

Consultation

Admissions from September 2023

The Priory Federation of Academies Trust (*the Trust*) is consulting on changes to the admission arrangements for The Priory Ruskin Academy for September 2023.

Over the last few years, the number of applications for places has grown considerably and the academy has become heavily oversubscribed. In 2021, for example, the number of applicants was nearly three times the number of places available. Clearly in such circumstances, many applicants will not achieve a place at the academy. The Trust cannot simply create additional places to cater for all applicants, of course. We review our admission arrangements regularly, however, and intend to make the following changes, which are included in the proposed arrangements below:

- allocate places to siblings and children of staff before the zonal arrangements are used, with zones only used for applicants with no sibling attending the academy
- revise the oversubscription criterion in respect of children of staff.
- reduce the number of zones from five to four and adjust the zone boundaries
- allocate non-sibling places within each zone by random allocation.

The proposed changes explained

Siblings and children of staff out of zonal arrangements

The Trust has analysed recent admission data and it is clear that the percentage of applicants with siblings at the academy varies from zone to zone. If the number of applicants with siblings in any zone is high, the number of places for applicants with no sibling is low, and vice versa. This means that the chance of a place for an applicant without a sibling at the academy can be different from zone to zone. By allocating places to siblings before introducing the zonal arrangements, the chance of an applicant without a sibling getting a place will be the same in each zone. We also intend to move the places for children of staff out of the zonal arrangements; this part of the change will have minimal impact on other applicants as very few places fall into this category in any given year.

Children of staff

The change to the oversubscription criterion for the children of staff is designed to bring it in line with the wording suggested in the School Admissions Code. Children of staff appointed to fill vacant posts in areas where there are shortages will have similar priority to children of longer-serving members of staff. This change will have minimal impact on other applicants as very few places fall into this category in any given year. The change will support the recruitment and retention of the best possible staff to work at the academy.

The zones

With relatively few applicants in the early years of the academy, the five original zones worked well. The high number of applications now received means that we need to be sure the zones provide the right balance of places between the town of Grantham and the surrounding area. We have considered the number of zones and the distance of the zone boundary from the academy in some detail. Our modelling indicates that two zones covering the town of Grantham are appropriate, although we intend to extend zone 2 slightly to cover homes less than 1.6 miles from the academy. This will result in more places being available to applicants in the town of Grantham (72% in 2023). We then feel that only two outer, rural zones are needed, instead of three, thereby providing slightly fewer places to those who live further away from the academy. We also intend to move the outer boundary of the new third zone to 7 miles, instead of 8. On the basis of recent applications, the four zones proposed provide a better distribution of places for children of Grantham and the surrounding rural areas than the current five-zone arrangements.

Decisions within each zone

The much greater number of applicants in the last few years has meant that the distance measurement used is increasingly problematic, because those applicants near the outer boundary of a zone have much less chance of gaining a place than those living closer to the academy. Applicants living further away from the academy in the next zone have a much greater chance of gaining a place. We intend, therefore, to introduce random allocation of places in each zone for applicants without siblings at the academy. No matter where a child lives within a zone, they will have an equal chance of obtaining a place at the academy. We believe parents would prefer the chance of gaining a place to be the same, wherever they live in a zone.

Other changes

A number of minor textual changes have also been made to meet the requirements of the revised School Admissions Code 2021, which came into effect on 1 September 2021, and to improve clarity. These changes have no impact on the admission arrangements themselves.

PRIORY RUSKIN ACADEMY

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS for 2023

1 The admission authority for Priory Ruskin Academy is The Priory Federation of Academies Trust (“the Trust”). These admission arrangements were determined by the Trust on **XX Month 2022**. They form part of the Trust’s admission policy. In drawing up the arrangements, the Trust has followed statutory guidance from the government in the School Admissions Code. You can find the code at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2.

ADMISSION NUMBERS

2 Priory Ruskin Academy will have the following published admission numbers (PAN) for the relevant year group in the school year 2023/24 and, subject to any changes approved or required by the Secretary of State, for subsequent years:

- a) 210 places in Year 7
- b) 20 places in Year 12, in addition to those for students from Priory Ruskin Academy who wish to stay on into the sixth form.

FINDING YOUR WAY ROUND THESE ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

3 For secondary school places in Year 7 please go to paragraphs 4 – 16.
For places in the sixth form please go to paragraphs 17 – 23.
Then, for important information for all age groups, please go to paragraphs 24 – 49.

APPLICATIONS TO YEAR 7

Process of application

4 You make applications for places in Year 7 through the co-ordinated admission arrangements in the local authority area in which your child lives. You apply using the Common Application Form (CAF) provided and administered by the relevant local authority.

5 Parents resident in Lincolnshire can apply online through Lincolnshire County Council’s website: <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/school-admissions>. You can also apply by telephone, or ask for a hard copy application form, by telephoning 01522 782030. Parents resident in other areas must apply through the local authority in which they live.

6 Priory Ruskin Academy will use the following timetable for applications each year (exact dates within the months may vary from year to year) which, whenever possible, will fit in with the common timetable agreed by the Lincolnshire local authority:

- a) By 1 September – Priory Ruskin Academy will publish in its prospectus information about the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria, for the following September (for example in September 2022 for admission in September 2023). This will include details of open evenings and other opportunities for prospective pupils and their parents to visit the academy.
- b) By the end of October – Priory Ruskin Academy will provide opportunities for parents to visit the academy.
- c) By 31 October – parents complete the CAF and return it to the relevant local authority to administer.
- d) Between 1 November and 28 February –
 - the local authority sends application information to the academy for consideration
 - Priory Ruskin Academy sends a list of pupils to be offered places by the Trust to the local authority.
- e) 1 March - the relevant local authority will make the offers of places to parents of pupils joining secondary provision on behalf of the Trust, as required by the School Admissions Code. If we are not able to offer a place, you can appeal against that decision.

Admission criteria for Year 7

7 Priory Ruskin Academy will consider all applications for places at the academy. Where the number of applications is less than or equal to the published admission number, we will offer places to all those who have applied.

8 Where the number of applicants is greater than the published admission number, Priory Ruskin Academy will first accept all pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan (as defined in the *Children and Families Act 2014*) that names the academy.

Admissions through aptitude for sport or visual arts in Year 7

9 Priory Ruskin Academy will admit up to 11 pupils to Year 7 on the basis of their aptitude for sport and up to 10 pupils on the basis of their aptitude for the visual arts. These numbers may vary from year to year but the total number of places offered on the basis of aptitude will not exceed 21. Parents who wish to seek a place at the academy for their child based on aptitude for sport or visual arts should present their child for assessment. For sport, the assessment is based on nationally recognised activities focusing on skill, power, stamina and agility, and is not linked to current success in any particular sport. For visual arts, a portfolio of recent work is assessed, focusing on creativity.

Admission through aptitude for sport or visual arts only applies to the intake starting secondary education in Year 7 at the beginning of the school year. It is not available in other year groups or for in-year admissions.

10 The assessment takes place in July of the summer term before applications are made (that is, when the child is towards the end of Year 5). The date of the assessment is available from Priory Ruskin Academy.

11 Parents who wish their child to take the assessment should request, complete and return the assessment application form, which is available from the academy, at least one week before the assessment.

12 Taking the assessment is not an application in itself. The academy will only consider applications for admission through aptitude assessments when the Common Application Form has been received by the local authority and the academy has been notified, confirming that an application has been made.

13 The academy will only consider those applicants who achieve a minimum standard in the assessment for the places available on the basis of aptitude for sport or visual arts. Parents will automatically be notified of the outcome of the assessment and whether or not their child has met the minimum standard for consideration for an aptitude place.

Admissions to Year 7 using zones

14 The academy follows the requirement of the School Admissions Code to give highest priority when oversubscribed to looked after and previously looked after children, no matter where they live. The academy also places great emphasis on developing and maintaining contact with families and so gives next highest priority to applicants with siblings attending the academy and to children of staff, no matter where they live.

15 The remaining places for applicants without siblings at the academy will be allocated using four concentric zones centred on the academy. Each applicant will be allocated to a zone using the straight-line distance from their home to the academy. The zones take into account the number of applications to the academy living in each zone for admission in the school year during which these arrangements are determined, and recognise that few students travel long distances to the academy. The following proportions will be used for each zone:

- zone 1: living less than 1 mile from the academy – 36%
- zone 2: living 1 mile or more but less than 1.6 miles – 36%
- zone 3: living 1.6 miles or more but less than 7 miles – 22%
- zone 4: living 7 miles or more from the academy – 6%

Oversubscription criteria for Year 7

The terms used in the following paragraph are explained in detail in a set of definitions at the end of these arrangements.

16 After the admission of pupils with EHC plans that name the academy, we will consider applications for the remaining places against the criteria set out below.

The criteria below will be applied in the order in which they are set out. If applying any criterion would result in the year group being oversubscribed, the subsequent criteria will be applied, in order, to decide which applicants will be admitted.

- a. looked after children, or previously looked after children
- b. applicants who achieve the minimum standards needed for admission on the basis of aptitude for sport or visual arts

In the event that more than 11 applicants achieve the minimum standard in sport, the 11 places will be offered to the applicants with the highest scores in the assessment. In the event that more than 10 applicants achieve the minimum standard in visual arts, the 10 places will be offered to the applicants with the highest scores in the assessment. If tied scores for the last of these places in either sport or visual arts would result in more than 11 or 10 applicants being admitted respectively, then the last places will be allocated at random. Any remaining applicants will then be considered along with all other applicants using the criteria in paragraphs 16c to 16f below.

In the event that fewer than 11 (sport) or 10 (visual arts) applicants achieve the minimum standard, they will all be admitted and the remaining places in that specialism will then be made available to applicants for the other specialism. If fewer than a total of 21 places are awarded to applicants who meet the minimum standard in either assessment, the places will be made available to other applicants using the criteria in paragraph 16c to 16f below.

- c. siblings of pupils who are on the roll of the academy at the time of the application
- d. children of a member of staff of the academy who has been employed at the academy for two or more years at the time of the application, or who has been appointed to a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage

In the event that there are more applicants than places using criteria 16c or 16d, then successful applicants will be chosen by random allocation.

- e. the remaining places, typically for applicants without siblings at the academy, will be allocated randomly to each of the zones 1 to 4 in paragraph 14, in the order zones 1 to 4.

The number of places available in each zone will be calculated using the percentages in paragraph 14 and be rounded down to the nearest whole number. At the end of this set of calculations, any remaining places will be held to the end of the process.

If there are more applications than places in any zone, then the places in that zone will be allocated randomly. If the number of applications in any zone is less than or equal to the number of places, all applicants will be admitted and any remaining places will be held to the end of the process. Once allocations to each zone have been made, any remaining places from the four zones, together with any places resulting from the calculations above, will be allocated at random to all remaining applicants from all zones.

Random allocations will be made using the online random sequence generator in 'random.org' or, if not available, an alternative random generator. The process will be overseen by a person independent of the academy and the local authority.

APPLICATIONS TO THE SIXTH FORM

17 The sixth form at Priory Ruskin Academy offers a wide range of A level and BTEC courses at Level 3. All applicants for places in the sixth form must satisfy the academic entry requirements of Priory Ruskin Academy.

18 For Level 3 academic courses (A levels) we normally expect students to have achieved at least a GCSE grade 4 in each of English and mathematics. For Level 3 applied courses (BTEC) we normally expect students to have achieved GCSE grades from their best English and their mathematics courses that 'total' 7. For example a grade 4 in English and a grade 3 in mathematics would meet this requirement. In addition, each course has subject-specific GCSE requirements that we expect students to meet. These are published in the sixth-form prospectus each year. Academic entry requirements and subject-specific requirements are the same for internal and external applicants.

19 We discuss with each applicant the best match of course to their subject background. Further information for individual subjects can be found in the academy's sixth form prospectus (<https://www.prioryruskin.co.uk/page/?title=Prospectus&pid=109>).

Process of application

20 Dates for applications for entry to Year 12, and acceptances and refusals, will be published in the academy's sixth form prospectus. You make applications directly to the academy.

Admission criteria for Year 12

21 Priory Ruskin Academy will consider all applications for places at the academy.

Where the number of applications is less than or equal to the published admission number, the academy will offer places to all those who have applied.

22 Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admission number, Priory Ruskin Academy will first accept all pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan (as defined in the *Children and Families Act 2014*) that names the academy.

Oversubscription criteria for Year 12

The terms used in the following paragraph are explained in detail in a set of definitions at the end of these arrangements.

23 After the admission of pupils with EHC plans, the academy will consider applications for the remaining places against the criteria set out below.

The criteria below will be applied in the order in which they are set out. If applying any criterion would result in the year group being oversubscribed, the subsequent criteria will be applied, in order, to decide which applicants will be admitted.

- a. looked after children, or previously looked after children
- b. students wishing to study the academy's specialist subjects (sport and visual arts subjects)

Where the application of this criterion still leaves more students than places, then the 'total' of students' grades in GCSE examinations will be taken into account, in order, starting with the highest. In the case of tied totals, then the distance from home to the academy will be used as in paragraph 23c below.

- c. a student who lives nearest to the academy measured by the straight-line distance from the child's home address to the academy's main entrance.

In the event that two or more applicants under criterion 23c live the same straight-line distance from the academy, the place or places will be allocated at random by a person independent of the academy and the local authority,

IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS

24 The Academy will consider all applications to year groups in which the school provides education. If the Academy is able to provide a place in a year group without prejudicing the efficient provision of education or use of resources, then the Academy will admit the child.

25 If there are more applications than places then the same oversubscription criteria set out for the relevant year groups above will be used to decide who should be offered places.

We will use the criteria for Year 7 for applications in Years 7–11, with the exception of criterion 16b (admission through aptitude in sport or visual arts) and criterion 16c (allocation of places to zones), which only apply to the initial allocation of places to Year 7. Under criterion 16c, we will allocate places at random to those who have applied, without reference to zones. We will use the criteria for Year 12 for applications in the sixth form.

26 For places in Years 7 to 11, you should make in-year applications through Lincolnshire County Council or directly to the academy. You can apply online at <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/school-admissions>. Details of Lincolnshire’s coordinated scheme for in-year admissions can be found at <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/school-admissions/apply-move-school>. You can also apply by telephone on 01522 782030, or you can ask for a hard copy application form by telephoning 01522 782030 or emailing schooladmissions@lincolnshire.gov.uk. Hard copy applications can be returned to Lincolnshire County Council or to the academy. In-year applications to the sixth form must be made directly to the academy.

27 We will aim to respond within 10 school days but you will always be notified in writing of the outcome of your application within 15 school days. If we are not able to offer a place, you can appeal against that decision.

ADMISSION OF PUPILS OUTSIDE THEIR NORMAL AGE GROUP

28 The academy will normally admit pupils into the designated year group for their age. Parents may seek a place for their child outside their normal age group if, for example, the child is gifted or talented, or has experienced significant problems such as ill health. In addition to completion of the CAF, these applications need to be made in writing, giving one or more reasons for the request. Any parent considering this should contact the academy to discuss the implications of this arrangement before applying. Each application for admission outside the normal age group will be dealt with individually to ensure all the circumstances are taken into account when making a decision. In coming to a decision, the academy will consider a range of evidence including that provided by the parent, and take account of:

- the parent’s views
- any available information about the child’s academic, social and emotional development
- where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- any evidence that the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- the views of the headteacher.

CHILDREN OF UK MILITARY PERSONNEL

29 The Trust aims to support the military covenant by removing any disadvantage to UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces) moving to the area or Crown Servants returning from overseas to live in the area. The Trust will not refuse a place to a child of relocating service

personnel or returning Crown Servants solely because the family does not yet have an intended address or does not yet live in the area. For all applications, the Trust will:

- a) process an application in advance of a move to the area provided it is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date
- b) use the address where the child will live when applying the oversubscription criteria, as long as the parents provide some evidence of their intended address, or a Unit or quartering address where the parent requests this.

Evidence of an intended residential address, such as a tenancy agreement or mortgage statement, will be required.

30 For late applications and in-year applications the Trust will also consider whether:

- a) an application from that address would normally succeed in an oversubscribed year
- b) any child on the reserve list has a higher priority under the oversubscription criteria
- c) the admission of another child would seriously prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

OPERATION OF WAITING LISTS

31 The academy will operate a waiting list (sometimes called a reserve list) until 31 December each year for all unsuccessful applicants for each year group in which the academy provides education. A child's position on a waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out for the relevant year group above. Once the waiting list has closed in each year group on 31 December, you will need to reapply if you wish your child to join the academy at a subsequent point.

32 The waiting list for the normal intake to Year 7 at the start of the school year is managed by Lincolnshire local authority's School Admissions Team from 1 March until 31 August each year. If we refuse a place at the academy during this period, your child is automatically placed on the waiting list, unless your child has been offered a place in a higher preference school. The full set of oversubscription criteria in paragraph 16 above is used.

33 After 1 September each year, the waiting list for Year 7 is managed by the academy, along with the waiting lists for all other year groups. The criteria used between 1 September and 31 December to allocate places to applicants on a waiting list in Years 7 to 11 are those in paragraph 16 above, with the exception of criterion 16b (admission through aptitude in sport or visual arts) and criterion 16c (allocation of places to zones), which only apply to the initial allocation of places to Year 7. Under criterion 16c, we will allocate places at random across the whole waiting list, without reference to zones. We will use the full criteria for Year 12 if there is a waiting list for places in the sixth form.

34 Where places become available the academy will allocate places to children on the waiting list in the order determined by the oversubscription criteria, irrespective of the time they have been on the waiting list. Children can move up or down the waiting list because the list will be reordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria every time there is a new applicant, an applicant's details change or an applicant leaves the waiting list. You will need to inform the academy of your new address and any other new contact details if you move house while on the waiting list.

RIGHT OF APPEAL

35 You have the right to appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel if your child is refused a place at the academy in any year group. Parents and carers will be informed of the reason why admission was refused. Sixth form applicants and applicants over the statutory school leaving age can exercise this right of appeal themselves. The appeal panel is set up under the School Admission Appeals Code. The decision of the independent panel is binding on all parties. Details of how to make an appeal will be provided when a parent is informed of a decision to refuse their child a place at the academy.

FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOL

36 The academy and Trust will participate fully in the Lincolnshire local authority's *Fair Access Protocol*, which makes sure that unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable children, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. This can involve admitting children to schools or year groups that are already full. Children allocated a place under the *Fair Access Protocol* take precedence over those on a waiting list or awaiting the outcome of an appeal.

CONCERNS ABOUT APPLICATIONS

37 As the admission authority for the academy, the Trust has the right to investigate any concerns it has about an application. The Trust may withdraw an offer of a place if it is found that parents have made a fraudulent claim or provided intentionally misleading information, such as a false address. The Trust reserves the right to check any information provided so it can apply the oversubscription criteria accurately and fairly.

DEFINITIONS

Looked after children and previously looked after children

38 *A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.*

39 *Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order), including those children who appear to the Trust to have been in state*

care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

40 *Previously looked after children includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).*

41 *Child arrangements orders are defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.*

42 *Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).*

Siblings

43 *A sibling is defined as:*

- *a natural brother or sister, whether or not a resident in the same household*
- *another child normally in residence for the majority (more than 50%) of term time in the household for whom the adult in the household has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act 1989 (for example, adopted siblings, half-brothers and sisters, step-brothers or sisters, and foster brothers or sisters)*
- *any child in the household where an adult is defined as a parent for the purposes of section 576 of the Education Act 1996.*

44 *In the case of twins or other children from multiple births (or two or more siblings in one cohort) and where fewer places are available than requested, the application will be considered together as one application. The academy will then admit all the applicants, unless this would prejudice the efficient provision of education or use of resources.*

Children of staff

45 *Staff means an employee of the Priory Federation of Academies Trust who is deployed for the largest proportion of their working time at Priory Ruskin Academy. If the staff member is deployed for equal amounts of time at more than one of the Trust's academies, then the staff member can select one, and only one, of these academies as the academy at which they work.*

Home address

46 *This is the address where the child lives for the majority of the school term time with a parent who has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act 1989 or where an adult in the household is defined as a parent for the purpose of section 576 of the education Act 1996. This could include a person who is not a parent but who has parental responsibility for her or him. It will not usually include other relatives such as grandparents, uncles, aunts*

etc. unless they have all the rights, duties, powers and authority which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and their property.

47 In the case of a child who normally lives during the school week with more than one parent at different addresses, or if the family has more than one home, we will take as the home address the address where you and your child normally live for the majority of the school term time. In either scenario if you can show that your child spends an equal amount of time at both addresses during school term time, you can choose which address to use on the application.

Distance

48 Distances are measured in a straight line and are calculated to three decimal places (for example 1.543 miles) by the Lincolnshire County Council school admissions team, using Servelec's "Synergy" system. Information about the address used for each application is taken from the Ordnance Survey AddressBase database, which provides 12 figure X and Y coordinates for each individual property, usually at the centre of the property. Distances are measured from this point of the child's home to the gate at the main entrance to the academy on Rushcliffe Road, Grantham).

'Total' of GCSE grades

49 This is the total of the numbered grades that are awarded at the end of GCSE courses, including the equivalent number when converted from other qualifications.