

## The Pochin School Admission Policy From Autumn Term 2023 onward

### **1. Principles**

- 1.1 The purpose of the policy is to ensure that places at The Pochin School are allocated and offered in line with legislation.
- 1.2 The Pochin School Admissions Policy should:
- Offer clarity regarding legal requirements and statutory guidance
  - Seek to encourage partnership and avoid conflict at a local and an authority level
  - Maintain parental rights and ease the process of admission for parents and children
  - Have one consistent first-time admissions date to mainstream education
- 1.3 Children's entitlements are as follows:
- entitlement to a place in the catchment area school (dependent on the parent applying at the appropriate time, or on compliance with infant class size regulations)
  - entitlement to a place in a preferred school if there is room
  - entitlement to be considered according to the same priority criteria as other children where the preferred school is oversubscribed.

### **2. Legal Position & Other Requirements: Summary**

- 2.1 The Pochin School is part of the Bradgate Education Partnership ("Trust") and is its own admissions authority. The Trust will consult as required by the school's appeals code and publish the admissions policy and arrangements.
- 2.2 The Local Authority is required to co-ordinate admissions for all residents in Leicestershire. To this purpose it must have an approved scheme for co-ordination and The Pochin School will participate in full with the scheme.
- 2.3 Parents have a right to express a preference for a school place, including where the child has an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP). Parents must ensure suitable full-time education for their children by attendance at school or otherwise; they are not obliged to do this before the child has reached compulsory school age.

- 2.4 A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August. If the child's birthday is on one of these days then s/he is of compulsory school age on their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. This means.

A child turning 5 on or before 31 December must start school no later than from the start of the spring term

A child turning 5 on or before 31 March must start school no later than from the start of the summer term

A child turning 5 between 1 April and 31 August in the summer term must start school no later than the following autumn term

- 2.5 The Pochin School has a Published Admission Number (PAN) that is **capped at 20**. This means once The Pochin School has filled to 20 (in line with its admissions criteria para 7.2) all other applications will be refused, and parents will have the right to appeal. See also paragraph 10.6. Children with an EHCP that names The Pochin School by the deadline for first time admissions for that academic year will be admitted and the number of available places under the PAN will reduce accordingly.

### **3. First Time Admissions to The Pochin School**

- 3.1 This section refers to first-time admissions (4+ entries)
- 3.2 Parents must apply for a school place at first-time admission stage. Parents must apply to their home Local Authority for a school place. The best way to apply is by applying online through your home local authority's website. All applications received by 15<sup>th</sup> January (national closing date) will be considered first and in accordance with the approved priority criteria. **All late applications will receive the lowest priority.**
- 3.3 The Local Authority that you live in will confirm decisions to parents from 16<sup>th</sup> April (national offer date). No child should be admitted without an offer from the Local Authority you live in; and this is regardless of whether the child lives in the catchment area or otherwise and regardless of whether the child has attended a nursery or pre-school group at the school.
- 3.4 For those pupils who do not live in Leicestershire, the Leicestershire School Admissions Service will inform the relevant home Local Authority who will in turn inform the parents.
- 3.5 Places will be allocated up to the PAN of 20 and will not be exceeded regardless of living in the catchment or moving into catchment. Where there are more applications than places available, places will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria as set out at paragraph 7.2.

- 3.6 Date of admission for all first time admissions is from the September immediately following a child's fourth birthday i.e. all children who have turned 4 before the end 31st August. Pre admission visits will only take place in the term before the child is admitted to the school.
- 3.7 The Pochin School has a single start for first time admissions at 4+. Parents must ensure full time education for their child from compulsory school age, from 5+.

#### **4. Infant Class Size Limits, Multiple Birth Children**

- 4.1 There is a requirement to limit infant class sizes to 30 children for each qualified teacher. This applies to reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes i.e. children aged 4 to 7.
- 4.2 In the unusual event of there being one space available within the PAN, children of multiple births will be admitted to The Pochin School.
- 4.3 Infant Class Size exceptions as laid down in the Admissions Code will also be considered.

#### **5. Deferring First-Time Admission / Summer Born children**

- 5.1 When a child's parents are notified of the allocation of a primary school place, they can request deferment of the child's admission to The Pochin School until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made. Where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.
- 5.2 Parents of summer born children (those born between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 31<sup>st</sup> August) have the following options:
- request deferment of the place (or attend part time) until the beginning of the final term.
  - delay their admission to the following school year in which case the place in Reception will be withdrawn and parents will need to make an in-year application for admission to Year 1. Please note there is no guarantee of a place on application to Year 1 as it will depend on whether there are other applicants and the numbers on roll.
  - request delayed admission. This means parents may request their child is admitted out of their normal age group - to Reception rather than Year 1 following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday (see 5.3).
- 5.3 If a parent requests admission to Reception not Year 1 all relevant factors will be considered in assessing the request and parents would be expected to provide evidence to show that admission to Reception was in the child's best interests.
- 5.4 Parents seeking to delay their child's admission into school should contact the Chair of the School's Admissions Committee in writing at the School office in the autumn term in the year prior to the normal entry in the following September in order for the Admission Committee to make the decision. Decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case. This will take into account parents' views and information about the child's

academic, social and emotional development. The views of the head teacher of the School will be taken into account.

- 5.5 Decisions made by the Admissions Committee will be clearly set out. In these circumstances, where the Admissions Committee agree to a child being admitted to Reception on a delayed basis (i.e. out of the normal age group), an application will need to be made in the usual way. Please note that even where it is agreed that admission may be delayed there is no guarantee of a place at The Pochin School as the application will be processed as part of the main admission round and on the basis of determined admission arrangements.
- 5.6 Parents' statutory right to appeal against or refusal of a place at The Pochin School does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not for their preferred age group.

## **6. In-Year (mid-term) Transfers (all year groups)**

- 6.1 All mid-term transfer requests (in-catchment included) will be co-ordinated through Leicestershire's School Admissions Service, commissioned on behalf of the schools Admission Committee.
- 6.2 Before applying parents are encouraged to arrange to visit the school after which the parent should complete the Local Authority's online Common Application Form (paper forms are available on request).
- 6.3 Leicestershire School Admissions Service on receiving a request for The Pochin School outside the normal transfer cycle:
- contacts The Pochin School to confirm numbers in the requested year group
  - allocates a place if there is space available within the year group (which will be based on whether there are fewer than 20 pupils in that year group) or will refuse the place and inform parent their right of appeal in accordance with the school's appeals code. The school must demonstrate prejudice above the admission number being reached.
- 6.4 The aim wherever possible is to always process mid-term applications within 10 working days (5 days if child is indicated as looked after or previously looked after), delays may occur where further evidence or proof is required i.e. proof of house purchase, tenancy agreement, council tax payment notification for proof of address.
- 6.5 Where the mid-term application is made through the Local Authority the decision letter will either offer the place or refuse the place because the school is full. A refusal letter will also explain to the parent their right to appeal, and how they should do this.
- 6.6 Parents have the right to apply for a place out of the normal age range for in year applications. The process is as set out in paragraph 5.4. You will need to write to the Chair of the Admissions Committee at The Pochin School office. Parents would be expected to provide evidence to show that admission to out of the normal age group was in the child's best interests. Decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case. This will take into account parents' views and information

about the child’s academic, social and emotional development. The views of the head teacher of the School will be taken into account. Decisions made by the Admissions Committee will be clearly set out.

## **7. Oversubscription Criteria**

7.1 The Pochin School applies oversubscription criteria to determine priority where the number of applications exceeds the PAN (see note i below). The oversubscription criteria are set out in paragraph 7.2 below.

7.2

<b>1st</b>	Children who are looked after and those children who were previously looked after children. (See note ii).
<b>2nd</b>	Pupils who live in the catchment area at the time of application and admission (See note iii and paragraph 12.4)
<b>3rd</b>	Pupils who will have an older brother or sister attending <b>The Pochin School</b> at the same time who live in the same house. This will <u>not</u> apply to mid term admissions in year groups where the admission number has been reached. (See notes iv and v).
<b>4th</b>	Pupils who are attending The Pochin Pre-School at point of application (see note v). Parents must make a separate application for a place at The Pochin School.
<b>5th</b>	Pupils who have a serious medical condition or exceptional social or domestic needs that make it essential they attend the school. (Professional documentation confirming the situation must be submitted with the application). (See note vi).
<b>6th</b>	Pupils living nearest to the school measured in a straight line distance ( <i>See note vii</i> )

The Pochin School will need to ask for proof of the following when applying, the oversubscribed criteria

- Address
- Child’s date of birth
- Copy of an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order and letter from the LA that last looked after the child confirming that he or she was looked after immediately prior to that order being made.

### **Notes:**

- i. The Pochin School’s PAN is limited to 20 only. Where more than 20 applications for The Pochin School are received for any one year group, the above criteria will

be used to rank the 20 places. Anyone refused a place will have the right to appeal. The above criteria are used in priority order.

- ii. Children looked after by the Local Authority and those children who were previously looked after children, but ceased to be so on being adopted (or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order) are considered under this criterion. In such circumstances a letter from the last local authority in which the child was looked after will be required.
- iii. The child's place of residence is taken to be the parental home. For the purpose of processing a school application a single home address must be used. The child's place of residence is taken to be the parental home at which they normally reside. Where parents claim equal or dual residency they must prioritise one address over the other, or risk the application not being processed.
- iv. The term "brother or sister" includes step or half brother or sister or legally adopted child being regarded as the brother or sister.
- v. If criterion 4 is used, priority will be given to children who were attending The Pochin Pre-School during the previous Autumn term. In the event that more than one child has attended, criteria 6 will be used to allocate spaces. A separate application must be made to The Pochin School even if the child attends The Pochin Pre-School.
- vi. If criterion 5 is used, professional supporting documentation from the Lead Professional must be supplied and must be submitted with the application. The following list are the areas that are considered exceptional:-
  - Crown Servants
  - Children subject to Child Protection Plans
  - Hard to place children – who fall under the Fair Access Protocol
  - Parents suffering domestic violence (This is dependent on documentary evidence by a lead professional)
  - A child for who transfer to the catchment area school would involve attending a different school until he/she is the right age for transfer. (This is dependent on the child having attended the present school for at least a year.)

Each case will be assessed on its individual merits.

- vii. For Criterion 6 above, measurement of distance is in a straight line from the centre point of the home property to the school's main designated front gate, using a computerized mapping system. Where the computerised mapping system throws up an equality of distance for more than one child (who do not have the same home address) the final tie breaker will be by drawing lots overseen by a person independent of The Pochin School and the Trust.

- viii If there is a tie using the above criteria, the final tie-breaker will be drawing lots witnessed by an independent officer independent of The Pochin School and the Trust.

## **8. Exceeding the Published Admission Number (PAN)**

- 8.1 At the time of first-time admission decisions, if there are more requests for in catchment children than the PAN, the PAN will **NOT** be exceeded to accommodate the catchment area children.
- 8.2 The PAN of 20 applies to all year groups and will **NOT** be exceeded in any year group by the admission of out-of-catchment pupils. If there are more out-of-catchment requests than places available within the PAN, places will be allocated up to PAN according to the priority criteria, with any outstanding requests refused.
- 8.3 Parents whose requests are refused have a right to appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel whose decisions can override The Pochin School policy.
- 8.4 As previously stated The Pochin School may admit above the PAN where one sibling of children in multiple births has a place but the other siblings do not. These situations should be viewed as exceptional and not as precedents for subsequent years or for other schools.
- 8.5 There will be no appeal process to challenge the Local Authority's decision by a school or governing body. The Pochin School commissions the LA to undertake all appeals on its behalf.

## **9. Withdrawing an offer or a place**

- 9.1 Leicestershire School Admissions in accordance with its co-ordinating scheme on behalf The Pochin School will withdraw the offer if:
- It has been offered in error
  - A parent has not taken up the place within 20 school days and not responded within this reasonable period of time indicating they want the place.
  - It is established that the offer was obtained through fraudulent or an intentionally misleading application.
  - The Pochin School will not withdraw a place once a child has started at The Pochin, except where it comes to light that place was fraudulently obtained.
- 9.2 In the normal admissions round (i.e. when offers are made for first-time admissions on national offer date 16th April) it will be assumed by the Local Authority that the offer is accepted unless it is refused. Once the academic year begins the school place should be taken up within 20 (school) days. If not, The Pochin School will afford the parent a

reasonable time, (the regulations state 2 weeks) plus additional 7 days for a reminder, to accept the offered place. If no acceptance is received the offered place may be withdrawn.

9.3 The Pochin School will be vigilant about fraudulent applications and will ask for sight of the child's short birth certificate before admission, as well as proof of residency.

## **10. Miscellaneous**

### Children who are Looked After or were previously Looked After and now adopted

- 10.1 Children looked after by a Local Authority and those children who were previously looked after children, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order) are considered under high priority in Leicestershire.
- 10.2 In such circumstance proof must be a letter from the last Local Authority that looked after the child.

### Catchment area definition and how to find out the catchment area school for your home address

- 10.3 The child's full **HOME ADDRESS** determines whether it is in the catchment area for The Pochin School. There is a map annexed to this admission policy which sets out the catchment area.

If you wish to know if your home address falls in The Pochin School's catchment area please consult the map but for further clarification you may contact either The Pochin School reception or the Local Authority's Customer Service Centre in the first instance – (0116) 4556684.

### Home Address / Parental Proof of Residence

- 10.4 The Pochin School may seek documentary evidence of residence from parents where the matter is unclear.

Where a child lives for part of the week with one parent and for part of the week with the other parent, the address recognised by the Council for the purposes of an application for a school place is the one where the child lives for the majority of the school week – Monday to Friday.

Where the weekly residence arrangement varies, and a child stays with both parents, on average, for the same amount of time during the school week over a four-week period, and one parent lives in another school catchment, the parents will be required by the Council to choose one address for the purposes completing a school application. Where parents cannot agree a single address, the Council will require parents to seek a Court Order to determine which address is to be used.



Where any claimed residence arrangement is found to be false, and the child is yet to start at the allocated school, the place will be withdrawn as it will be considered obtaining the school place on fraudulent and / or misleading grounds. In such circumstances the application will be considered afresh and determined at that time based on the correct information.

#### 10.5 Verification of address:

Parent's written confirmation and declarations will be sought regarding important information. Parents will be asked to verify in writing that they are residing at the address claimed and intend to remain in the catchment area. Places will be withdrawn if such declarations are subsequently found to be incorrect or not honoured and the school is oversubscribed.

- Documentary evidence such as Council Tax payment, Rental agreement or, Child Benefit letter information will be sought.
- Claims of new residence in a school's catchment area will be judged on circumstances and the documents provided; completion of both sale and purchase, where relevant, are normally necessary before a place is allocated.
- Officers from the LA Admissions may be authorised to visit addresses to clarify whether families are living at the addresses claimed. Such visits will be undertaken in a reasonable fashion, by officers carrying appropriate identification.

#### 10.6 Exceptional circumstances:

The School will always give serious consideration to any exceptional situations, such as where a family has been forced by circumstance to:

- move into temporary accommodation, having lost their previous residence, or
- where there is a long-term separation between the parents and the child spends time in the week at two separate parent addresses.

#### 10.7 The following are generally not accepted as the child's Home Address:

- Purchase of a second property by a family, while the first property is retained
- Rented accommodation, while a previous property is retained.
- Offers or exchange of contracts on intended purchases or sales of properties.
- Informal accommodation arrangements with friends or relatives.

### **11. Over-subscription Lists**

Parents whose children have not been offered a place at The Pochin School will automatically be added to the school's oversubscription (waiting) list (OSL). The OSL for admission will remain open until the 31st December in the admission year.

The OSL is ranked using over subscription criteria listed (see para 7.2). The OSL may change, this means that a child waiting list position during the year could go 'up' or 'down'. The OSL makes no

distinction between on time or late applications. The Pochin School will not hold over subscription lists for mid-term transfers.

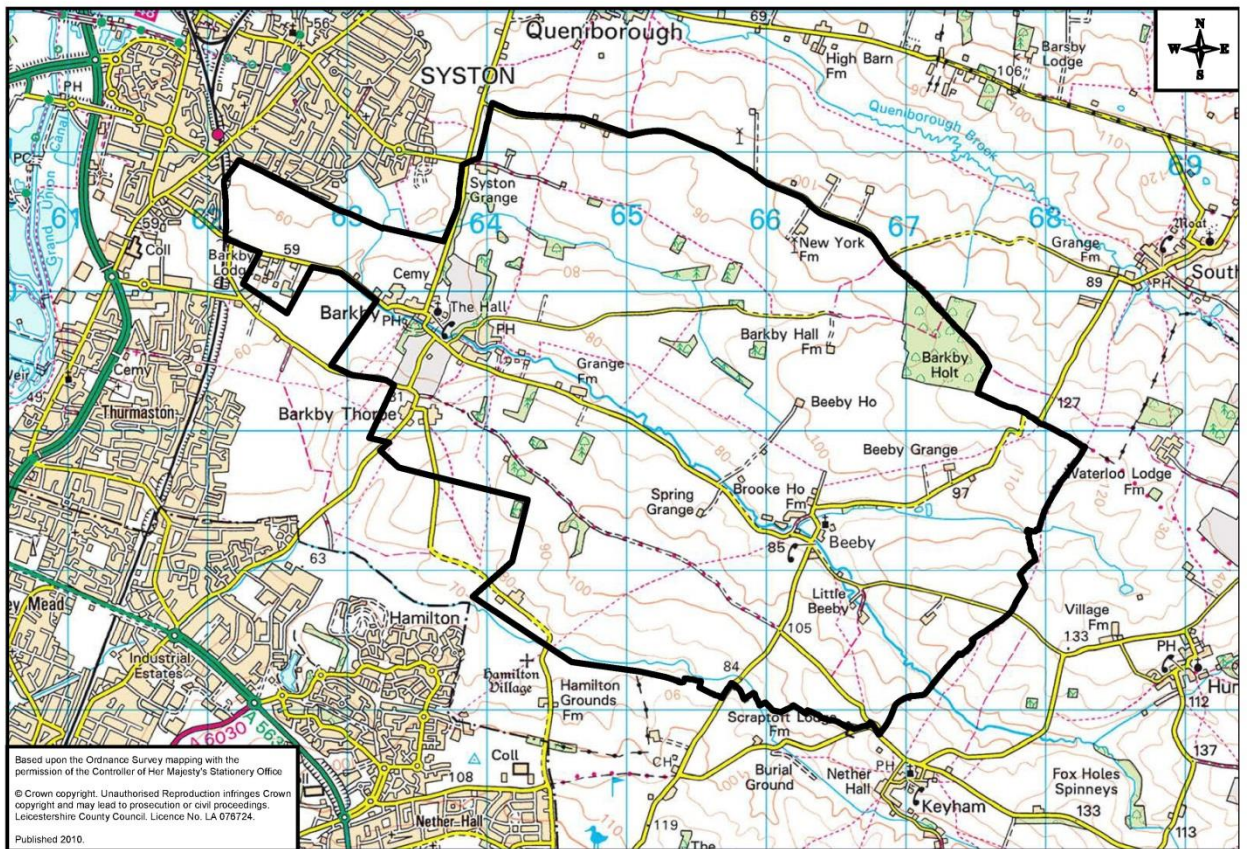
### **12. Late Requests, Appeals and Further Appeals**

- 12.1 Late requests for school places, e.g. those received after a closing date, will be considered after on time applications have been processed.
- 12.2 The Pochin School commissions the LA to undertake the arrangements and administration of all admission Appeals
- 12.3 Appellants do not have the right to a second appeal in respect of the same school for the same academic year unless a second application has been accepted on the basis that there has been a significant exceptional or material change in circumstances of the parent, child or school. Where the second application has been accepted and then rejected, a second right of appeal may lie.

### **13. Significant Change of Circumstances**

- 13.1 The School may consider fresh information in support of a parental preference for a school place, even if it is received at a late stage in the admissions process.
- 13.2 Where the school's places have all been allocated, the School will be unable to offer a place, but may give higher priority to the parent's request if a place subsequently becomes available, according to the family's circumstances, in accordance with the priority criteria.
- 13.3 Verification, e.g. from professional persons or bodies, may be sought from the parent to confirm a change of circumstances. In such circumstances it remains the parent's duty to gather and provide the evidence.

#### 14. The Pochin School Catchment Map:



This policy was acknowledged by the Local Advisory Board on 30 November 2020.

**NOTE:** The School's Admissions Committee is The Pochin School's Local Advisory Board.