MEPA ACADEMY

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Policy owner	Principal / Senior Attendance Champion
Approved by	Senior Leadership Team
Adopted	July 2026
Review date	July 2027, or sooner if guidance changes
Applies to	All applicants of MEPA Academy
School contact	admissions@mepaacademy.com | 01622 756644

Contents

1. PURPOSE AND LEGAL STATUS 3
2. EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS 3
3. ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATIONS 3
4. AUDITION AND ASSESSMENT DAY 3
5. DECISION CRITERIA AND OUTCOMES 4
6. OFFERS, FEES AND DEPOSIT 4
7. APPLICANT INFORMATION AND DATA PROTECTION 4
8. DECISION REVIEW AND COMPLAINTS 5
9. MONITORING AND DOCUMENT CONTROL 5

1. PURPOSE AND LEGAL STATUS

MEPA Academy is an independent school for pupils aged 11 to 16. This policy explains how applications are made, how auditions and assessments are conducted, how admission decisions are reached and what information families receive before accepting a place.

MEPA Academy aims to operate a fair, transparent, consistent and inclusive admissions process. Admission is selective and is based on the published criteria in this policy, available places and the Academy's ability to provide an appropriate academic and vocational programme for the applicant.

As an independent school, MEPA Academy is not generally governed by the statutory School Admissions Code or the maintained-school admissions appeal regime. It must nevertheless comply with applicable law, including the Equality Act 2010, consumer-protection law, the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 as amended, and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

2. EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

MEPA Academy will not unlawfully discriminate in its admissions arrangements, decisions or terms of admission because of a protected characteristic. Applicants will be treated with dignity and assessed consistently against the published criteria.

Disabled applicants and applicants with special educational needs may request reasonable adjustments to the application, audition, interview, academic assessment or associated communications. Adjustments may include accessible information, additional time, rest breaks, modified instructions, an appropriate space, use of usual aids or another proportionate arrangement.

A request for an adjustment will not count against an applicant. Families should contact admissions@mepaacademy.com as early as reasonably possible and provide only the information needed to identify an effective adjustment. The Academy may discuss the request with the applicant and parent or carer. Reasonable adjustments remove disadvantage but do not require the Academy to lower a genuine competence standard.

3. ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATIONS

Applications are considered for pupils within the Academy's registered age range of 11 to 16, subject to availability in the relevant year group. Applications, including late applications, follow the same published process unless an adjustment is reasonably required.

Application information and the current application form are available at https://www.mepaacademy.com/admissions-and-fees. Completed applications should be submitted using the method stated on the current form or sent to admissions@mepaacademy.com.

Before an audition is booked, the Academy will make available the current audition fee, admissions process, assessment requirements, material fee information and relevant privacy information. Any audition fee will be disclosed before booking and will not be increased after payment without the family's agreement.

4. AUDITION AND ASSESSMENT DAY

The Academy will confirm the date, arrival time, timetable, clothing or equipment requirements and any preparation materials in advance. The day normally includes academic baseline assessments, vocational workshops, prepared performance pieces and an interview or discussion.

4.1 Academic baseline assessments

Applicants normally complete English and Mathematics assessments. These support baseline and curriculum planning and are not, by themselves, an automatic pass-or-fail barrier. Adjustments will be made where reasonably required.

4.2 Prepared vocational work

- Dance: a prepared solo in any style of approximately two minutes;
- Acting: a monologue of approximately one to two minutes, suitable for the applicant's playing age;
- Singing: a song of approximately one to two minutes with an appropriate backing track or sheet music; and
- Music: an optional instrumental or other musical performance, if the applicant wishes.

Applicants also take part in selected vocational classes. Requirements may be adapted where reasonably necessary to allow a disabled applicant to demonstrate the relevant ability or potential.

5. DECISION CRITERIA AND OUTCOMES

A Principal or authorised senior leader and appropriately experienced staff will consider the available evidence and record the reasons for the decision. Applicants are assessed holistically against:

- current vocational ability and potential for development in performing arts;
- engagement, responsiveness to direction and willingness to learn;
- ability to participate constructively and safely in individual and group work;
- readiness to engage with the Academy's combined academic and vocational curriculum; and
- whether an appropriate place is available in the relevant year group.

Protected characteristics, disability-related needs and the fact that an adjustment was requested will not be treated as negative factors. Academic baseline results will be considered in context and used primarily to support planning.

The Academy aims to notify applicants in writing of the outcome within seven calendar days of the audition. The outcome may be an offer, a waiting-list decision, a request for further information or assessment, or an unsuccessful decision. Offers may specify a year group, start date and reasonable conditions that are clear and relevant to admission.

6. OFFERS, FEES AND DEPOSIT

Before a family is asked to accept an offer or pay a deposit, the Academy will provide or make readily available the current fee schedule, parent contract, notice and cancellation provisions, payment timetable, material additional charges and this policy. Families should read these documents before committing.

To secure an accepted place, a £500 deposit is payable by an approved payment method. No additional surcharge will be imposed for payment by a consumer credit card, consumer debit card or other payment method where a surcharge is prohibited by law. The deposit will be credited against the first term's fees if the pupil starts at the Academy.

If the Academy withdraws the place before the pupil starts for a reason not caused by the applicant or family, the deposit will be refunded in full. If the family withdraws, the Academy may retain only the amount permitted by the parent contract and applicable consumer law, reflecting its reasonable net loss and taking reasonable steps to reduce that loss. Any balance will be refunded without undue delay. Any applicable statutory cancellation or refund rights remain unaffected.

Acceptance is complete only when the required acceptance documentation has been returned and cleared funds have been received. The parent contract governs ongoing fees, notice requirements and withdrawal after entry, subject always to applicable law.

7. APPLICANT INFORMATION AND DATA PROTECTION

MEPA Academy processes applicant and parent or carer information to administer applications, arrange auditions, make admission decisions, provide adjustments, communicate outcomes and prepare for entry. Applicants and families will be directed to the Academy's current privacy notice when information is collected.

Information about health, disability or learning needs may be special-category personal data. The Academy will identify and document an appropriate lawful basis and additional condition, collect only information that is relevant, restrict access, keep it secure and retain it in accordance with its retention schedule and legal obligations.

Privacy information will be clear and age appropriate and will explain the identity of the controller, purposes, lawful bases, recipients, retention, individual rights and how to contact the Academy or complain to the Information Commissioner's Office.

8. DECISION REVIEW AND COMPLAINTS

There is no statutory independent-school admissions appeal under the School Admissions Code. A parent, carer or applicant may nevertheless ask the Academy to review whether this policy was followed, relevant evidence was considered, a reasonable adjustment was provided or the decision was affected by a factual or procedural error.

A review request should normally be sent to admissions@mepaacademy.com within ten working days of the written outcome, stating the issue and the remedy sought. The review will be considered by a senior person who was not the original decision-maker where reasonably practicable. The Academy will provide a written response within a reasonable period and normally within ten working days.

Concerns about the administration of the process may also be raised under the Academy's published Complaints Policy. Nothing in this policy restricts any right to bring a discrimination claim, contact a regulator or exercise another legal remedy.

9. MONITORING AND DOCUMENT CONTROL

The Principal and Senior Leadership Team will monitor decisions, adjustment requests, complaints, applicant feedback and consistency of assessment. Selection criteria and associated forms, fee information, contracts and privacy notices will be reviewed together so that applicants receive accurate and consistent information.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following a legal or regulatory change, material complaint, identified inconsistency or significant change to the admissions process.