

Information for Parents

Secondary Schools



**Deadline for
applications
Wednesday
31 October
2012**

2013-14

Introduction

Moving to secondary school is one of the most important steps in a child's life. This guide has been produced to provide you with the information to make that decision and sets out the steps necessary to make your application.

These are exciting times for our secondary schools. As we are now well into our Building Schools for the Future rebuild and renovation programme, pupils are starting to access some of the best facilities available anywhere in the country. Our fourteen secondary schools are working together to improve standards and to provide the best opportunities for young people in Stoke-on-Trent.

Please read this guide before making your decision. I also encourage you to visit your preferred schools to ask any questions on their offer; all schools have open evenings, the details of which are included in this guide. Each school also has additional information available via its website.

Applications should be made online at stoke.gov.uk/admissions or by completing an application form by 31 October 2012. You will be informed of the outcome on 1 March 2013. Staff in the Admissions Team can be contacted on 01782 236867/236885 to provide assistance if you have any queries on making this application.



Eleanor Brazil
Interim Director of Children and
Young People's Services



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at Secondary School

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If you require this
booklet in another
format, please call
01782 236885

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The information contained in this booklet was accurate at the time of print. Parents should refer to the website stoke.gov.uk/admissions for the latest information.



Apply on-line for school places
stoke.gov.uk/admissions

Reminder

The deadline for applications for
a place at secondary school in
Stoke-on-Trent for 2013 is

**Wednesday
31 October
2012**

Applications received after this deadline
will be processed as soon as possible,
but parental preferences expressed by
the deadline will take priority.



Applying for a place at secondary school

What do you need to do to apply for a place?

If your child is in Year 6 and you live in the city, you should register your preference on-line at stoke.gov.uk/admissions. You should have received a letter detailing a Unique Identifier (UID) to use with this application.

The benefits of applying on-line are:

- You will get an instant email confirmation that your application has been received.
- You will be notified of the outcome of your application by email on 1 March 2013.
- You may edit your preferences on-line anytime before the closing date of 31 October 2012.

If you are applying for a Church Aided School or Faith-Based Academy, additional information such as baptism certificate/faith reference will be required. This can be forwarded separately. Please refer to the individual admissions policies for faith schools to confirm which additional information is necessary.

Please note: The required additional information relating to applications on faith grounds must be supplied. Failure to do so will affect the admissions criteria under which your application is considered.

If you prefer to complete a paper copy of the application form, this can be downloaded from the above website or can be obtained by phoning the Admissions Team (Tel: 01782 236867/ 236885). If you require a receipt for your completed form, it will need to be hand delivered to your child's current school where a receipt will be issued.

Should you wish to change any of the details on your application, you can do so up until the closing date of 31 October 2012 by telephoning the Admissions Team (Tel: 01782 236867/236885) or by writing to :

Admissions and Family Services,
People:- Children and Young People's Services,
Civic Centre, Glebe Street, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 1HH

You should express a preference for three schools on the form. These should be listed in order of preference. It is most important that you include all of your preferences at this stage, as some schools will have more applications than they can take. Where we are unable to meet your preference, we will try to offer your next preferred school. Naming the same school more than once on an application form does not increase the chances of your being successful. Instead, it will reduce your opportunity to secure a place at a second or third preference.

Decision letters on the outcome of your application will be sent out on 1 March 2013.



What types of school are available in Stoke-on-Trent?

Your child will transfer from a primary to a secondary school in the September after his/her eleventh birthday. City of Stoke-on-Trent secondary schools are comprehensive and cater for both boys and girls. This means that they accept children of all abilities and no child is offered or refused a place on the basis of general level of ability. The only exception to this is St. Joseph's Academy, which is a selective school.

Currently, there are five types of secondary school within the city:

Community Schools

These are run by Stoke-on-Trent City Council.

- Holden Lane High School and Specialist Sports College
- Thistley Hough High School

Foundation Trust Schools

These are non-denominational schools where the governing body has the same power as the governing body of an Aided school. These schools are supported by a charitable trust.

- Birches Head High School
- Sandon High School
- Trentham High School



Voluntary Aided Schools

These "Church" schools are run with the support of the Anglican or Roman Catholic Church or their Trustees. They have a legal duty to preserve and develop their denominational religious character and will strongly emphasise religious education. These schools are run in close partnership with the local authority.

- St. Margaret Ward Catholic School and Arts College
- St. Thomas More Catholic College

Academies

These are state-funded independent schools.

- Haywood Engineering College
- Ormiston Horizon Academy
- Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy
- St Joseph's College
- St Peter's Academy
- The Co-operative Academy at Brownhills
- The Discovery Academy

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Transferring from primary to secondary school

This section of the booklet applies to all secondary schools, including those outside of the city. If your preference is for a Church school or Faith Academy, please read carefully the admissions policies on the school's website which will inform you of any supplementary information which is required.

The legislation does not give you the right to choose which school your child should be admitted to. However, the city council must make arrangements to enable you, as parents, to express a preference for the secondary school(s) which you would like your child to attend. Your preference must be met unless to do so would "prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources" - for example, when a particular school is full. If a school is full and it is not possible to meet all parental preferences, your second preference will be very important. It is, therefore, vital that you give careful consideration to which schools to nominate on the enclosed application form and in which order you name them. Please note that if your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs then we must allocate a place at the school named on the Statement.

Schools hold open evenings for parents during the first half of the Autumn Term, and this provides an opportunity for you to visit those in which you are interested. You may also consult schools' inspection reports at ofsted.gov.uk and schools' examination results at education.gov.uk

All applications for secondary schools are managed by Stoke-on-Trent City Council on behalf of Community, Foundation, Voluntary Aided schools and Academies. This is known as the co-ordinated admission scheme.

We will pass to the governing bodies of Foundation (trust), Academies and Voluntary Aided schools the preferences for their schools and will ask the governors to list the children in priority order according to their admissions policy. These lists will be returned to us. Admissions authorities cannot take into account the position of a school on the parent's preference form.

We will pass preferences for schools in other local authority areas to the city council for that area and ask that council to which children it will be able to allocate places in its schools.

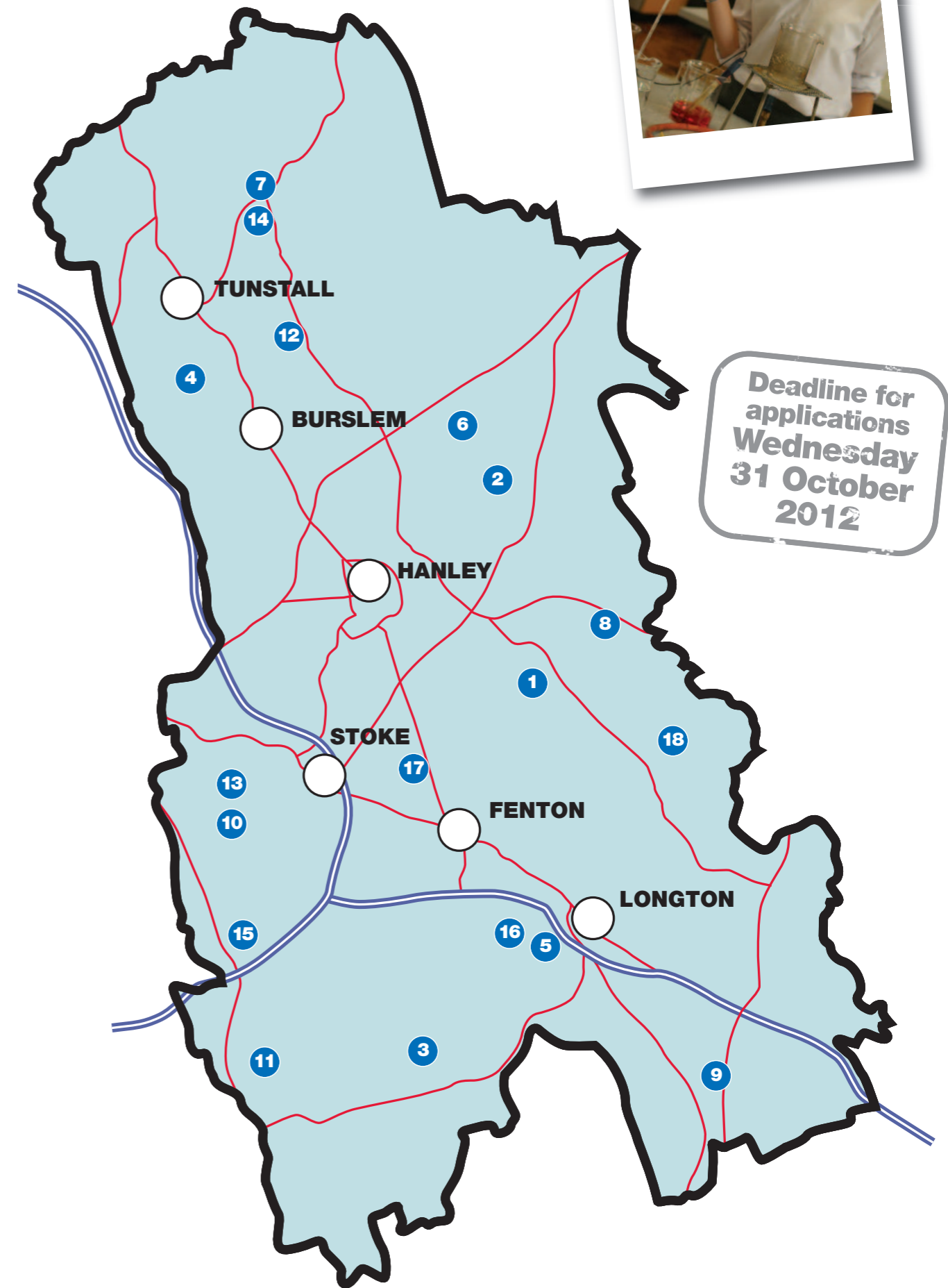
We will consider preferences for the Community schools in the city in accordance with its own criteria which are set out on page 8. We will draw up a list for each school of children in priority order.

Once all the lists have been completed, the council will allocate places up to each school's admission number. If a child is eligible for a place at more than one school the child will be offered a place at the school which is highest on the parent's preference list. In the event that a child is not eligible for any of the schools that their parent has named, s/he will be offered a place at the nearest school where there is a place. Each child will be offered one place.

The advantage of this coordinated system is that a child is more likely to gain a place at one of the schools which is a preference even if it is not a first preference. It must be recognised that this could be at the expense of a child who lives further away and whose parents put the school as a first preference.

Secondary School	Map Ref
Birches Head High School	2
Co-op at Brownhills Academy	4
Haywood Engineering College	12
Holden Lane High School	6
Ormiston Horizon Academy	7
Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy	3
Sandon Business and Enterprise College	9
St Joseph's College	15
St Margaret Ward Catholic College	14
St Peter's Academy (Penkhull site)	13
St Peter's Academy (Bucknall site)	1
St Peter's Academy (New site)*	17
St Thomas More Catholic College	16
The Discovery Academy (North site)	8
The Discovery Academy (South site)	5
The Discovery Academy (New site)*	18
Thistley Hough High School	10
Trentham High School	11

* St Peter's Academy and Discovery Academy are due to move to new sites in September 2013 on completion of new buildings under the Building Schools for the Future programme.



Admissions Policies

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For applications to Community schools, for each school we will draw up a list of all the children whose parents have named the school as a preference. At this stage, we will not take any account of whether it is a first, second or third preference. We will use the following criteria to draw up the list. We will list the children in descending order of priority.

1. Children who are in the care of a local authority (looked-after children) or provided with accommodation by them (Section 22 of the Children Act 1989) and children who were previously looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).
2. Children who have older brothers or sisters at the school at the time that they will start; and
3. Children who live nearest to the school as determined by a straight line measurement from the front door of the child's home address to the main entrance of the school.

We will also consider any reasons put forward by parents in support of their preference. These reasons should be supported with evidence wherever possible. If the reasons concern the child's health or social wellbeing, the evidence should be provided by a medical practitioner or other social care professional. If we consider that the reasons for a place at a particular school are sufficiently strong, we will place the child on the school list above those whose position is based

upon the distance criterion. If the last eligible child is a twin, triplet or child of any other multiple birth, we will allocate places to the siblings even if that means exceeding the admission number.

The local authority no longer uses catchment areas for the allocation of secondary school places to Community schools.

All applicants are considered against these criteria, with no priority given for early application. Late applications will receive individual consideration. Normally we will accept applications received late for genuine reasons, for example, a single parent who has been ill or a family that has recently returned from abroad.

If a place is offered on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent, this may effectively deny a place to a child with a stronger claim. In that situation, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

For some schools, not all preferences can be accommodated. In a few cases, it may not be possible to meet any of your three preferences because all places are filled by candidates with a higher priority. In that case a place will be offered at the school which is nearest to your home address with a place available.

Waiting lists for all schools have to be held until the end of the Autumn Term (i.e. 31 December 2013). If places

do become available, due to pupil movements in the area, the places will be filled in line with the admissions criteria.

If you do not get one of your preferences, there are three options available to you:

- You can appeal against the decision to an Independent Appeals Panel. Appeals for Community schools in the city are convened by Member Services at the city council. The Appeals Panel normally consists of three people, none of whom work for the city council or the school and will not have dealt with your case before. The Panel's decision is final. Normally, parents are allowed one appeal per school. You are however, entitled to appeal for as many schools as you wish and, if we are unable to offer you a place, you have the right to an appeal for each school. Repeat appeals for the same school are only considered where there had been a material change in the circumstances of the child or family since the previous appeal, for example, a change of home address;
- You can ask to go on a school's waiting list; or
- You can apply for a place at other schools with vacant places.

The Admissions and Family Services Team will be happy to advise you. Whichever school your child transfers to, the aim is to provide a happy and challenging education, with the emphasis on hard work and achievement – and on staying on in education and training after 16.

For applications to Academies, Church and Foundation schools, these schools have their own admissions criteria and the governing body of each school will decide on admissions. If you wish to apply for any of these schools, you must include them in your preferences and complete the relevant sections of the form. Details of how these schools will give priority to pupils seeking admission can be found on each schools website. If the governors at one of these schools are unable to offer your child a place, you are still entitled to an appeal. You will need to approach each school for information regarding their independent appeals process.

For applications to schools in other Local Authorities' areas, you should name the school as one of your preferences on the Stoke-on-Trent application form and submit this as set out on Page 4 We will then send information on the application to the other local authority or school for their attention. There is no need to fill in a second form, but you are strongly advised to name three preferences.

If you are unsure of your chances of gaining a place at any school, please telephone the helpline (details on Page 4), or the school, for advice before filling in the form. Data on recent applications are set out in the table below.

Secondary School	Pupil Admission Number (PAN)	Number of Applications	1st Prefs	2nd Prefs	3rd Prefs	Allocated	Refused	Appeals	Appeals upheld
Birches Head High School	210	315	155	79	81	157	n/a		
Co-op at Brownhills Academy	210	201	116	48	37	129	n/a		
Haywood Engineering College	210	476	204	175	97	212	3		
Holden Lane High School	220	325	145	130	50	164	n/a		
Ormiston Horizon Academy	180	198	89	60	49	98	n/a		
Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy	210	232	145	52	35	151	n/a		
Sandon Business and Enterprise College	180	309	157	86	66	173	n/a		
St Joseph's College	120	241	205	23	13	120	93	27	2
St Margaret Ward Catholic College	200	386	221	90	75	200	26	4	4
St Peter's Academy	240	425	143	174	108	168	n/a		
St Thomas More Catholic College	187	475	207	174	94	187	35	11	3
The Discovery Academy	240	400	212	114	74	226	n/a		
Thistley Hough High School	186	224	139	54	31	148	n/a		
Trentham High School	150	334	146	109	79	150	10		

Data relating to applications received by and offers made on 1st March 2012.

Birches Head High School bircheshead.org.uk

Birches Head Road, Birches Head, ST2 8DD Phone: 01782 233595 Email: info@bircheshead.org.uk
 Headteacher: Ms Karen Healey

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2012	Open Evening
Foundation Trust	2	210	752	Thursday 4 October 6.30 and 8.30pm

Haywood Engineering College haywood.stoke.sch.uk

High Lane, Burslem, ST6 7AB Phone: 01782 853535 Email: haywood@sgfl.org.uk
 Headteacher: Mr D Parmar

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2012	Open Evening
Convertor Academy	12	210	1046	Wednesday 3 October Open Evening: 7pm Tours: 8.45-9-45am, 11.20-12.20pm, 2.00-2.45pm

Holden Lane High School holdenlane.co.uk

Milton Road, Sneyd Green, ST1 6LG Phone: 01782 234449 Email: enquiries@holdenlanehighschool.co.uk
 Headteacher: Mr John Patino

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2012	Open Evening
Community School	6	220	902	Thursday 18 October

Ormiston Horizon Academy ormistonhorizonacademy.co.uk

St Michael's Road, Tunstall, ST6 6JT Phone: 01782 235785 Email: info@ormistonhorizonacademy.co.uk
 Principal: Mr Rod Hughes

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2012	Open Evening
Academy	7	180	553	Thursday 27 September 6.30pm

Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy ormistonsirstanleymatthewsacademy.co.uk

Beaconsfield Drive, Blurton, ST3 3JD Phone: 01782 234004 Email: info@sirstanleymatthewsacademy.co.uk
 Principal: Mr Mark Stanyer

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2012	Open Evening
Academy	3	210	683	Thursday 20 September 6.30pm

Sandon Business, Enterprise & Arts College sandonbec.com

Sandon Road, Meir, ST3 7DF Phone: 01782 377100 Email: info@sandonmail.com
 Headteacher: Ms Karen Castrey

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2012	Open Evening
Foundation Trust	9	180	910	Thursday 27 September 7pm

St Joseph's College stjosephstrentvale.com

London Road, Trent Vale, ST4 5NT Phone: 01782 848008 Email: sjcollege@stjosephsmail.com
 Headteacher: Ms Roisín Maguire

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2012	Open Evening
Convertor Academy	15	120	1064 (with 6th form)	Wednesday 12 September 7pm

St Margaret Ward Catholic College stmargaretward.co.uk

Little Chell Lane, Tunstall, ST6 6LZ Phone: 01782 234477 Email: smwadmin@sgfl.org.uk
 Headteacher: Mr Chris Smith

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2012	Open Evening
Voluntary Aided	14	200	955	Wednesday 19 September 7pm

St Peter's Academy spa.woodard.co.uk

(Bucknall Site) Arbourfield Drive, Bucknall, ST2 9LR Phone: 01782 235235 Email: office@spa.woodard.co.uk
 (Penkhull Site) Queens Road, Penkhull, ST4 7LG Phone: 01782 233600 Email: office@spa.woodard.co.uk
 (New Site*) Off Victoria Road, Fenton, ST4 2 RR Principal: Mr Joe Burns

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2012	Open Evening
Academy	1(B) 13(P) (New 17*)	240	1051	Tuesday 18 September 5.30-7pm (Penkhull) Wednesday 26 September 5.30-7pm (Bucknall)

St Thomas More Catholic College stmcc.net

Longton Hall Road, Longton, ST3 2NJ Phone: 01782 234734 Email: office@stmcc.net
 Headteacher: Mr Martin Nugent

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2012	Open Evening
Voluntary Aided	16	187	942	Wednesday 26 September 7pm

Thistley Hough High School thistleyhough.stoke.sch.uk

Newcastle Lane, Penkhull, ST4 5JJ Phone: 01782 418500 Email: thhs@sgfl.org.uk
 Acting Headteacher: Mrs Holly Hartley

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2012	Open Evening
Community School	10	186	818	Thursday 11 October

Trentham High School trentham.stoke.sch.uk

Allerton Road, Trentham, ST4 8PQ Phone: 01782 234534 Email: trentham@sgfl.org.uk
 Acting Headteacher: Mr John King

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2012	Open Evening
Foundation Trust	11	150	720	Open Evening: Thursday 27 September Open Mornings: 1-3 October

The Co-operative Academy cas.coop

Brownhills Road, Tunstall, ST6 4LD Phone: 01782 837508 Email: co-operativeacademy@sgfl.or.uk
 Principal: Mr Andrew Stanier

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2012	Open Evening
Academy	4	210	638	Thursday 20th September 7pm

The Discovery Academy thediscoveryacademy.co.uk

(North Site) Corneville Road, Bucknall, ST2 9EY Phone: 01782 233633 Email: academy@thediscoveryacademy.co.uk
 (South Site) Greendock Street, Longton, ST3 2NA Phone: 01782 233933 Email: academy@thediscoveryacademy.co.uk
 (New Site*) Lauder Place North, Bentilee, ST20QL Principal: Mr Rob Ridout

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2012	Open Evening
Academy	8(N) 5(S) (New 18*)	240	1476	Tuesday 9th October 7pm (South site)

Schools in Staffordshire

The admissions policies for St. John Fisher and Painsley Catholic Colleges can be found on our website: admissions.gov.uk

Admissions policies for Staffordshire schools can be found on the Staffordshire County Council website: staffordshire.gov.uk

Transferring from one secondary school to another

For applications taking place outside the normal admissions round, for example, if you are moving into the area or from one area of the city to another and you wish to change your secondary school, you should first discuss the matter with the headteacher at your child's current school before contacting the admissions team to enquire about making a transfer.

If your child is experiencing difficulties at his/her current school, we strongly advise that the best course of action, initially, is to try to resolve matters by speaking to your child's Headteacher. If, after discussion and careful consideration, it is considered that a transfer may be beneficial to your child, Admissions and Family Services will assist you. Before making any final decision in favour of transferring your child, however, you should first consider how s/he will travel, as an alternative school could be some distance from your home. You should also note that pupils begin their GCSE course in Year 10 and it will almost certainly be harmful to your child's education to change schools once this important stage is reached.

Any parent residing in Stoke-on-Trent, who wishes their child to change schools will need to apply via our Admissions Team and complete an In-Year Transfer Request form. This includes applications to transfer to any schools within Stoke-on-Trent and schools in other local authorities. You can name up to three schools for which you would like your child to be considered for a place.

Where preferences are made for community schools within Stoke-on-Trent, we will decide with the school whether or not a place can be offered. Where preferences are made on the application for schools which are their own admissions authority (i.e.

academies, voluntary aided and foundation (trust) schools) or for schools within another local authority, we will forward the application along with any relevant supplementary information to the relevant governing body or local authority who will make the decision.

In all cases, we will send a letter notifying you of the outcome. Where a child qualifies for a place at more than one of the preferred schools applied for, the Admissions Team will allocate a place at the school which is highest on the preference list.

Stoke-on-Trent does not provide funding for pupils to be educated at private day or boarding schools (except where such access is deemed to be necessary for children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs). Similarly, Stoke-on-Trent does not run any secondary school which offers boarding facilities and does not normally provide funding for pupils to attend boarding schools in other areas.



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Applying for Transport

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child(ren) get to and from school at the appropriate time each day.

Stoke-on-Trent City Council will provide assistance with a pupil's school transport arrangements if they meet the criteria under our Home to School Transport Policy.

Eligibility

Pupils seeking free transport must be of compulsory school age i.e. between the ages of 4+ and 16 years and living in the City of Stoke-on-Trent.

Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need and pupils over 16 years but still in education are covered by separate policies

Free transport will be offered to the following categories of young people:

- Pupils unable to walk to school by reason of a temporary mobility/medical problem (transport offered on a temporary basis).
- Pupils unable to walk to school by reason of a long-term medical problem (where the application is accompanied by a letter from a doctor or other medical professional to confirm the medical circumstances and how these affect the child's ability to get to school).
- Pupils unable to walk to school because of the unsuitability of the only reasonable route.
- All those pupils aged 4+ to 8 years if they live more than 2 miles from their nearest qualifying school. The distance is calculated by determining the shortest acceptable walking route for a child accompanied by an adult (not necessarily by road).
- Those pupils aged 8 to 16 years (applicable from the academic year in which the child turns 8) who live more than 3 miles from their nearest qualifying school.
- Those pupils aged 11 to 16 years from low income families * who live more than 2 but less than 6 miles from their school which must be one of the three nearest, qualifying schools to their home. Eligibility will be reviewed annually.
- Those pupils aged 11 to 16 years from low income families * whose parents have expressed a preference for a faith school based on their religious beliefs where that school is the nearest appropriate faith school and is more than 2 miles but less than 15 miles from their home.

Transport will be offered on a vacant seat basis at a specified charge to the following categories of young people:

- Those pupils aged 4+ to 8 years whose parents have expressed a preference for a Faith school based on their religious beliefs where that school is the nearest appropriate faith school and is more than 2 miles from their home.
- Those pupils aged 8 to 16 years whose parents have expressed a preference for a Faith school based on their religious beliefs where the school is the nearest appropriate Faith school and is more than 3 miles but less than 15 miles from their home.

Qualifying Schools

Parents may state preferences for any schools as part of the admissions process. Some choices may appear to trigger free transport or subsidized transport if a place were to be allocated. However, if they fall outside the "qualifying school" criteria and there are suitable places at a nearer qualifying school, then the pupil does not qualify for transport assistance. Transport to and from school then becomes the responsibility of the parent.

Qualifying schools must satisfy all of the following criteria:

- They must be a Community, Foundation, Academy or Voluntary Controlled/Aided school or a pupil referral unit.
- It must be the nearest school to the pupil's home that provides education appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the child (including any special placement for an excluded pupil who is off the roll of their mainstream school, or a Faith school that has been chosen by parents because of a religious belief), with places available.
- However, for pupils aged 11 to 16 years from low income families (where the child(ren) are eligible for free school meals or the parents are in receipt of maximum Working Tax Credit) a qualifying school maybe one of the three nearest schools to the pupil's home more than two miles away but less than 6 miles away; or, the nearest appropriate Faith school to the home where parents have expressed a preference based on their religious beliefs and where that school is more than 2 but less than 15 miles from their home. The distance is calculated by determining the shortest walking route (not necessarily by road).
- Where qualification is based on grounds of faith, this is determined through the assertion of this preference through the admission application process. Parents will need to have satisfied the admitting body's faith



criterion. For Voluntary Controlled schools, the local authority will require evidence of the family's adherence to the religion / denomination of the school.

- Where a pupil attends a split site school, the relevant site for qualification purposes will be the site where the pupil spends the majority of his/her school week as notified by the school at the beginning of the academic year.
- Where a pupil is dual registered, both sites will be separately assessed to determine the transport need.
- For children in the care of the local authority, the school where the child is placed is deemed to be the 'nearest qualifying school' in order to provide the necessary continuity of education. The allocation of school is to be reviewed as part of the child's regular Care Plan monitoring.

Similarly, transport will be considered to provide continuity of education where it is necessary as a result of other intervention by Vulnerable Children and Corporate Parenting.

Charges/Reimbursements Applying for Denominational Transport (Vacant Seat Scheme)

Latest charges to students meeting both the walking route and faith criteria, attending the nearest appropriate Faith school and not otherwise qualifying for free transport are published on the website:

stoke.gov.uk/admissions

For pupils not eligible for assistance with school transport, information regarding:

- Walking,
- Cycling,
- Bus timetables and routes for individual schools can be obtained from: Travel Plan Co-ordinator (Schools) on 234968.

Transport for Children with Special Needs

Children who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and who attend the most appropriate school for their needs, may be provided with assistance with their transport requirements. Free transport may be provided at the discretion of the city council.

For further details please contact the Special Needs Transport Section on 01782 235952 or 235924.

Sustainable Travel to School

When deciding on which school you want to send your child to, you may wish to think about the journey to school. For example, how far it is, is it safe, is it a pleasant journey, and so on.

For many children, walking and cycling are excellent ways to travel to school as it helps to keep them fit and healthy and it has the added bonus of being good for the environment. It is also a lot less stressful, for parents, than driving a car in today's busy traffic conditions and avoids parking difficulties and congestion. What's more you don't necessarily have to walk or cycle the same route as you would drive to school.

99% of Stoke-on-Trent schools have written a School Travel Plan for their site which aims to improve the way children travel to school. As part of the plans schools have developed improved facilities to help children and adults walk or cycle to school. New footpaths have been provided, road crossings and sheltered waiting constructed and lockers provided for children to keep their bags safe.

Stoke-on-Trent City Council has invested heavily in schools to encourage a new generation of cyclists. A quarter of schools are now "Bike It" schools which means that they get extra attention with cycle rides, bike related activities and cycle training. Cycle parking has now been provided at over half of Stoke-on-Trent schools and there is now a good network of safe and secure cycle routes. For more information about cycling training contact the Cycling Development Officer on 01782 232066.

Where schools are beyond walking distance, you may be entitled to free school transport. See the "Applying for Transport" section in this booklet. If your child is not eligible then find out about cycle routes to the school or enquire about Park and Stride. We would like you to consider these other ways of travel as taking your child to school by car can make the roads outside the school very unpleasant and potentially hazardous for all concerned.

The Sustainable Travel to School Strategy can be found on the city council's website:

stoke.gov.uk/traveltoschoolstrategy

Alternatively ring the Travel Plan Officer on 01782 234968.

Other Information

Fair Access Policy

The local authority is required to have an In-Year Fair Access Protocol in order to ensure that access to education is secured quickly for children who have no school place and that all schools in the city admit their fair share of children with challenging behaviour. Once a child is identified as "difficult to place", the Admissions and Family Services Team will ask for a copy of his/her school record and any information relevant to the child's placement.

In coming to a decision about the child's placement the local authority will take careful account of the views of the Headteachers and governing bodies of the schools named by the parent. In particular the local authority will take account of any genuine concerns about a Fair Access admission e.g. a previous serious breakdown in relationships between the family and the school, etc.

Children without a school place must take precedence over children on a waiting list attending another school.

Family Information Service

The Stoke-on-Trent Family Information Service is a free local service providing a wide range and variety of information and support to parents and carers of children and young people aged 0-19 (0-25 with a disability). Information, advice and guidance is available to help you with the following:

- Behavioural issues – practical information and advice on how to tackle behavioural issues which may be affecting you and your family.
- Signposting – to local, regional and national services which can provide specialist support and advice.
- Rights and entitlements – your legal and paternal rights as a parent.
- Activities – information about activities taking place across the city during school holidays.
- Choosing childcare – types of childcare and availability of childminders; out of school clubs and holiday schemes.
- Family benefits – including information on childcare vouchers, tax credits, and other schemes to help with the cost of childcare.
- Brokerage – free to access additional support if you are struggling to find childcare that meets the needs of you and your family.

Stoke Know How is an easy to use on-line directory of local services and childcare across the city.

The website, developed with the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, also includes information on national sources of support.

You can access Stoke Know How by logging on to stoke.gov.uk/stokeknowhow

To find out more about the Family Information Service or Stoke Know How, please contact us on:

- Telephone - freephone 0800 015 1120*
- Email - fis@stoke.gov.uk
- Website - stokefis.co.uk
- Twitter (@stokeFIS) and Facebook – (search for Stoke Family Information Service)
- By calling in to the Civic Centre (Floor 2) or your local Children's Centre

*The Family Information Service helpline is available from 8.45am – 5pm Monday to Thursday and 8.45am - 4.30pm on a Friday. An answer phone service is available at all other times.

The Parent Partnership Service

The Stoke-on-Trent Parent Partnership Service works in partnership with parents/carers of children with special educational needs and encourages partnership working with other service providers. The service is confidential.

It offers a menu of support which includes:

- Flexible services for parents including access to other agencies and organisations, and, for all parents who want one, access to a Choice Adviser to help parents finding difficulty with the admissions process.
- Access to high quality, accurate, neutral information, advice and support on parents' rights, roles and responsibilities within the SEN process, and on a wide range of options available, to enable them to make informed decisions.
- Training packages and workshops for parents, Independent Parental Supporters, and school staff.
- Multi-agency working between statutory and voluntary organisations work with schools, local authority officers and other agencies to help develop positive relationships with parents.
- Assurance that parents' views inform and influence the development of local SEN policy and practice.
- A telephone help line service.
- Drop-in centres and support groups.
- Office/home visits.
- Access to an independent mediation service.
- Information and support around Special Education Need and Disability Tribunal issues.

**Deadline for applications
Wednesday
31 October
2012**

A choice advisory service is also offered:

- Providing information about the schools in Stoke-on-Trent, and their admissions criteria.
- Providing information about the schools performance and specialisms.
- Discussing all options available to you.
- Helping you to understand the admissions process and how places are allocated.
- Supporting you to complete the application forms online or a paper copy.
- Helping and giving advice on how to apply for a school outside Stoke-on-Trent.
- Supporting you through the school admissions appeals procedure.

Contact: The Parent Partnership Service on: 01782 234701

Statement of Special Educational Needs

Children and Young People have Special Educational Needs (SEN), if they have a learning difficulty which requires which a greater level of SEN provision than most children and young people of their age.

If your child has a Statement and is due to move from one sector of education to another, for example from pre-school to primary, or primary to secondary education, an annual review meeting will be held in the summer term of the year before they are to transfer, to ensure planning and preparation are in place for a smooth transition.

The SEN Policy and Inclusion Strategy set out the policy, principles and priorities on which arrangements for SEN are based. These documents can be found on our website stoke.gov.uk

If your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs, it will need to be amended to name the school your child will attend. The annual review in the summer term, prior to their transfer a year later, will give you the opportunity to express a preference for the school you want your child to attend. We must agree your preference providing:

- The school is suitable for the child's age, ability and aptitude and the Special Educational Needs set out in Part 2 of the statement.
- The child's attendance is not compatible with the efficient education of other children in the school and
- The placement is an efficient use of the local authority's resources.

It is generally expected that, if your child has made progress in a mainstream primary school, s/he will be able to make progress in a mainstream secondary school.

The arrangements for transfer of young people with a Statement are made by the SEN Monitoring and Assessment Service. If you have any queries please ring 01782 236842

Free School Meals

If you are in receipt of one of the following, your child is eligible to receive Free School Meals:

- Income Support
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Income-Based Job-seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (providing you do not also receive Working Tax Credit) and have an annual income of £16,190 or less (as Assessed by HM Revenue and Customs)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Income related Employment Support Allowance

If you have a Working Tax Credit you are not eligible for free school meals.

You can make a claim at your child's school, local centre, Stoke-on-Call or you can simply ring our Free School Meals Team on 01782 236813 for assistance.

NB If you need to add a child to an existing claim you are required to complete a new application form.



Parental Responsibility

The Children Act of 1989 requires schools to know who has "parental responsibility" for each child. This helps to ensure that everyone who has parental responsibility for a child is consulted about important decisions, even if s/he does not live with the child.

Mothers always have parental responsibility, unless removed by the court. Fathers also have parental responsibility if married to the mother (and this carries on after any divorce/separation or re-marriage even if the child lives apart from them). Fathers named on the birth certificate, whether married or not, have parental responsibility. Unmarried fathers, step-fathers and other relatives who look after a child can obtain parental responsibility by applying to the court, but do not qualify automatically.

Please help the school to collect this information. If any changes occur in your family life, or if orders are made under the Children Act which affect your child, please tell the school.

If you need help with this matter, the Education Welfare Officer attached to the school will be pleased to assist.

Complaints

Although we will try to offer your child the best possible education, you may at some point feel you wish to make a complaint.

If you are concerned about any aspect of your child's education, you should firstly talk to the school. Most problems can be sorted out informally. If you are still unhappy, the local Education Welfare Officer will be able to advise you what to do next. Alternatively, you may write to or contact:

Children and Young People's Services, Civic Centre, Glebe Street, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 1HH.

Education Welfare Team

The Education Welfare Team can be contacted on 01782 235355. Any concerns will be addressed via the telephone helpline between 8.30am and 5pm. The Education Welfare Service can offer support on a variety of issues, for instance:

- Issues surrounding school attendance
- Bullying
- Procedures relating to child protection
- Child employment and performances in entertainment.

Further Help and Information

The Admissions and Family Services Team is the central contact point for parents requiring further help or information. Our helpline telephone numbers are (01782) 236885 or 236867.

The team may also be contacted by writing to: Admissions and Family Services, Children and Young People's Services, Civic Centre, Glebe Street, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 1HH.

Or you could contact us by e-mail on admissions@stoke.gov.uk.

Officers will also be pleased to deal with any enquiries in person, should you prefer to visit the office (on Floor 2 of the Civic Centre) to discuss your concerns in private. You should contact the Admissions and Family Services Team to make an appointment. The offices are open to the public from 9am to 4.30pm Monday to Thursday and 4pm on Friday. From here you can obtain information on:

- Admissions to schools
- Exclusions
- Free school meals
- Bus passes
- Special educational needs.

Useful contact details

Admissions Helplines	01782 236885 / 236867
Choice Adviser	01782 234867
Education Welfare	01782 235355
Parent Partnership	01782 234701
Free School Meals	01782 236813
Vulnerable Children and Corporate Parenting	01782 235100
School Transport	01782 233232 / 236868

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 twitter.com/sotcitycouncil



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Children and Young People's Services
Civic Centre, Glebe Street, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 1HH

DX21058 Stoke-on-Trent Minicom 01782 232331

Telephone: 01782 234567

stoke.gov.uk/education