

Aragon Primary School ***'to be the best we can be'***



DRAFT ADMISSIONS POLICY 2024

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1.0 Admissions for September 2024 Entry into Reception

Aragon Primary School is part of the Pan London co-ordinated admissions scheme for primary admissions. Applications must be made through the London Borough of Merton during the period 1st September to 15th January before the child is due to start. The application process is for children born between 1st September 2019 and 31st August 2020. Attendance in the Nursery does not give priority for a place in Reception, therefore a separate application must be made by parents wishing to apply for a place in Reception.

Aragon Primary School will offer full time education to children from the September before their fifth birthday. Parents can defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach the compulsory school age of five years old or, for children born between 1st April and 31st August, not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made.

Where parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which they reach the compulsory school age of five years old.

The key dates for the Reception process, which are set in accordance with the London Borough of Merton's Pan-London Admissions Scheme can be found in the following table:

Tours	Tours are run on a regular basis. Please contact the school office to find out the next scheduled and book a place.
1 st September 2023	Online applications open at www.merton.gov.uk/admissions
15 th January 2024	Closing date for receipt of applications. Applications received after this date will be regarded as late.

9 th February 2024	Latest date that an application that is late for good reason can be accepted. Reasons and evidence must be presented to the Local Authority with the application before this date.
16 th April 2024	Offer letters will be posted to applicants who applied using a paper form. Parents who applied online on-line will be able view the outcome of their application from the evening of 17 th April 2023.
1 st May 2024	Date by which on-line acceptances must be submitted and acceptance slips must be returned.
17 th May 2024	Closing date for submitting an appeal.
June to July 2024	Admission appeals.
September 2024	Pupils start school in Reception.

1.1. Published Admission Number (PAN) for Reception

Aragon Primary School has 90 places available in Reception. Included within this figure are children with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) which names Aragon Primary School, who will be allocated a place before other applicants are considered.

1.2 Order of Priority/Over-Subscription Criteria

Where application for admission exceeds the number of places available the following criteria will be applied in the following order of priority:

Priority 1: Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangement or special guardianship order including those 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. 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).

The children in this priority group will be allocated a place in order of the proximity of their home address to Aragon Primary School, with the closest having the highest priority.

Priority 2: Children with Exceptional Medical or Social Reasons for Attending Aragon Primary School

Children with exceptional medical reasons or exceptional social reasons for attendance at Aragon Primary School, rather than at any other school, where the applicant can show that Aragon Primary School is the most suitable school to meet the child's stated needs, why no other local school could meet those needs, and can outline what the difficulties would be if the child had to attend another school, will be allocated a place.

The children in this priority group will be allocated a place in order of the proximity of their home address to Aragon Primary School, with the closest having the highest priority.

Applications must be in writing and supported by written professional evidence for example, from a Social Worker, Health Visitor, Housing Officer, the Police, Probation Officer, Doctor or Hospital Consultant. Applications will be assessed by the Trustees' Admissions Committee.

The Trustees do not consider childminding or parents' working arrangements as evidence of social need.

Applicants will not be individually advised if their application has been prioritised under this criterion.

Priority 3: Children of Permanent Staff Employed by Aragon Primary School

Children of permanent staff will be allocated a place where;

- the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more consecutive years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made; **or**
- the member of staff employed by the school has been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

The children in this priority group will be allocated a place in order of the proximity of their home address to Aragon Primary School, with the closest having the highest priority.

Priority 4: Children with a Sibling at Aragon Primary School

Children who have a sibling at Aragon Primary School in Years 1 to Year 6 at the time of admission to Reception.

The children in this priority group will be allocated a place in order of the proximity of their home address to Aragon Primary School, with the closest having the highest priority.

The term sibling includes a brother or sister, a half-brother or half-sister, an adopted brother or sister, a step-brother or step-sister, and a child of the parent or carer's partner. In all cases, the sibling must live as part of the same family unit as the child for whom a place is sought, at the same address from Monday to Friday each week.

Priority 5: Children Living in Proximity to Aragon Primary School

Children will be allocated a place on the basis of the proximity of their home address to the school, with those living closer to the school receiving higher priority. The distance is measured in a straight line from the main front door of the school to the child's home address.

1.3 Home Address and Distance Calculation

The home address is where a child normally lives. Where a child lives with parents with shared parental responsibility, each for part of a week, the address where the child lives is determined using a joint declaration from the parents stating the pattern of residence. If a child's residence is split equally between both parents, then the parents will be asked to determine which residential address should be used for the purpose of admission to school. If no joint declaration is received and the residence is split equally by the closing date for applications, the home address will be determined to be the address where the child is registered with the Doctor. However, all evidence will be taken into account. If the residence is not split equally between both parents, then the address used will be the address where the child spends the majority of the school week. In some cases, where distance is a relevant factor in admission decisions, a different address may be used if a family unit owns or has access to another property.

All school admission applications for school places are subject to address checks to ensure school places are allocated fairly and in accordance with published admission arrangements. These checks will be conducted by the home Local Authority using council systems, agencies, fraud departments, other education settings or other resources available to them. Applicants may also be asked to provide additional evidence to support their application.

It is for the home Local Authority to determine if, on the balance of probability, the address given on the application is a child's normal place of residence or is considered to be an address of convenience. Examples of circumstances which may fall under this definition are:

- using the address of a relative, friend, childminder or business
- using the address of a parent with whom the child spends the minority of the week
- use of a rented or second owned property address on a temporary basis which gains advantage in the admissions process whilst still continuing to own or rent an alternative property
- use of a local address whilst the child lives overseas.

In making a decision, the following factors will be taken into account alongside any evidence seen during the address checking process:

- the preference schools and if they are oversubscribed
- if the address being used gains an advantage in the admissions process
- the distance of the properties to the preference schools
- the length of time the arrangement has been in place
- current education providers and services working with the family
- any state benefits in payment.

If an address of convenience is found to have been used, the home Local Authority will determine the address to be used based on the evidence found in their investigations. Where this address or preference school fall within another Local Authority, they may be consulted in the decision. If a fraudulent address or address of convenience is found to have been used after the allocation of places, any offer made will also be withdrawn, and this may be the case even if the child has started school.

Applicants living overseas may only submit an application if they have a linked address within the Local Authority area, and documentary evidence must be supplied to show they will return to the address prior to the September in the year of entry; this address must not be an address of convenience.

All distances will be measured in a straight line from the child's home address with those living closer to the school receiving higher priority. The point within the school to be used in any distance calculation will be the main entrance to the school building. All distances will be measured by a computerised Geographical Information System maintained by the London Borough of Merton Admissions Team.

In the case of multi-dwelling buildings (for example, an apartment block), the distance will be measured from the same GIS determined point in the building regardless of the actual location within the building of the child's home address, with the tie-breaker being applied if more than one application is received for children living in the building (see below).

The address to be used for the initial allocation of places to Reception will be the child's address at the closing date for application. Changes of address up to 10th February 2023 may be considered if there are exceptional reasons for the change, such as if the family has just moved to the area or has returned from abroad.

Any offer is conditional upon the child living at the appropriate address on the relevant date. Parents and carers have a responsibility to notify the Local Authority of any changes of address.

The address to be used for waiting lists, after the initial allocation, and for in-year admission will be the child's current address.

1.4 Tie Breaker

Where the order of priority between two children cannot be established because they live an equal distance from Aragon Primary School, the order of priority in which these children will be allocated places will be decided by the drawing of lots in the presence of a person who is independent of the school.

If the last child to be offered a place (the 30th place in a school with a Published Admission Number of 30 for example), is the child's twin, triplet, etc., will be admitted if they apply at the same time. This is because the School Admissions Code allows schools to admit such siblings as exceptions to the infant class size limit and operate with classes of over 30.

1.5 Notification and Acceptance of Offers

Notification of offers of places will be sent to parents or carers by the Local Authority on the National Offer Date, currently 16th April 2024.

Acceptance of the offer of a place should be received by the Local Authority by the closing date as determined in the offer letter.

1.6 Late Applications up to 16th April 2024

If your application is made after the closing date of 15th January 2024 or you change your existing preferences after this date, your application will be treated as late. A late application will not be considered until after those that were received on time and may jeopardise the possibility of your child being offered a place.

Forms that go missing in the postal system can only be reconsidered if there is proof of postage. Lost forms, where there is no proof of postage, are the responsibility of the applicant. For this reason, parents are advised to apply online wherever possible.

1.7 Waiting Lists

Where there are more children applying than the total number of places available in Reception, a waiting list will be maintained. Children on the Reception waiting list will be ranked in accordance with the order of priority outlined in paragraph 1.2 above and not in relation to the date that the application was received or when the child's name was added to the waiting list. Children with an EHCP which names the school will take priority over children on the waiting list.

The waiting list for Reception admission will be kept open until the end of the Autumn Term 2024. Parents or carers who want their child to remain on the waiting list (which will become the In-Year waiting list) after this date must write to Aragon Primary School by 31st December 2024 confirming their decision, providing the child's name, date of birth and the name of their current school.

After 31st December 2024, parents or carers of children who are not already on the In-Year waiting list must apply for an In-Year admission through Merton Local Authority Admissions, if they wish to apply for a place. In-Year waiting lists will be ranked in the order of priority outlined in paragraph 1.2 above.

Waiting lists for all other year groups will be reviewed at least twice a year. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest. Further information regarding In-Year admissions is contained in paragraph 2.0 below.

Parents and carers should note that their child's position on the waiting list may go down as well as up. This is because other children might be added to the waiting list who have a greater priority for a place in accordance with paragraph 1.2 above, for example, when a new family move into a property which is closer to Aragon Primary School, or when a family who had not previously named Aragon Primary School as a preference, asks for their child to go on the waiting list after the initial allocation date.

1.8 Appeals

Parents or carers have a statutory right of appeal under the School Standards & Framework Act 1998 if a place is not offered.

There is no right of appeal against a decision not to offer a Nursery place.

Appeals for entry in September 2024 must be received by 17th May 2024 at the latest if these are to be heard by the Independent Appeals Committee in June and July 2024. Appeals received after this date, where possible, will be heard by July; however, this will depend on the date the appeal is lodged and cannot be guaranteed.

If you wish to appeal, please contact the Admissions Manager c/o Glenthorne High School.

1.9 Admission of Children Outside Their Normal Age Group

Children are educated in school with others of their age group. However, parents may request that their child is exceptionally admitted outside their age group. The school will decide whether or not the individual child's circumstances make this appropriate, taking into account the child's individual needs and abilities and considering in which year group these needs can best be met. Such requests will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances.

Decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. The Headteacher's views will also be taken into account.

All requests should include recent professional evidence of the child's circumstances which make education outside the age group necessary. Evidence must be of the individual child's need, rather than general factors which relate to a wider group of children born at a similar time.

Parents requesting admission to an age group below the child's actual age should submit an application for the child's actual age group before the relevant closing date. The request for later admissions should accompany the application. This enables the application to be processed and a school place secured in the child's actual age group if the request is refused by the school. Parents will be informed of the outcome of their request prior to offer day.

2.0 In-Year Admissions into Reception to Year 6 (After 1st September 2024)

Aragon Primary School is part of Merton Local Authority's Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for In-Year Admissions. Applications for admission into Reception after 1st September 2024 and for admission into Years 1 to 6 must be made to Merton Local Authority Admissions on their In-Year application form. If you wish to apply for a place at Aragon Primary School, you must name the school as one of your preferences on the application form.

Waiting lists will be maintained for each year and reviewed at least twice a year, and will be based upon the over-subscription criteria/order of priority outlined in the admissions arrangements which were applicable when that year group originally entered Reception. For the Reception intake, the waiting list will be reviewed at the end of the Autumn Term.

Parents and carers have a statutory right of appeal if a place cannot be offered. An appeal form is available from the school upon receipt of a written request. Appeals will be heard by an Independent Appeals Committee and must be heard within 30 working days.

APPENDIX A

Nursery Admissions

Aragon Primary School has a nursery provision on the same site. However, attendance at the Nursery does not give priority for a place in the Reception Class of Aragon Primary School and a separate application must be made.

Pupils will be eligible for consideration for entry to the Nursery following the date of their third birthday. There are 45 places for children in the morning session and 45 places for children in the afternoon session; each session last three hours, making a total of 15 hours per week. In addition to the morning and afternoon sessions, there are a further 20 places available for parents/carers wishing to apply for the 30 hours extended entitlement, meaning that children will attend both the morning and afternoon sessions. Parents/carers can specify their preferred session on the application form, but please note that the school cannot guarantee your preference.

Where application for admission exceeds the number of places available, application for admission will be ranked in the same order of priority/over-subscription criteria as for children applying to Reception (see section 1.2 above).

In the case of under-subscription in the morning and afternoon sessions, additional places may be made available for parents/carers wishing to apply for the 30 hour extended entitlement if the number of applicants exceeds 20.

Applications for a nursery place at Aragon Primary School must be made directly to the school and an original copy of the child's birth certificate and proof of address must be produced. The closing date for applications will be in line with that of the London Borough of Merton, namely 23rd February 2024. Applications for the school outside the normal point of entry to Nursery should also be made to Aragon Primary School.

The key dates for the nursery class 2024 admissions process is shown in the table below:

Tours	Tours are run on a regular basis. Please contact the school office to find out the next scheduled date and book a place.
23 rd February 2024	Closing date for receipt of applications.
April to May 2024	Applications will be ranked according to the order of priority/over-subscription criteria in Section 1.2.
3 rd May 2024	Offer day. Parents will be notified of the outcome of their application.
June 2024	Second round of offers issued.

Children applying for Nursery who are not offered a place will automatically be added to the school's waiting list. Nursery waiting lists will be reviewed regularly. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.