



20 March 2019

To: Newcastle City Council
Newcastle Diocesan Education Board
Schools, trusts and childcare providers in the local area
Parents of children who attend NEAT schools
Parents in the local area

Dear Sir/Madam

Consultation on proposal to alter the admissions arrangements for 2-3 year olds and 3-4 year olds for primary schools in Newcastle East mixed multi Academy Trust

Newcastle East mixed multi Academy Trust (NEAT) is proposing changes to the admissions arrangements for 2-3 year (playgroup) and 3-4 year old (nursery) provision of all its primary schools: Central Walker Church of England Primary School, Tyneview Primary School, Walkergate Community School and West Walker Primary School.

As part of this process NEAT is consulting with those groups who are most likely to be affected by the proposed changes.

You should read this letter in conjunction with the proposed Admissions Arrangements – Nursery 2019-20 and proposed Admissions Arrangements - Playgroup 2019-20 which can be found on our website: https://www.neat.org.uk/web/local_consultation_-_playgroup_and_nursery_admissions_arrangements_2019-20/400197 or by requesting a paper copy from one of the affected schools or the NEAT office.

If you have already applied to a school for a playgroup or nursery place in 2019-20 you do not need to reapply – this letter sets out the way NEAT proposes to process applications and is asking for your views on the proposal.

The questions and answers below set out the key facts about the proposal:

Q Why is the trust proposing changes to admissions arrangements?

A When NEAT was formed the trust became the admissions authority for each of the schools. The trust is proposing that all NEAT schools within an age phase (playgroup, nursery, primary or secondary) should apply the same admissions arrangements. This process has been completed for primary and secondary age phases and the trust is now looking at admissions for playgroup and nursery.

Q Which schools are affected by the proposal?

A All four NEAT primary schools are affected by the proposal:

- Central Walker Church of England Primary School

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- Tyneview Primary School
- Walkergate Community School
- West Walker Primary School.

Q Which aspects of the current arrangements are proposed to change?

A There are three main changes:

- A single policy for playgroup admissions and a separate single policy for nursery admissions for all primary schools in the trust rather than each school having its own single policy which covers both age groups.
- Information about applications will be shared between all NEAT schools with a coordinated timetable for the offer of places.
- Changes to the oversubscription criteria to be applied in the event of more applications than places available.

Q Why is the trust proposing to share information about applications between schools and coordinate offers of places?

A Families may wish to apply to more than one school for a playgroup or nursery place. Sharing information about applicants on a waiting list and coordinating offers allows schools to plan more effectively for the provision that is needed and the trust to allocate resources appropriately.

Applying to more than one school will not affect the chances of being offered a place by any or all of the schools. All applicants who are eligible for a place will receive an offer unless there are more applicants than places. Families receiving an offer from more than one school can then decide which to accept.

Q What are the new oversubscription criteria?

A The proposed criteria are, in order of priority:

1. Looked after and previously looked after children
2. Children adopted from state care outside of England
3. (Playgroup places only) Eligibility for free childcare under the government offer for 2-3 year olds
4. Sibling link
5. Exceptional medical reasons
6. Distance from the school

Q How are the new oversubscription criteria different?

A There are three changes:

- The oversubscription criteria are matched to those for the admissions policies for primary and secondary age groups with the following two additions:
- For 2-3 year olds only: priority for those eligible under the government criteria for a funded 2-3 year old place.



- Siblings already in the playgroup or nursery will count as a sibling link. (Note - this does not change the policy for admissions to Reception to Year 6 where siblings in playgroup or nursery do not count as a sibling link)

Q Are there any other changes to the admissions arrangements?

A Yes. There are changes to the wording of the admissions policy to make it clear that there may be circumstances under which fewer places are available than the maximum number of places that the school is able to provide.

Q When will the changes take effect?

A The revised admissions arrangements will apply to admissions into the 2019-20 school year.

Q How is the local community being consulted about the proposal?

A We are writing to families on the waiting list for playgroup and nursery at each school. We have published details on the trust and schools' websites and highlighted the consultation on the schools' Twitter accounts.

Q How can I respond to the consultation?

A You can return the attached consultation form.

Your response to the above proposal must be received by the Trust Registered Office **no later than midday on Wednesday 3 April 2019** so that views can be taken into account when the Trust's Board of Directors meets on 3 April 2019.

Yours faithfully

Debi Bailey
Chief Executive Officer – NEAT

Copies:
Headteachers of NEAT schools
Chairs of Local Governing Bodies of NEAT schools