



Temporary Admissions Policy for Children in Need of International Protection (CINIP)

Rationale:	This is a time-limited policy seeking to establish protocols for The Pilgrims' School to support young refugees fleeing active war zones.
Owner:	Head of Pilgrims'
Endorsed by Governing Board:	November 2022
Revised:	September 2023
Date of next full review:	January 2024
Reviewed:	Every term
Date(s) of interim amendments:	

Rationale / Summary:

The Governors and staff at The Pilgrims' School recognise the immense suffering of young people forced to flee from active war zones and recognised as requiring international protection by the UK Government. This policy solely relates to these young people.

In accordance with our aims and objectives, we wish to provide opportunities where possible and sustainable for these displaced children to receive an education at our School. These places are separate from, and based upon different entry requirements, to those offered under our normal admissions process. Acceptance of a child under this policy does not invalidate a separate decision not to offer a local child a place under normal entry procedures due to the School being full, or based on normal academic criteria.

However, we also recognise that making such a commitment inevitably brings additional burdens upon our staff and community. Children fleeing from a conflict may well have more complex educational and emotional needs. Further, there is a limit on the number of places we can accommodate within our School, particularly in year groups already full or over-capacity. Therefore, we recognise that we cannot provide support for unlimited numbers of refugee children.

Nonetheless, we believe that our staff and community would happily bear additional reasonable burdens in this specific set of circumstances, and that they would support us trying to offer places under such conditions where possible.

Financial and Logistical Implications:

This policy recognises that refugee children fleeing from active war zones would need, in the first instance, to attend the School for free. In addition, they are unlikely to be able easily to afford additional costs associated with attending Pilgrims' – such as school uniform costs. Therefore, each pupil joining the School places a significant cost upon the organisation.

For the purposes of accounting and logistical planning, places offered at our School under this policy would be regarded not as normal bursary students, but rather as protected school places for such children receiving a free education at the School. Whilst they would be on our Department for Education School Roll, this defines all such children as additional to our usual School roll – i.e. supernumerary. This means that children arriving under this policy would not be counted towards pupil numbers when calculating whether or not a class or year group is 'full'. This is an important distinction, as otherwise The Pilgrims' School might not be able to support local children by awarding places or bursaries for entry to our Schools already taken by children under this policy. However, it also means that due to children offered places under this policy we may find that classes and year groups exceed 'normal' capacity numbers in order to accommodate these additional children. We recognise that this places an additional burden on staff, and potential additional disruption to our current pupils. Therefore, limits on the numbers of places that we are able to offer are inevitable.

Separately, any pupils joining the School under this policy will in all likelihood require a school uniform and basic school equipment. For each pupil arriving at Pilgrims' under this policy, these items will be sourced and provided free of charge.

Notwithstanding the above, it is important that the school protects itself and potential pupils by providing these places under terms very similar to the bursary system. After initial assessment (see below), places will be offered on a 110% bursary basis, with yearly checks performed in the usual way to ensure that the financial need of the family remains the same as it was at point of entry to the school.

Note: no financial assessment of a family at point of entry will be made, as this is likely to be difficult for the family involved, and potentially slow down the process of entry. The first financial assessment for the bursary element will usually be made one year after entry to the school.

Entry Protocol:

Places at Pilgrims' will be offered to children fleeing from war zones who apply for a place on a first come-first served basis and available to start at the School immediately, as long as the following criteria are met:

- The Head is satisfied that the applicants are from an active war zone being genuine children in need of international protection and recognised as such by the UK government.
- The Head, in consultation with relevant colleagues, is satisfied that the year group and classes in to which the child would be placed are able to accommodate additional supernumerary children. As a guide, a year group being 'nominally full +3' or classes being 'nominally full +1' are likely to set an upper limit for the number of places offered. However, it is also recognised that there may be exceptions to this stipulation, such as where siblings would be best served by joining our School, but where one or more would be joining a year group already exceeding this number. Similarly, there may be reasons why the Head does not regard offering a place to be in the best interests of the School, even in classes/year groups not exceeding these guidelines. For this reason, places will always be offered under this policy at the ultimate discretion of the Head. Please note, that priority will be given to children in need of international protection who have existing connections with the school, [or] who are currently residing in the local area and/or who in the professional judgment of the Head, would benefit from an education at our school.
- The Head, in consultation with relevant colleagues, is satisfied that the child will be able to access our education or a suitability modified programme that draws from the co-curriculum as well as the curriculum. This is **not** to say that we will expect children fleeing conflict to be fluent in English, or to have prior knowledge of UK-based schemes of work or exam specifications. Rather, that we are satisfied that they have the ability to access our education in time, and that we are satisfied that their educational and emotional needs can be met by our staff (pastoral, academic, SEN, EAL). This does not preclude children joining Pilgrims' under this policy in exam year groups, but it does recognise the potential for additional academic integration issues to occur in such year groups. Places will not be denied on the grounds that they might be detrimental to the school's academic achievement statistics.
- The school will liaise with the Local Education Authority to ensure they are aware of the places being offered and our ability to meet the needs of the children and provide a safe and inclusive environment for them.

Note: children accepted under this policy may need on a temporary basis to pursue a reduced curriculum in order to cover core elements of our education. This will be enacted if practicable and able to be resourced by the School, and will remain under review by the school for as long as it is deemed needed.

Families applying for entry to Pilgrims' under this policy will be asked by the Head to come and visit the School; meet key pastoral and academic staff; and (if suitable) undertake basic accessible testing. Whilst these places are not determined on academic merit and are being offered to help alleviate a humanitarian crisis, the school needs to carry out a basic level of testing to ensure that the child is able to manage the school environment and access the education. This may be written, or through aural assessment methods as suitable. These meetings are designed to ensure pastoral and academic potential, and will not be judged at normal entry requirement levels, but rather on the basis of promise (as outlined above).

We recognise that children fleeing from a war zone may have long-term needs which the School cannot easily determine in the short time-frame required prior to offering a place. This may make our School unsuitable for individual children in the longer term. Similarly, family circumstances for these children may change drastically over their time at the School. Children may wish to return home or move to another location; families may settle in the UK and become able to access work and financing. All of these factors need to be reviewed as and when appropriate in order to determine the best approach for each individual child on a case by case basis. Our aim is to enable all children at the School to flourish, including those admitted under this policy and our pastoral policies will be applied consistently for all children. All normal standards of behaviour and participation would be expected of all children at our School, and the School reserves the right to exclude any pupil causing significant disruption.

It is recognised that expected academic outcomes for children in these circumstances may not match the School's usual expectation. This will not usually be a determining factor in the annual review of a child's place – so long it is recognised that the child has made every effort to participate in the academic life of the School as far as possible.