

Admissions Policy 2025/26

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Part 1

1 Pre 16 Admissions Policy

- 1.1 The Marches Academy Trust's schools are open access comprehensive schools catering for children & young people (CYP) aged between 3 and 18. The maximum admission number for each September intake is:

Grange Primary School	60	
The Grove School and Sixth Form	208	
Idsall School	216	
Longlands Primary School	30	
Lower Heath CE Primary School	15	
The Marches School	270	
Oakmeadow CE Primary School	60	
Shrewsbury Academy	237	
Sir John Talbot's School	135	
Tilstock CE Primary School	10	each for both nursery and reception admissions
Woodlands School		The Local Authority (LA) is the admissions authority. The school currently has places for 84 pupils. Occasionally the school may be required to take additional pupils.

- 1.2 All schools within Marches Academy Trust (the Trust) are an admission authority in their own right, and the Trust is therefore responsible for determining each school's Admissions Policy.
- 1.3 For transfers to Primary school for the first time into Reception, or Secondary school in Year 7, the Council's Admissions Team co-ordinates the admissions process, and all enquiries regarding admissions should be addressed to them. They publish a booklet, 'Parents' Guide to Education in Shropshire', each year, with up-to-date information about schools, and a full explanation of the admissions process. The booklets are available from the Shropshire Council website, or reference copies are available in schools and local libraries. Parents/carers who may wish to speak directly to an Admissions Advisor may also contact them through the Admissions Team. Admissions for any year group, other than Reception or Year 7, will be classed as In-Year or Mid-term applications, and will be handled directly by the school (please see Section 7).
- 1.4 A copy of the determined arrangements are available for viewing on the Council's website at www.shropshire.gov.uk
- 1.5 The contact address is: Admissions Team, Shropshire Council, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND. Tel: 0345 678 9008
or email: school-admissions@shropshir4.2e.gov.uk
Website: www.shropshire.gov.uk
- 1.6 Catchment areas for schools can be viewed on Local View which can be found on the above website address.

2 Published Admission Number

- Grange Primary School has a Published Admission Number of 60.
- The Grove School and Sixth Form has a Published Admission Number of 208.
- Idsall School has a Published Admission Number of 216.
- Longlands Primary School has a Published Admission Number of 30.
- Lower Heath CE Primary School has a Published Admission Number of 15.
- The Marches School has a Published Admission Number of 270 for each Year 7 intake (this number also applies to Years 8 - 11).
- Oakmeadow CE Primary School has a Published Admission Number of 60.
- Sir John Talbot's School has a Published Admission Number of 135.
- Shrewsbury Academy has a Published Admission Number of 237.
- Tilstock CE Primary School has a Published Admission Number of 10 for the Reception year, aged 4 years and 10 months, and 10 for Early Years education, aged 3, starting the term after their third birthday.
- Woodlands School - the Local Authority (LA) is the admissions authority. The school currently has places for 84 pupils. Occasionally the school may be required to take additional pupils.

- 2.1 The number of preferences received, and places allocated, for the previous year can be viewed on the Shropshire Council website and in the Parents' Guide to Education in Shropshire booklet.

3 Children & Young People with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

- 3.1 Following the School Admissions Code section 2.8: CYP with an Education Health and Care Plan will not be part of an oversubscription process and will receive a place at the school in the event of the school being oversubscribed.

4 Applications

4.1 Parents/carers of pre-school children, children in Early Years Education, or Year 6 children, resident in Shropshire, will be required in the Autumn term, prior to the school year of transfer to make an application, naming three preferences, via the Shropshire Council website. The online application facility will be available in early September. Where there are more applications than there are places available, allocations will be made in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Full details of these criteria are given in the Parents' Guide to Education in Shropshire booklet; therefore, it is recommended that parents/carers read the booklet before completing an application, but, in general terms, they are based upon the following (in order):

4.2 CYP who have an Education Health and Care Plan, which names the school the CYP should attend because their needs can be best met by that particular school, will be offered places before other CYP. After that places will be offered up to the admission number in the following priority order:

4.3 Secondary School(s)

4.3.1 Priority 1a

Priority will be given to CYP in public care, usually referred to as 'Looked After Children', and CYP who were previously 'looked after'. These are CYP 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). CYP within, or from state care, within England.

4.3.2 Priority 1b

CYP who appear (to the admission authority of 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 in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society*)

4.3.3 Priority 1c

Priority will be given to a child where medical or social exceptionalities are accommodated, if parents/carers can provide written evidence from a medical professional that attending the school is essential to the medical well-being of the child.

4.3.4 Priority 2

Priority will be given to CYP living within the designated catchment area. If there are not enough places for all the CYP in the catchment area, then the following criteria for admission will apply:

- 1) Priority will be given to CYP living within the catchment area who will have an older sibling at the school (including sixth form if applicable) on the day they are due to start there.
- 2) Shrewsbury Academy only: After that, priority will be given to other CYP who live within the Shrewsbury catchment area for whom the school is the nearest Shrewsbury secondary school. For this 'Nearest School Test', a straight-line computerised mapping system is used, to determine the distance between home and the nearest appropriate official entrance gate to the school site.
- 3) After that, any other CYP who live within the catchment area.

4.3.5 **Priority 3**

CYP who have a parent/carer who is a member of staff, who has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage by the school.

4.3.6 **Priority 4**

After that any places that are left will be offered to CYP who live outside the catchment area according to the following criteria:

- 1) CYP who have an older sibling at the school (including sixth form if applicable) on the day they are due to start and whose homes are nearest to the school.
- 2) (Does not apply to Shrewsbury Academy) Secondly, priority will be given to CYP living outside the catchment area without an older sibling at the school, but who have attended a state-funded primary school that lies within the secondary school's catchment area, for more than a whole academic year immediately prior to transfer.
- 3) After that, priority will be given to other CYP who live outside the catchment area.

4.4 Primary School(s)

As well as being an inclusive neighbourhood school, our Church of England schools have distinctive Christian characters and ethos that reflect the teaching of Jesus Christ and Christian values. We ask all parents and carers applying for a place at these schools to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community. We hope that all CYP who come to these schools will be able to participate (as appropriate) in the religious life of our schools (including collective worship and religious education).

4.4.1 **Priority 1a**

Priority will be given to CYP in public care, usually referred to as 'Looked After Children', and CYP who were previously 'looked after'. These are CYP 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). CYP within, or from state care, within England.

4.4.2 **Priority 1b**

CYP who appear (to the admission authority of 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 in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.'*

4.4.3 **Priority 1c**

Priority will be given to a child where medical or social exceptionalities are accommodated, if parents/carers can provide written evidence from a medical professional that attending the school is essential to the medical well-being of the child.

4.4.4 **Priority 2**

Priority will be given to CYP living within the designated catchment area. If there are not enough places for all the CYP in the catchment area then the following criteria for admission will apply:

- 1) Priority will be given to CYP living within the catchment area who will have an older sibling at the school/Sixth Form on the day they are due to start there.
- 2) Shrewsbury Academy only: After that, priority will be given to other CYP who live within the Shrewsbury catchment area for whom the school is the nearest Shrewsbury secondary school. For this 'Nearest School Test', a straight-line computerised mapping system is used, to determine the distance between home and the nearest appropriate official entrance gate to the school site.
- 3) After that, any other CYP who live within the catchment area.

4.4.5 **Priority 3**

CYP who have a parent/carer who is a member of staff, who has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage by the school.

4.4.6 **Priority 4**

After that any places that are left will be offered to CYP who live outside the catchment area according to the following criteria:

- 1) CYP who have an older sibling at the school on the day they are due to start and whose homes are nearest to the school.
- 2) After that, priority will be given to other CYP who live outside the catchment area.

4.5 **Notes which apply to the oversubscription criteria**

- 4.5.1 Applicants in each of the categories and sub-categories above will be rank ordered by home to school straight-line distance, where the shortest distance will be given priority. For admission purposes all distances are measured by the School Admissions Team as a straight-line distance on a computerised mapping system between the home address and the nearest appropriate entrance gate of the school by pinpointing their eastings and northings. Where two addresses are within the same block of flats, the lowest number of flat or nearest the ground floor will be deemed to be the nearest in distance.
- 4.5.2 Very exceptionally, where a child has a particular health reason requiring them to attend a specific school, that child may be given a place before any of the CYP who qualify under Priorities 2 and 3 above. This will only be allowed if parents/carers can provide written evidence from a medical professional that attending that particular school is essential to the medical well-being of the child. Shropshire County Council reserves the right to check the relevance of the medical condition.
- 4.5.3 Catchment area maps can be viewed on Local View available from 'Maps' at the foot of the website www.shropshire.gov.uk, or individual addresses can be checked by contacting the Admissions Team. Admission numbers can be found in the Parents' Guide to Education in Shropshire booklet.
- 4.5.4 The definition of a sibling, is the brother or sister, stepbrother or stepsister, half-brother or half-sister, living at the same address as part of the same family unit, and of compulsory school age (i.e. 5 - 16 years) or in the same school's Sixth Form. Fostered and adopted siblings are also included. Older siblings must still be attending the school on the date the younger sibling is due to start there. However, cousins or other relatives who take up residence in the home in order to establish an 'in catchment area' address will not be given priority under the sibling criterion.
- 4.5.5 The Trust will endeavour to place siblings born at the same time (e.g. twins, triplets etc.) in the same school. If necessary, the Trust will admit over PAN to accommodate such CYP.
- 4.5.6 All applicants are required to give correct information about the genuine residential address of the child. This is normally expected to be with the parent/carer who has care of the child for the majority of the time (that is school time during the week in term time) but where care is shared

equally, the home address will be determined by which parent receives the relevant Child Benefit.

- 4.5.7 In the event that two individual applications are exactly the same, after all other criteria have been taken into account, a tie breaker will be used. This will be by random allocation, and overseen by an independent party not connected with the admissions process. The Trust will liaise with Shropshire County Council if this is required.

5 Refusals

The Trust schools may refuse admission to applicants who have been permanently excluded from two or more other schools; this does not apply to CYP with Education Health and Care Plans. The ability to refuse admissions runs for a period of two years since the last exclusion. Exclusions which took place before the child concerned reached compulsory school age do not count for this purpose.

6 Appeals Process

- 6.1 Any applicant refused a place at the Marches Academy Trust schools has a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.
- 6.2 Schools within the Trust are its own admission authority, and so you should contact the school in order to lodge your admission appeal if you are refused admission. The school will give you the information you need.
- 6.3 The school has to ensure that the independent appeal panel is trained to act in accordance with all relevant provisions of the School Admissions Appeals Code published by the Department for Education. The code can be found online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code>
- 6.4 If, after your appeal, you are concerned that the appeal did not comply with the Code, or was set up wrongly, and that this affected the outcome of your appeal, you can complain to the Education and Skills Funding Agency. The Education and Skills Funding Agency will investigate the complaint on behalf of the Secretary of State.
- 6.5 If the Education and Skills Funding Agency finds that the appeal arrangements have breached the Code, and affected the outcome of the appeal, the school may be required to establish a fresh appeal.
- 6.6 Further details can be found on the factsheet:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/692952/Academy_independent_admission_appeal_panel_complaints_factsheet_2018.pdf

7 Mid-Term or In-Year Admissions

- 7.1 Where families wish to change the school their child attends at other times of the year, after the start of Reception or Year 7, this is coordinated by Shropshire Local Authority (LA). To apply for a place parents/carers must apply by completing the LA's Online Application Form. This can be found [here](#)
- 7.2 Your application will be processed by the School Admissions Team at Shropshire Council in accordance with our school's oversubscription criteria. You will then be notified via letter of the outcome of your application.
- 7.3 The LA School Admissions Team and staff based in schools, libraries and customer services will support parents who have difficulty applying online. In **exceptional** circumstances, a paper application form will be made available by the LA School Admissions Team upon request, this is not available through the schools and schools will not be responsible for sending applications they receive to the LA School Admissions Team.
- 7.4 If applications are received directly to a school, the school must advise the applicants to complete the LAs online application form.
- 7.5 The LA aims to notify parents/carers of the outcome of applications within 7 working days, however, processing may take up to 15 working days.
- 7.6 Further details of the LA policy for placing of CYP under the in-year applications process, can be found on the LA website.
- 7.7 School applications and waiting lists will be administered and held by the LA Admissions Team. Applications are discussed with the school and a place will be offered if there is a vacancy in the relevant year group or if the school is able to exceed their PAN.
- 7.8 The Headteacher at your chosen school will usually then make an appointment to visit the school.
- 7.9 If there are no places available, unsuccessful applicants have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel. The LA has an established appeals process and will inform parents/carers of the process as needed.
- 7.10 Parents/carers with CYP at any age, prior to beginning school in Reception, or admission to secondary school, who wish to visit a school within the Trust, should contact the relevant Headteacher.
- 7.11 If an application is made for a CYP to be admitted to the school, and the required year group is below the level of the Published Admission Number applicable to the age group, the CYP will be accepted subject to the provisions of Sections 4 and 5. The Academy may refuse to admit a child, where there are places available, on the grounds that admission of such a CYP would prejudice the provision of efficient education, or the efficient use of resources in any year group.
- 7.12 The Trust will consult and co-ordinate its arrangements, including over the rapid re-integration of CYP, including those who have been excluded from other schools, and who arrive in an area after the normal admissions round,

in accordance with local In-Year fair access protocols for securing schools for unplaced CYP.

8 Admissions to Attend out of Cohort

These will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, to establish whether an out of cohort place is in the best interests of the child. For entry into Reception, please refer to the Local Authority online booklet, Parents' Guide to Education in Shropshire, for the legal start dates based on age.

Part 2

9 Post 16 (Sixth Form) Admissions Policy

The Trustees of the Marches Academy Trust are responsible for admissions. It is intended that the school will offer an education particularly suited to the more academic CYP. It is our aim, when considering applications, to accept CYP onto a curriculum which will suit their learning style, and encourage them to flourish academically. Judgments and offers will be made on an appropriate level of prior academic achievement. For success in outcomes, CYP should also have a positive attitude, and aptitude for learning. We will support CYP to strive for standards of excellence, and encourage them to develop a sense of intellectual independence, accompanied by a social and moral responsibility, so as to prepare them for their roles in the wider society of the 21st Century.

10 Post 16 (Sixth Form) Method of Application

- 10.1 All CYP in Year 11 will be invited to our Post 16 Events at The Grove School and Sixth Form, The Marches School, and Sir John Talbot's School; these will take place in October. The events will be publicised locally and on the schools' websites. This will provide an opportunity for all Year 11, and CYP studying in other education establishments, to attend.
- 10.2 Prospectuses will be published, and available for the Post 16 Events. Information, advice and guidance meetings will be arranged for every prospective Sixth Form CYP in Year 11 at the Trust schools, providing expert professional support at a critical time of decision making. All applicants will be required to attend an interview with a member of the Sixth Form team.
- 10.3 CYP will be asked to indicate their provisional preferences in the late autumn term/early spring term, in order to help us construct the curriculum. Timetable blocks will then be created to cater for as many curriculum choices as possible. CYP can alter their preferences, up, until, and including, the start of the A level courses, but they may be constrained by the timetable blocking that has been set based on earlier preferences.

11 Post 16 (Sixth Form) General Entry Requirements

- 11.1 CYP wishing to continue their studies with us are required to achieve a minimum of a grade 4 in English Language and Maths. In order to secure a place at our Sixth Forms, we ask applicants to achieve a minimum of five grade 5s in their GCSE examinations and at least a grade 5 in the subjects they intend to study. Whilst ideally, we would like a grade 5 in the subject they intend to study, we will assess applications on a case-by-case basis. BTEC and vocational courses require 5 GCSEs of at least a grade 4 to include English and Maths. At Idsall we run a construction course that involves the resitting of Maths and English (if CYP have not achieved a grade 4). Applications on decided on a case-by-case basis.

- 11.2 If they are applying to join us from another school, we also seek a reference from the current school, focusing on predictions to meet the academic criteria.

12 Post 16 (Sixth Form) Course Specific Requirements

- 12.1 In addition to the general entry requirements, there are course specific requirements which explain what CYP need to achieve, in order to pursue studies in each subject in the Sixth Form. This may entail attaining particular grades in specified subjects, and it is important that CYP check these before making their choices. Details of these course specific requirements will be published in the Sixth Form prospectus, which will be available at the Post 16 Event.
- 12.2 Where an applicant fails to meet the general entry requirements we will provide them with information, advice and guidance to support them in continuing their learning or work-based training at an alternative institution. If a CYP fails to meet the course specific requirements but achieves five grade 5s at GCSE, we will strive to approve a new course offer which will allow the CYP to take up a place at a Trust Sixth Form. This will be dependent primarily on the number of CYP on the course, and the CYP having achieved the course entry requirement as published.
- 12.3 On the publication of mid-course exam results, we will review each CYP's progress. We will focus on the probability of them being successful if they make the transition to A2. If their results are not a platform for achieving three A*-E grades at A2, they may not be able to continue studying in the Sixth Form.

13 Post 16 (Sixth Form) Courses in Year 12 and Year 13

- 13.1 All CYP in Year 12 will be required to work towards completing a minimum of three A levels or their equivalent. Alongside this, they will be expected to play a full and active part in the wider life of the school. This will include a commitment to developing themselves beyond their academic studies.
- 13.2 In Year 13 it is expected CYP will continue with a minimum of three full level 3 qualifications.

14 Post 16 (Sixth Form) Applicant's Age

Very occasionally, we may offer places to CYP one year ahead or behind their standard year group if we consider, as a matter of professional judgement, that this would be in the best interests of the CYP and the school.

15 Post 16 (Sixth Form) The Integrity of the Admissions Procedure

The Trust's Sixth Forms rely on the veracity of the information provided by the applicant, and their parents/carers in the course of the application procedure. Where any such information proves to be both inaccurate or misleading, the school reserves the right to deny the applicant admission or, where a CYP has already entered Sixth Form, to immediately withdraw their place.

16 Post 16 (Sixth Form) Oversubscription Criteria

16.1 In circumstances where the Sixth Form of a school is oversubscribed, the school would make every possible effort to accommodate extra numbers from beyond our own school's Year 11. Where this is not possible, the following oversubscription criteria, given in order, would be used to allocate places:

16.1.1 Priority 1a

Priority will be given to CYP in public care, usually referred to as 'Looked After Children', and CYP who were previously 'looked after'. These are CYP 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). CYP within, or from state care, within England.

16.1.2 Priority 1b

CYP who appear (to the admission authority of 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 in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society*)

16.1.3 Priority 1c

Priority will be given to a child where medical or social exceptionalities are accommodated, if parents/carers can provide written evidence from a medical professional that attending the school is essential to the medical well-being of the child.

16.1.4 Priority 2

CYP who meet the entry requirements, and live within the Trust school's individual Geographical Area of Responsibility for that school.

Our Published Admission Number (external intake) is 35 for Grove School and Sixth Form, 35 for the Marches School, and 35 for Sir John Talbot's School.

17 Post 16 (Sixth Form) Appealing Against Admission Decisions

- 17.1 If your application is unsuccessful, you will be advised of your right of appeal. Admission decisions may initially be considered by the Governors' appeals panel but if unsuccessful, applicants may also appeal to an independent appeal panel. Parents/carers and CYP are able to appeal jointly or separately against a decision refusing a CYP admission to the Sixth Form. Where they appeal separately, the Trustees of the Trust will make arrangements so that they are heard together.
- 17.2 Where applicants have been refused admission to the Sixth Form because there are more eligible CYP than places available, and other oversubscription criteria have then been applied, the appeals panel will follow the normal two-stage process of:
- 1) First stage: establishing the facts
 - 2) Second stage: balancing the arguments
- 17.3 In the case of an appeal where the CYP did not meet the specified entry requirements, the panel will not attempt to make its own assessment of the CYP's ability, but will decide whether the school's decision that the CYP was not of the required standard was reasonable, in light of the information available to it. In doing so, it will consider whether any process in place to consider such cases (for example where a CYP had not been studying in England, and therefore did not have GCSEs) was carried out in a consistent and objective way.

18 Post 16 (Sixth Form) Timetable for Appeals

- 18.1 The schools will ensure that appeals lodged by the appropriate deadlines are heard within certain timescales.
- 18.2 Where the offer of a place would not have been conditional upon exam results, appeals must be heard within 10 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals.
- 18.3 Where the offer of a place would have been conditional upon exam results, appeals must be heard within 15 school days of confirmation of those results.
- 18.4 The schools will ensure that appellants receive at least 10 school days' notice of their appeal hearing and that decision letters are sent within five school days of the hearing wherever possible.

19 Post 16 (Sixth Form) General Enquiries

General enquiries about admissions to The Grove School and Sixth Form should be directed to the Head of Sixth Form on: 01630 652121, or Post16admissions@gro.mmat.org.uk Further details about The Grove School and Sixth Form and the admissions procedure can be found on our website: <https://groveschoolmarketdrayton.co.uk/>

General enquiries about admissions to The Marches School Sixth Form should be directed to the Sixth Form on: 01691 664400, or Post16admissions@mar.mmat.org.uk Further details about The Marches Sixth Form and the admissions procedure can be found on our website: www.marchesschool.co.uk

General enquiries about admissions to Sir John Talbot's Sixth Form should be directed to the Head of Sixth Form on: 01948 660600 or Post16admissions@sjt.mmat.org.uk Further details about Sir John Talbot's Sixth Form and the admissions procedure can be found on our website: www.sirjohntalbots.co.uk

General enquiries about admissions to Idsall Sixth Form should be directed to the Head of Sixth Form on: 01952 468400 or info@idsall.shropshire.sch.uk. Further details about Idsall Sixth Form and the admissions procedure can be found on our website: www.idsallschool.org