PENK VALLEY ACADEMY TRUST

Admission Arrangements for the Academic Year 2025/2026 Policy

Adopted by Trustees:	
Signed:	
Date:	March 2024
This policy is reviewed annually by the Trust Board.	
Review date:	January 2025

COLLABORATION CHALLENGE CURIOSITY CARE

POLICY INFORMATION

Date of last review:	January 2024	**Review period:**	Annually
Date ratified by Trustees:	18/03/24	**Trustee committee responsible:**	Trust Board
Policy owner:	Chief Executive Officer	**Executive team member responsible:**	Chief Executive Officer

Reviews/revisions

Review date	Changes made	By whom
February 2023 2024	New policy format. Dates changed to 2024/25 throughout the document. Dates changed to 2025/26 throughout the document. St Mary and St Chad changes made i.e. changed to the September after their 2nd birthday and start dates.	Chief Executive Officer Chief Executive Officer

Equality and GDPR

All Penk Valley Academy Trust policies should be read in conjunction with our Equal Opportunities and GDPR policies.

Statement of principle – Equality

We will take all possible steps to ensure that this policy does not discriminate, either directly or indirectly against any individual or group of individuals. When compiling, monitoring and reviewing the policy we will consider the likely impact on the promotion of all aspects of equality as described in the Equality Act 2010.

Statement of principle – GDPR

Penk Valley Academy Trust recognises the serious issues that can occur as a consequence in failing to protect an individual adult's or child's personal and sensitive data. These include emotional distress, physical safety, child protection, loss of assets, fraud and other criminal acts.

Penk Valley Academy Trust is therefore committed to the protection of all personal and sensitive data for which it holds responsibility as the Data Controller and the handling of such data in line with the data protection principles and the Data Protection Act (DPA)/GDPR.

Penk Valley Academy Trust will be referred to as **PVAT** for the remainder of the document which includes all schools who are members of PVAT, business operations and centralised services.

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR PVAT FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2025/2026 POLICY

1. Aim

This policy sets out the admissions arrangements for PVAT for the Academic Year 2025/26.

2. Nursery Provision: Academic Year 2025/2026

Children can be admitted from:

- MARSHBROOK FIRST SCHOOL - the half term after their 2nd birthday.
- PRINCEFIELD FIRST SCHOOL - the term in which they are 3.
- ST JOHN'S CofE FIRST SCHOOL - the term in which they are 3.
- ST MARY & CHAD CofE FIRST SCHOOL - the September after their 2nd birthday*.

According to the terms of registration with OFSTED. Places are allocated on a yearly/termly/half termly basis, on receipt of the registration form.

Registration cut off dates are:

Start Date	Registration Cut of Date (except St Mary & St Chad)
Autumn 1 (September)	End of Summer Term 1 (May)
Autumn 2 (October) Marshbrook and St Mary and St Chad only*	End of Summer Term 2 (July)
Spring 1 (January)	End of Autumn Term 1 (October)
Spring 2 (February) Marshbrook and St Mary and St Chad only*	End of Autumn Term 2 (December)
Summer 1 (May)	End of Spring Term 1 (February)
Summer 2 (June) Marshbrook and St Mary and St Chad only*	End of Spring Term 2 (March/April)

Minor changes confirmed January 2024 at the request of the DFE.

It is PVAT's policy to try and meet parents' wishes where possible, however in some cases, there may be more applications for a particular setting than there are places.

If the total number of preferences for admission to a Nursery age setting exceeds the number of available places, then the oversubscription criteria (see page 5 and 6) will be applied.

3. Admission Arrangements for First, Middle and High Schools Normal Age of Entry: Academic Year 2025/2026

Full time places in First School, (Reception classes) will be available in September of the Academic Year within which the child becomes five years old.

Full time places in Middle School, (Year 5 classes) will be available in September of the Academic Year within which the child becomes ten years old.

Full time places in The Rural Enterprise Academy, (Year 7 classes) will be available in September of the Academic Year within which the child becomes twelve years old.

Full time places in Wolgarston High School, (Year 9 classes) will be available in September of the Academic Year within which the child becomes fourteen years old.

Although parents have the right to express a preference for the school that they wish their child to attend, there is no guarantee of a place being offered at their preferred school.

It is PVAT's policy to try and meet parents' wishes where possible, however, in some cases there may be more applications for a particular school than there are places available. If the total number of preferences for admission to a school exceeds the school's Published Admission Number (PAN), admission to oversubscribed PVAT school's will be determined by the oversubscription criteria (see page 5 and 6)

4. Deferred Entry to Reception Class

Parents may request that their child be admitted to Reception class on a part-time basis, or that their child be admitted to school later in the same Academic Year until the child reaches compulsory school age (i.e. beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday). The effect is that the place will be held for the child in Reception and is not available to be offered to any other child within the same Academic Year in which it has been offered. Before deciding whether to defer their child's entry to school, parents should visit their preferred school(s) to clarify how they cater for the youngest children in Reception and how the needs of these children are met as they move up through the school.

5. Admission Outside of the Normal Age Group

Parents may seek to apply for their child's admission to school outside of their normal age group, for example if the child is exceptionally gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

In addition, the parents of summer born children entering First School, may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted outside of their normal age group to Reception rather than Year 1.

These parents will need to make an application alongside children applying at the normal age which should explain why it is in the child's best interest to be admitted outside of their normal age which may include information such as professional evidence as to why this is the case and why an exception should be made in the case of the child. A decision as to whether this is an appropriate course of action will be made by PVAT who will take into account the circumstances of the case and views of the Headteacher of the school concerned. Parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular year group.

6. Late Applications to First, Middle and High Schools

Preferences received after the closing date will be considered alongside those applicants who applied on time wherever possible. Where it is not practicable because places have already been allocated, or are shortly to be allocated, then late preferences will be considered only after those that were made before this point.

A late application does not affect the right of appeal or the right to be placed on a school's waiting list.

7. Repeat Applications

Parents do not have the right to a second appeal in respect of the same school for the same Academic Year unless, in exceptional circumstances, the Local Authority has accepted a second application from the appellant because of a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school but still refused admission.

8. "In-Year Admission" Arrangements

Parents or carers seeking to be admitted to a PVAT school may make an application directly to the preferred school using the appropriate application form. This application will be processed in line with the procedure outlined in the determined admission arrangements and parents and carers need to be aware that in the case of transfers between local schools, any date set for joining the new school may be after the next term or half term holiday and those parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that their child continues to receive appropriate education in the interim.

Sixth Form Admission Arrangements applications for admission to the Sixth Form will be dealt with by the school in accordance with the school's published Admission Arrangements. Each year a Sixth Form Prospectus is published providing detailed information on the Admission policy including minimum entry requirements for particular courses.

Children already in Year 11 at Wolgarston High School or The Rural Enterprise Academy will be required to apply formally for places in Year 12 but should have reached the minimum entry qualifications / predications for admission into the sixth form, details of which are included in the Sixth Form Prospectus.

External applicants will not be refused the opportunity to make an application, or told that they can only be placed on a waiting list rather than make a formal application.

Any applicant refused a place in Year 12 is entitled to make an appeal to an independent appeal panel whether the child is already attending the school or is an external candidate. Minimum entry requirements are the same for internal and external applicants.

Schools must not interview children or their families for entry to Year 12, although meetings can be held to provide advice on options and entry requirements for particular courses. Entry must not be dependent on attendance, behaviour record or perceptions of attitude or motivation. **9. Oversubscription Criteria**

9.1

Children in care and children who ceased to be in care because they were adopted (or became subject to a Child Arrangements Order or Special Guardianship Order), including those children who appear (to the Admission Authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

9.2

Children who satisfy both of the following tests:

- Test 1: the child is distinguished from the great majority of other applicants either on their own individual medical grounds or by other exceptional circumstances.

  Medical grounds must be supported by a medical report (obtained by the applicant and provided at the point of application). This report must clearly justify, for health reasons only, why it is better for the child's health to attend the preferred PVAT setting/school rather than any other setting/school.
  Exceptional circumstances must relate to the choice of setting/school and the individual child, i.e. the circumstances of the child, not the specific economic or social circumstances of the parent/carer, and be supported by a professional report (obtained by the applicant and provided at the point of application), e.g. social worker, justifying why it is better for the child to attend the preferred PVAT setting/school rather than any other setting/school.

  and

- Test 2: the child would suffer hardship if they were unable to attend the preferred PVAT setting/school. Hardship means severe suffering of any kind, not merely difficulty or inconvenience, which is likely to be experienced as a result of the child attending a different school. Applicants must provide detailed information about both the type and severity of any likely hardship at the time of application.

9.3

Children who have an elder brother or sister in attendance at the preferred school/setting and who will still be attending the school at the time of the proposed admission date. (For admission purposes, a brother or sister is a child who lives at the same address and either: have one or both natural parents in common; are related by a parent's marriage; are adopted or fostered by a common parent or are unrelated children who live at the same address, whose parents live as partners).

9.4

For applications to all schools except The Rural Enterprise Academy: children living within the defined catchment or cluster area of the preferred PVAT setting/school.

9.5

For applications to Penkridge Middle School to Year 5: children in Year 4 who attend at the time of application one of the feeder First Schools.

For applications to Wolgarston High School to Year 9: children in Year 8 who attend at the time of application one of the feeder Middle Schools.

9.6

The children of any member staff employed by the preferred school on a permanent contract or the children of any member of staff employed by the preferred school on a fixed-term or casual contract with a period of continuous service with PVAT of a minimum of two years on the closing day of applications.

9.7

Other children arranged in order of priority according to how near their home addresses are to the main gate of the preferred setting/school, determined by a straight-line measurement as calculated using the Local Authority's Geographical Information System.

Where it is not possible to accommodate all children applying for places within a particular category then the parents can seek alternative available places.

10. Additional Notes

The feeder First School's are: Princefield First School, Marshbrook First School, St. Michael's First School (Penkridge) and St Leonard's First School (Dunston).

The feeder Middle School's are: Penkridge Middle School and Brewood Middle School.

Schools in PVAT are:

- Wolgarston High School
- The Rural Enterprise Academy
- Penkridge Middle School
- Marshbrook First School
- Princefield First School
- St. John's CofE First School, Bishopswood
- St. Mary & St Chad CofE First School, Brewood

Copies of catchment area maps are available from the Local Authority or individual schools. Please note, there is no catchment area for The Rural Enterprise Academy.

There is no charge or cost related to the admission of a child to a school.

Attendance at a particular Nursery setting, First School or Middle School will not guarantee admission to any particular Reception class, Middle School or High School or give any advantage to the child's application for Reception. Parents must make a separate application for admission to Reception at the appropriate time.

The requirement for PVAT to meet the infant class size legislation may result in the refusal of catchment area or sibling applications where a class has already reached its limit of 30 pupils. However, as an exception, PVAT will give careful consideration to offering places above the admission number to applications from children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted even when there are no other vacant places.

Admissions to First, Middle and High Schools are administered through the Local Authority Coordinated Admission Scheme and preferences will be processed centrally by the School Admissions and Transport Service (as for maintained schools).

In accordance with legislation, children who have a statutory statement of special educational need or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that names a particular Nursery setting or school must be admitted to that Nursery/school. This will reduce the amount of places available to other applicants.

Children in Care means children who are in the care of, or provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in accordance with section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989 and who is (a) in care of a Local Authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see definition in Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school. This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders). Child Arrangements Orders are defined in s.8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by s.12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child Arrangement Orders replace Residence Orders and any Residence Order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a Child Arrangements Order. 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).

It is the applicant's responsibility to provide any supportive information required in order for the application to be assessed against the published admissions criteria, PVAT will not seek to obtain this information on behalf of the applicant.

The Local Authority uses a Geographical Information System (GIS) to calculate home to school distances in miles. The measurement is calculated using Ordnance Survey (OS) data from an applicant's home address to the main front gate of the school. The coordinates of an applicant's home address is determined and provided by the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and OS Address Point data.

The home address is considered to be the child's along with their parent/carer's main and genuine principal place of residence at the time of the allocation of places i.e. where they are normally and regularly living. If a child is resident with friends or relatives (for reasons other than legal guardianship) the friend or relatives address will not be considered for allocation purposes.

If a child's home address changes during the admissions process it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform PVAT immediately. Where there is a proposed house move taking place during the admissions process PVAT will only accept the revised address for purposes of allocation, where parents/carers can provide sufficient evidence of a permanent move, before it will be taken into account for allocation purposes on the offer date.

If a place is offered on the basis of an address that is subsequently found to be different from the child's normal and permanent home address at the time of allocation of places, then that place may be withdrawn.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with both parents for part of the school week, parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes.

It is expected that parents will agree on school places before an application is made, and it may be necessary to request evidence from you to confirm that this is the case. PVAT is not in a position to

intervene in disputes between parents over school applications and will request that these are resolved privately.

If there are a limited number of spaces available and we cannot distinguish between applicants using the criteria listed, such as in the case of children who live in the same block of flats or are the result of a multiple birth, then the child or children who will be offered the available spaces will be randomly selected. This process will be independently verified.

Unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria stated above and not based on the date their application was received.

Waiting lists will be held until the end of the Autumn term of the year of admission. However, for cases where the infant class size regulations apply, the waiting list will operate until the cohort concerned leaves Year 2. If places become available after allocation dates, they will be offered according to the child at the top of the waiting list. Waiting lists will remain active until individual children move to the next phase of their education.

Inclusion on a school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available at the preferred school.

A child's position on a waiting list is not fixed and is subject to change during the year, i.e. they can go up or down the list since each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the oversubscription criteria.

Children who are subject of a direction by a Local Authority to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those on the waiting list.

11. Right to Appeal

There is no statutory right of appeal for admission to a Nursery setting. Any disputes over the administration of the policy will be dealt with by PVAT Trustees complaints procedure.

Parents and in some circumstances children applying for places in First, Middle or High Schools have the right to appeal against PVAT's decision to refuse admission. For further information please refer to the DfE Appeals Code https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schooladmissions-appeals-code

12. Published Admission Numbers (PAN) for PVAT schools 2025/2026

DFE No.	School	PAN 2025/2026
2323	Marshbrook First School	30
2362	Princefield First School	45
3030	St John's CofE (VC) First School, Bishopswood	15
3034	St Mary and St Chad CofE (VC) First School, Brewood	30
4128	Penkridge Middle School	125

4100	Wolgarston High School	220
4007	The Rural Enterprise Academy	60

The details of and timetable for the Coordinated Admission Scheme 2025/26 can be found on the Staffordshire County Council website.