

ADMISSIONS POLICY



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Signed Chair of Trustees	

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WHERE LEARNING IS UNSTOPPABLE AND ASPIRATIONS HAVE NO LIMITS

	Last School Year consulted on	Date of 7-year period - to consult for
Brooklands Primary School	2027-2028	2034-2035
Grace Cook Primary School	2027-2028	2034-2035
Grange CP School	2027-2028	2034-2035
Halifax Primary School	2027-2028	2034-2035
Handford Hall Primary	2027-2028	2034-2035
Springfield Infant School	2027-2028	2034-2035
The Willows Primary School	2027-2028	2034-2035

Admission Arrangements for 2027-2028

1. INTRODUCTION

Orwell MAT schools follow the Admissions Code and the law relating to admissions. This accords with the Trust's funding agreement with the Department for Education.

Local Governing Committees consider annually whether arrangements are satisfactory, taking into account issues that have arisen throughout the last year, and any changes in accommodation. Should a Local Governing Committee wish to suggest amendments to existing arrangements, they need to make recommendations to the OMAT Trust board, which is the admission authority for all its schools.

All schools are required to follow the Trust Admissions policy which should be clearly displayed on individual school websites. This replaces individual school admissions policies. For nursery admissions schools are required to follow the separate OMAT Nursery admissions policy which again should be displayed on the schools' websites with application arrangements.

As part of the admission arrangements for each Academy/School, an admission number for each normal year of entry to the school, including reception, Year 7 and sixth form, will be determined. This is known as the Published Admission Number (PAN). Each OMAT school and their published PAN is listed below:

School PAN

Brooklands 45

Grace Cook 30

Grange 30

Halifax 60

Handford Hall 45

Springfield Infants 90

The Willows 30

2. ADMISSION TO PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Suffolk Local Authority (LA) currently co-ordinates the admission of Reception age students. Parents/Carers apply for a school place through the LA's admission process. The LA allocates places (following consultation with academies/schools) for students at the beginning of their education.

3. ADMISSION OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA for Brooklands Primary School, Halifax Primary School, Handford Hall Primary School, Grange Community Primary School, Springfield Infants and Nursery School and The Willows Primary School.

Children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that names an individual school within the Trust will be admitted to that school.

In the event of a year group being oversubscribed, and after the admission of pupils with an EHCP where the school is named, priority for admission to individual schools within the Trust will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in order:-

A. Looked after children (children in care) and previously looked after children (children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order, immediately following having been looked after). This includes children who were in state care outside of England but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted only. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

B. Siblings (see definition in section 4) of pupils who are already at the school or who have already been offered a place, and who will still be there at the time of admission, but not in nursery. Priority will be given, where necessary, to applications where there is the smallest age gap in calendar days between the child's date of birth and the date of birth of any sibling already attending the school, or who has been offered a place at the time of application.

C. Children who are **ordinarily resident** in the catchment area. Children who live nearest to the school. We will measure the distance by a straight line ('as the crow flies'). All straight-line distances are calculated electronically by the local authority (LA) using data provided jointly by the Post Office and Ordnance Survey. The data plots the coordinates of each property and provides the address-point between which straight line distance is measured and reported to three decimal places. Where there is more than one home within a single building (for example apartments) we will measure to a single point within that building irrespective of where those homes are located.

D. Children who live outside the school's catchment area. Children who live nearest to the school. We will measure the distance by a straight line ('as the crow flies') as shown in criterion C.

TIE BREAKER

In the unlikely event that two applicants competing for a single place at a school live the same distance from the school, the place will be offered to one applicant on the basis of lots drawn by an officer of Suffolk County Council not involved with admissions.

ADMISSION OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA for Grace Cook Primary School Children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that names an individual school within the Trust will be admitted to that school.

In the event of a year group being oversubscribed, and after the admission of pupils with an EHCP where the school is named, priority for admission to individual schools within the Trust will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in order:-

- A.** Looked after children (children in care) and previously looked after children (children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order, immediately following having been looked after). This includes children who were in state care outside of England but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted only. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.
- B.** Siblings (see definition in section 4) of pupils who are already at the school or who have already been offered a place, and who will still be there at the time of admission, but not in nursery. Priority will be given, where necessary, to applications where there is the smallest age gap in calendar days between the child's date of birth and the date of birth of any sibling already attending the school, or who has been offered a place at the time of application.
- C.** Priority will next be given to EYFS children who attend Grace Cook Primary School Nursery who are eligible for the early years' pupil premium. Evidence of eligibility will need to be submitted with the application. See notes below on eligibility.

D. Children who live nearest to the school. We will measure the distance by a straight line ('as the crow flies'). All straight-line distances are calculated electronically by the local authority (LA) using data provided jointly by the Post Office and Ordnance Survey. The data plots the coordinates of each property and provides the address-point between which straight line distance is measured and reported to three decimal places. Where there is more than one home within

a single building (for example apartments) we will measure to a single point within that building irrespective of where those homes are located.

TIE BREAKER

In the unlikely event that two applicants competing for a single place at a school live the same distance from the school, the place will be offered to one applicant on the basis of lots drawn by an officer of Suffolk County Council not involved with admissions.

Challenging Behaviour

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. We may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, i.e. where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that isn't the normal point of entry, only in such a case that we have good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour that may adversely affect the provision we can offer. In this case, we will refer these pupils to the Fair Access Protocol. We will not refuse admission on these grounds to looked after children, previously looked after children and children with EHC plans listing the school.

Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Suffolk County Council's Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible.

4. DEFINITIONS FOR ADMISSION CRITERIA

Parent

For the purposes of education law, Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines a 'parent' as:

- all natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person (this could be a step-parent, guardian or other relative);
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.
- A person has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child.

Looked after children

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).

Previously looked after children

Previously looked after children includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (section 46 adoption orders). Child arrangements orders are defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.

Children adopted from state care outside of England

A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

Distance from School

All straight-line distances are calculated electronically by Suffolk County Council using data provided jointly by the Post Office and Ordnance Survey. The data plots the co-ordinates of each property and provides the address-point between which the straight-line distance is measured and reported to three decimal places. Where there is more than one home within a single building (for example apartments) we will measure to a single point within that building irrespective of where those homes are located.

Future House Moves

Places cannot be allocated on the basis of an intended future change of address, unless the new address has been confirmed by exchange of contracts and with confirmation of an anticipated completion date, for a house purchase or the signing of a formal lease agreement. The parent or carer will be expected to provide documentary evidence in support of any anticipated move date given.

Ordinarily resident

Ordinarily resident: By ordinarily resident we mean the place where your child usually lives. We consider this to be where they sleep overnight. We may need proof of this address.

If you use another address to give the impression that your child lives at a different address to where they are ordinarily resident, such as a second home or a grandparent's address, so that you have a higher priority for a place at that school, we consider this to be a fraudulent application.

Where a child lives at two or more addresses, each for part of the week, the address at which the child is ordinarily resident will be considered to be the address that the child lives at for most of the week (excluding weekends and school holidays). Separate evidence in writing from each parent must be provided to confirm the child's living arrangements at the time of application.

In cases where the child spends an equal proportion of the school week at two or more different addresses, evidence of which is to be considered the main contact address will be required to support the application. Agreement in writing by the parents will be required to state which address is to be used as the ordinarily resident address. This address will then be used when processing all school preferences expressed.

It is not acceptable to use one address for one school preference and another address for another school preference. If we are aware of a parental dispute affecting the application, we may not be able to deal with the application, and you may need to seek independent legal advice in order to resolve the matter.

Siblings

The term 'sibling' includes natural, half, step, and adopted brothers and sisters; a child of the partner of the parent/carer; and children who are fostered into the family. In all these cases, the child and their sibling will both be living at the same address (that is where the child is ordinarily resident) in a single-family unit. This means that children from different family units, where those separate families are living together at the same address, are not considered siblings under this criterion.

At Springfield Infant School the sibling criterion will also apply to applications to the paired junior school, Springfield Junior School (Children's Endeavour Trust). We will treat these applicants as siblings when the older child is already attending the junior school or will be offered a junior school place in the normal year of entry.

Sibling tie-breaker

Priority will be given, where necessary, to applications where there is the smallest age gap in calendar days between the child's date of birth and the date of birth of any sibling already attending the school, or who has been offered a place at the time of application.

In the unlikely event that two applicants competing for a single place at a school have the same number of days difference in age from their closest aged sibling, the place will be offered to one applicant on the basis of lots drawn by an officer of Suffolk County Council not involved with admissions.

Twins, triplets and other multiple births

If the final place available at a school is offered to a twin, triplet or other multiple birth and the remaining sibling/s would ordinarily be refused, OMAT will offer places to the remaining sibling/s at the same school. The law requires that this will apply even in those primary schools where this would mean that more than 30 pupils would be admitted to an infant class. Where a sibling of a twin, triplet or other multiple birth has a school named on their EHC plan, OMAT will, from the date of issue of the EHC plan, treat their twin, triplets or other multiple births under the sibling oversubscription criterion for the named school. This does not apply to siblings of children in a nursery, because they do not meet the sibling definition in the oversubscription criteria.

Waiting lists for the normal year of entry

If you apply for a school place in the normal year of entry and are refused, your child's name will automatically be placed on the waiting list for that school. Names are placed on the waiting list in the priority order set out in our admissions oversubscription criteria.

The order of children does not remain static - as circumstances change a child's place on the waiting list can go up or down, for example due to withdrawals or additional applications. If you change your address while your child is on a waiting list you must let us know. Please be aware that this may change your child's position on the waiting list, particularly if you move into or out of the school's catchment area. Written evidence of this will be required.

Having your child's name on a waiting list will not affect your right to appeal for any of the schools you have been refused a place at.

Late applicants will be added to the waiting list in oversubscription priority order if their parental preference cannot be met.

If a place becomes available, we will offer it to a child on the waiting list in priority order. We do not offer places on the basis of the date on which names were placed on the list. The waiting lists will cease to operate on 31 December.

Waiting lists for in year applicants

In year waiting lists are held by the individual schools. Places which become available are filled from the school's waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. We do not offer places on the basis of the date on which names were placed on the list.

Parents/carers must reconfirm they wish their child to remain on the waiting list within one week of the start of each new academic term. Failure to do so may result in removal from the waiting list

All waiting lists will be closed at the end of each academic year.

5. IN-YEAR ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Orwell MAT, as the Admitting Authority, is responsible for in-year admission arrangements. This responsibility is devolved to the local governing committee of each school within the Trust, and carried out in partnership with Suffolk LA. Parents who wish to transfer their child during the course of a school year will be advised to contact the school office to obtain an in-year admissions form.

The School will, upon allocation of a school place to a pupil transferring in-year, notify the LA of the proposed admission to enable the LA to keep up-to-date figures on the availability of places.

6. ADMISSION OF CHILDREN OUTSIDE THEIR NORMAL AGE GROUP

It is expected that children will normally be educated within their normal age group (chronological year group). However, when requested to do so by the parent, the admission authority, the Trust, will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned in line with the School Admissions Code.

Parents or carers should make a request to the headteacher of the school in writing. This will need to include, where relevant, any supporting information about why the child should be admitted out of their normal age group. This includes when a parent or carer wishes their summer born (April to August) child to start full-time education in the Reception Year group until the following school year when they reach compulsory school age rather than in Year 1.

When considering the request this will include, but is not limited to, taking account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social, and emotional development; whether the child has 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. Any evidence in respect of these or any other reasons can be submitted. Where relevant, consideration can be given to the child's medical history and any evidence from a medical professional involved with the child's care or treatment such as:

- a speech and language therapist
- an occupational therapist
- a social worker
- a paediatrician
- the child's nursery, childminder or current school.

The decision will also take into account the views of the headteacher of the school(s) concerned.

Parents and carers are not expected to get evidence that they do not already have.

A CAF1 application form must be sent to the Local Authority along with the decision letter and other relevant evidence by the national closing dates. Even if the request is agreed there is no guarantee there will be a place available.

Deferred entry for infants

All our schools provide for the admission for all children in the September following their fourth birthday and the vast majority of our children complete a full year in Reception, starting full-time from the September after they turn four. However, parents offered a place in Reception for their child have a right to defer the date their child is admitted, or to take the place up part-time, until the child reaches compulsory school age. Places cannot be deferred beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made.

Children reach compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their 5th birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31st August, 31st December and 31st March.

As stated in Section 6, parents of a summer born (April to August) child may request that their child joins Reception, the school year after they reach compulsory school age. Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and always and only if it is in the child's best interests. Additionally, there are various implications that should be taken into account, and these are listed for careful consideration.

Considerations and Implications

- There is no guarantee of a place into Reception the following year as the application will be subject to the normal admissions process and allocations. Delay due to a summer birth date is not given priority over other applications. Please see our admissions arrangements which outline criteria for allocations.
- We recommend that parents/carers similarly approach other schools that they will be putting as preferences in an application to admissions, as if a child is not offered a place due to the usual admissions criteria, the second and third choice

schools will also need to have agreed to the request for a delayed entry place into Reception.

- If parents/carers reconsider during the child's fourth year and wish their child to start in-year in Reception or go straight into Year 1 in the autumn term after they turn 5, it is important to understand that applications will go through the 'in-year admissions' process and no guarantee of a place can be made.
- We strongly recommend that an application is always made in the usual way regardless of agreements with schools (i.e. in the January when the child is three) as this allows time for reconsideration by the parents/carers, for example if the child's development in the second half of their third year significantly accelerates, or the family's circumstances change.

7. CATCHMENT AREA

Catchment area maps are available online at:

www.suffolk.gov.uk/catchmentmaps.

If you live near to a boundary line on the map please check your address against the catchment area and/or street lists at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions.

You can also obtain a copy of the map or list from the Admissions Team on 0345 600 0981 (local rate).

8. NURSERY ADMISSIONS

Pre-statutory school age admissions are outlined in the separate Orwell MAT Nursery Admissions Policy. The Local Governing Committee of each school within the Trust will annually review arrangements to ensure the admission criteria is clear and fair. Should a Local Governing Committee wish to suggest amendments to existing arrangements, they need to make recommendations to the Orwell MAT Trust board, which is the admission authority for all its schools. Nursery application arrangements can be found on the individual school websites.

9. ADMISSION APPEALS

As part of the funding agreements, Orwell MAT is required to comply with the School Admissions Appeals Code. All Admission appeals should be referred to Suffolk County Council School Admissions Appeals team, and appeal hearings will be organised where appropriate. All letters refusing admission will give details of how to appeal the decision.

10. REVIEW

The Admissions Arrangements at Orwell MAT and schools within the Trust are reviewed annually.