

Consultation on Admission Arrangements to Pele Trust schools for the 2021-22 academic year

Consultation period (6 weeks)

Start: 1 October 2019

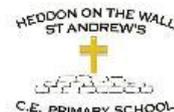
End: 26 November 2019 (4.00pm)

Pele Trust welcome comments on the Admissions policy proposal.

Responding to the consultation

Email responses to: admissions@peletrust.org.uk

Written responses to: Carol Wilson, Ponteland High School, Callerton Lane, Ponteland, NE20 9EY



Consultation on Admission Arrangements for Pele Trust schools for the 2021-22 academic year

Background

Pele Trust was formed on 1 February 2019 and consists of five primary schools and one secondary school: Belsay Primary; Darras Hall Primary; Heddon St. Andrews Primary; Ponteland Primary; Richard Coates CE School and Ponteland High School.

Pele Trust is the Admissions Authority for each of the schools within the Trust. Due to the conversion date this is the first opportunity for the Directors to formally consult on their proposed admission arrangements and reflects their desire to ensure a reasonable, clear, objective and procedurally fair Admissions Policy that supports the aims of the Trust and serves our local community and complies with all relevant legislation.

Consultation Process

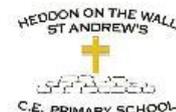
Admission Authorities have a duty to consult on their admission arrangements in advance of the year of intake. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 provides the DfE with the right to issue a statutory School Admissions Code, setting out statutory guidance and imposing mandatory requirements and guidelines in relation to school admissions (known as the "Code"). The purpose of the Code is to ensure that all school places are allocated and offered in an open and fair way.

As a multi-academy trust, Pele Trust is the Admission Authority and must ensure that its determined admission arrangements comply with the mandatory provisions of the Code and the law relating to admissions. In order to promote fair access to educational opportunities, admission arrangements are subject to scrutiny by the Schools Adjudicator who has the power to impose arrangements on those authorities that do not meet the requirements of the Code.

Consultation must take place for a minimum of 6 weeks between 1 October and 31 January in the determination year, therefore consultation on our proposal will begin on Tuesday 1 October 2019 and end on 26 November 2019.

The following groups are being consulted;

- Northumberland County Council (School Admissions team)
- Parents of all Pele Trust schools
- Parents with children in other Ponteland Partnership schools, i.e. Stamfordham Primary, Whalton Primary and Ponteland Community Middle School



- Headteachers and Academy Committee members of Pele Trust schools
- Governors/Trustees and Headteachers in other Ponteland Partnership schools, i.e. Stamfordham Primary, Whalton Primary and Ponteland Community Middle School
- Co-ordinating neighbouring authorities, i.e. Newcastle Local Authority
- Other relevant groups, e.g. preschool settings

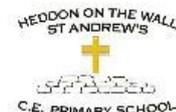
All consultation documents are displayed on the websites of Pele Trust schools, namely Belsay Primary; Darras Hall Primary; Heddon St. Andrews Primary; Ponteland Primary; Richard Coates CE School and Ponteland High School.

Northumberland County Council also operates a co-ordinated scheme with Voluntary Aided Schools, Trust Schools and Academies by acting as a clearing house for school admissions. Pele Trust will remain part of these co-ordinated arrangements. Copies of documents relating to Voluntary Aided schools, Trusts, Academies and other foundation schools will be published on the County Council website

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/School-admissions-places-appeals-1.aspx>

Rationale for the Consultation

1. The Board of Directors have a duty to consult on their proposals for Admissions Arrangements and this is the first opportunity to do so since the Trust was formed. Consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the Code and relevant legislation.
2. We are keen to ensure that our schools serve the needs of our local community and that children can continue their education journey within our Trust schools
3. Continuity of Education is a high priority in our proposed admissions policy because:
 - a. Our aim is to provide a clear, stable and secure pathway for parents within our Trust schools as their child moves from primary to secondary school
 - b. Our schools have formed a Multi Academy Trust based on a shared vision and set of values that direct our work together
 - c. We have a Trust-wide school improvement strategy focusing on making best use of shared resources, staffing and facilities to benefit Trust schools
 - d. We want children within Pele Trust to benefit from:
 - i. A coherent curriculum that is planned progressively across our primary and secondary schools supporting effective transition
 - ii. A consistent approach to assessment and use of pupil data reinforced through regular staff training and peer review



- iii. Common approaches to teaching and learning that support highly effective transition from primary to secondary school

Admissions Procedure - How and when to apply

The standard admission points for Pele Trust schools are entry to the primary phase in the Reception year and entry to the secondary phase in Year 7. These places are allocated for the start of the academic year in September. Applications should be made through Northumberland County Council's online portal. The deadline for secondary places is 31 October in the year prior to admission. For reception places the deadline is 31 January in the year of admission. Applications received after these dates will be classed as late applications and will be processed after all of the applications received on time.

Applications for places in other year groups, or after the start of the academic year, can be made at any time.

Primary schools also offer nursery places. Parents and carers should note that the allocation of Reception places does not take into account attendance at any specific nursery class or school. Children in the nursery class of the school will not be given priority nor are they guaranteed a Reception place in the main school.

Admission of children outside their normal year group

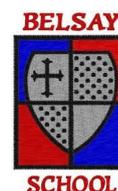
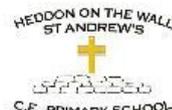
Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group if they feel their child is not ready to start school with their peers. Requests must be submitted in writing to the Headteacher of the school and include any supporting evidence from relevant professionals. The decision to agree with the request and offer a place will have to be confirmed by the Board of Directors.

Admissions Policy

The Board of Directors of Pele Trust is the Admission Authority and is obliged to admit all applicants to a particular school within Pele Trust provided these do not exceed the school's Published Admission Number (PAN).

The Published Admission Number of each school is:

Belsay:	15
Darras Hall:	60
Heddon St. Andrews:	30
Ponteland Primary:	60



Richard Coates: 60
 Ponteland High School: 240 (Y7)

NB: Please note that Ponteland High School is usually oversubscribed with significantly more first choice requests for places than the number available.

If applications for places at a particular school exceed the Published Admission Number, priority is given in accordance with the criteria set out below.

Oversubscription criteria (Pele Trust primary schools)

Applicable to Belsay Primary; Darras Hall Primary; Heddon St. Andrews Primary; Ponteland Primary; Richard Coates CE School

1. Special Educational Need

- a. Children with an Education and Health Care Plan that names the school on the statement, and where the school is most appropriate to meet those needs, must be given admission to that school before other applicants

2. Looked After Children

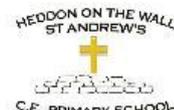
- a. A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order⁷¹. A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

3. Catchment area

- a. Children living within the catchment area of the school (defined as those children who permanently reside in NE15, NE18, NE19, NE20 and NE61 postcodes) and those on whose behalf firm evidence is presented that they will be living in the catchment area by the appropriate admission date

4. Exceptional medical or social need

- a. Students on whose behalf evidence of exceptional medical or exceptional social need is presented. For example, where one or both parents of the child have a disability that may make travel to a school that is further away difficult. Evidence must be supported by a



written statement by a professionally involved third party, such as a doctor or a social worker

5. Siblings

- a. Students who have an older brother or sister who already attends the same Pele Trust school and who is expected to be on roll at the school at the time of admission.
- b. For the purpose of admissions siblings are deemed to be brothers and sisters, step brothers and sisters, adopted brothers and sisters and other children who reside permanently in the household and are treated as siblings.

6. Children of staff employed within Pele Trust

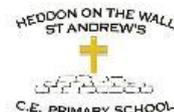
- a. Children of staff employed within a Pele Trust school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made and/or the member of staff has been recruited to fill a post where there is a demonstrable skill shortage, and/or the member of staff has relocated.

7. Faith consideration (*Richard Coates CE School only*)

- a. *Children whose parents are committed members of the Church of England, or any other Christian Church, and who regularly and frequently attend. (NB: **Regularly and frequently** is defined as attendance at least once per month over the last twelve months. It is sufficient for just one parent/carer to attend)*

8. Distance

- a. Distance from the front door of the child's home to the main gate of the school will be the deciding factor with preference being given to those whose home address is nearest to the school as measured in a straight line ('as the crow flies').
- b. The distance checker is contained within the EMS school admissions software using GIS data. Distance checking is an integral function within the school admissions software ensuring consistency in measurement. This will be based on the child's address.
- c. Where the last place to be allocated would mean that a multiple birth sibling group, i.e. twins, triplets, or other multiple birth sibling groups would be split, the sibling group will be given priority over other children. Otherwise, if only one final place can be offered, and two applicants live equidistant from the Academy, the LA's system of random allocation will apply as a tie-breaker.



Oversubscription criteria (Pele Trust secondary school)

Applicable to Ponteland High School

1. Special Educational Need

- a. Children with a Statement of Special Educational Need or Education and Health Care Plan that names the school on the statement, and where the school is most appropriate to meet those needs, must be given admission to that school before other applicants

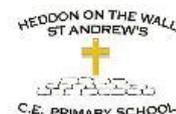
2. Looked After Children

- a. A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order⁷¹. 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).

3. Feeder schools

In descending order of priority

- a. Continuity of Education - Pele Trust primary schools
 - i. Applications on behalf of students which are based on the need to maintain continuity of educational provision within the feeder pattern of Pele Trust schools, i.e. when moving from a Pele Trust primary school to Ponteland High School.
 - ii. To meet the criteria of 'continuity of education' students must have been on the roll of the Pele Trust primary school for a minimum of two full academic years, i.e. from the beginning of Year 5 for entry into Year 7 at Ponteland High School.
 - iii. Exceptions will be made for children who have been in a Pele Trust school for less than two years but who are demonstrably permanently resident within the catchment of the school attended
- b. Local primary schools
 - i. Children living within the catchment area (as defined below) who attend the following primary schools: Stamfordham Primary School, Whalton Church of England Primary School or Ponteland Community Middle School (also known as the Ponteland AcademyTrust).
 - ii. Students living within the catchment area (as defined below) and those on whose behalf written evidence is presented that they will be living in the catchment area (as defined below) by the appropriate admission date. Please note that this



criteria does not prevent any application from students who live outside the catchment area.

- iii. NB: 'Catchment area' means those children who permanently reside in NE15, NE18, NE19, NE20 and NE61 postcodes

4. Exceptional medical or social need

- a. Students on whose behalf evidence of exceptional medical or exceptional social need is presented. For example, where one or both parents of the child have a disability that may make travel to a school that is further away difficult. Evidence must be supported by a written statement by a professionally involved third party, such as a doctor or a social worker

5. Siblings

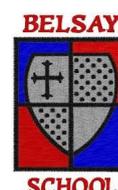
- a. Students who have an older brother or sister who already attends the same Pele Trust school and who is expected to be on roll at the school at the time of admission.
- b. For the purpose of admissions siblings are deemed to be brothers and sisters, step brothers and sisters, adopted brothers and sisters and other children who reside permanently in the household and are treated as siblings.

6. Children of staff employed within Pele Trust

- a. Children of staff employed within a Pele Trust school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made and/or the member of staff has been recruited to fill a post where there is a demonstrable skill shortage, and/or the member of staff has relocated.

7. Distance

- a. Distance from the front door of the child's home to the main gate of the school will be the deciding factor with preference being given to those whose home address is nearest to the school as measured in a straight line ('as the crow flies').
- b. The distance checker is contained within the EMS school admissions software using GIS data. Distance checking is an integral function within the school admissions software ensuring consistency in measurement. This will be based on the child's address.
- c. Where the last place to be allocated would mean that a multiple birth sibling group, i.e. twins, triplets, or other multiple birth sibling groups would be split, the sibling group will be given priority over other children. Otherwise, if only one final place can be offered, and two applicants live equidistant from the Academy, the LA's system of random allocation will apply as a tie-breaker.



Proof of Residence

- Parents will be asked to provide proof of residency in the case of oversubscription
- The address given must be where the child and parents/carers live permanently. It must not be that of a childminder, grandparent, or other relative's address. If parents/carers share custody of a child then the Trust may request to see the court order, child tax credit letter, child benefit letter, medical card, or other evidence to establish where the child is resident for most of the time during weekdays. If there is joint custody for the child, then the address of the parent/carer receiving the child benefit will be used.
- Pele Trust also reserves the right to withdraw a place at a school if information relating to address or any other matter is found to be false.

Additional information

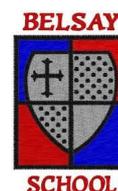
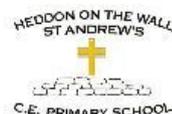
1. Children with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 will be treated no less favourably than other applicants for admission. In respect of children with disabilities, schools are under a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not placed at a substantial disadvantage, and no child will be refused a place on the grounds of disability. A pupil has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
2. In cases where an application for a place has been unsuccessful, parents may request that the child's name be placed on a waiting list for the school in question. Waiting lists can only apply to transfer year groups and will only be maintained until 31st December of the year in question. A place on the waiting list does not affect your right to appeal.
3. Those parents whose application to a school has been unsuccessful will be notified of their right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 gives this right to all parents whose application for a school has been unsuccessful. The decision of an Appeal Panel is binding on both the Admission Authority and the school. The School Admissions Appeals Code can be found on the DfE website at: www.DfE.gov.uk.

Late applications for a Northumberland School Place

If an application is late and is not considered as exceptional, a place will not be offered on 1 March 2021. This will be the case even if you live in the catchment area for the school. If you are a Northumberland resident, you will get an offer on or after 1 March 2020.

In year admissions

The Pele Trust has agreed to operate in accordance with Northumberland County Council's Pupil Placement Panel (Fair Access protocol). To apply for a place during the academic year, parents/carers



should contact Northumberland County Council Admissions Team and request an In-Year Transfer Form. If the year group is full or oversubscribed then a place will be refused, however the applicant will be given the opportunity to appeal. If the parent/carer chooses to appeal for a place then an independent panel will be convened, and any decision made by the panel is legally binding. If the year group is not full and a place is available, the student along with the parent/carer will be invited for a meeting and tour of the school after which an offer will be made unless there is a compelling reason not to do so.

Notification of Places

The formal offer of a place will be issued by the LA who will write to parents/carers on **1 March 2021**.

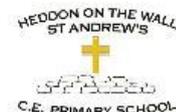
Waiting lists/appeals

Each school within the Trust will maintain a waiting list. Positions on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. There will be no waiting list available after 31 December 2021.

Withdrawing an offer of a place

The Trust reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a place if:

- Parent/carer fails to respond to the offer of a place within the agreed deadline
- It is established that the offer of a place was obtained through fraudulent or misleading application



CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

Consultation on Admission Arrangements for Pele Trust schools for the 2021-22 academic year

NAME (optional):

CONSULTATION GROUP (i.e. Primary school parent, Governor etc)

I agree / disagree with the proposed Admissions Policy (delete as appropriate)

Comments:

Alternative ideas or suggestions?

Completed forms can be returned to:

admissions@peletrust.org.uk or Carol Wilson, Ponteland High School, Callerton Lane, Ponteland, NE20 9EY

