

ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR SEPTEMBER 2018

Date of Policy: January 2017

Date of Review: January 2018

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Parents should note that for Suffolk Secondary Schools there is no automatic right to a place at the local school. It is essential that application forms are completed and returned by the 31st October.
- 1.2 Please note that this policy does not apply to sixth form admissions: please see our separate Sixth form policy.

2. Published Admission Number

The Published Admission Number (PAN) for 2018-19 is 240

3. Procedures for admission

- 3.1 The LA co-ordinates all applications to the normal year of entry (Year 7) up until September 2018. After September 2018 and for all other year group applications, it is the school who will write to parents.
- 3.2 Procedures for applying to Thomas Gainsborough are explained in the publication Admission to Schools in Suffolk. Parents should make themselves familiar with this information and take particular note of the definitions provided, dates and deadlines, which apply to Thomas Gainsborough admission arrangements unless stated otherwise in this document.
- 3.3 Normal admissions round is a CAF1, we recommend applications for the normal admissions round are made online at www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions. No completed forms will be accepted. For in year applications this is an ADM1 or the school's own application form, which is available from Suffolk County Council on 0345 600 0981 or online.
- 3.4 The deadline for ordinary Year 7 admissions will be that published in the Admission to Suffolk Schools Publication. This date is the 31st October.
- 3.5 As required by the Regulations of 2006 the school will give top priority to applications on behalf of 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).
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's 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.

4. Definitions and Details Priority Admission Area

4.1 Our priority admission area is that comprised of our **Partner Primary Feeder Schools**. This means that pupils attending one of our partner primary feeder schools at the application closing date are considered to 'reside' in our priority admission area.

4.2 Our partner primary feeder schools are Wells Hall Primary School, Pot Kiln Primary School, Bures, Boxford, Lavenham, Nayland and Stoke by Nayland Primary Schools.

5. Sibling

By sibling we mean children living at the same address who have one or both natural parents in common, children living at the same address who are related by a parent's marriage, children living at the same address whose parents are living as partners at this address. We do not include 'cousins' within our definition of sibling.

6. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs / Education, Health and Care Plans

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan that name the school will be admitted.

7. Oversubscription

7.1 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) will be admitted as the top priority.

7.2 Exceptional Medical Need (see below)

7.3 In the event of oversubscription, **applications from within the priority admission area** (from the named feeder partner schools) will be considered next and determined using the following criteria:

7.3.1 Children with a brother or sister (sibling) attending Thomas Gainsborough at the time of application with a reasonable expectation they will be attending at the start of the new school year. Attendance at Thomas Gainsborough will include attendance at the Sixth Form.

7.3.2 Children attending one of the named partner schools who do not have a brother or Sister (sibling) attending Thomas Gainsborough

7.4 Applications from children who **do not attend a named partner school** will be considered and will be determined by the following criteria:

7.4.1 Children with a brother or sister (sibling) attending Thomas Gainsborough at the time of application with a reasonable expectation they will be attending at the start of the new school year which will include attendance at the Sixth Form.

7.4.2 The proximity criteria described below in 'Tie-Breaker'.

8. Tie-breaker

8.1 In the event of oversubscription, priority will be determined by the proximity of the child's home to Thomas Gainsborough. We will give priority to the applicants who live nearest to the school as measured by a straight line (as the crow flies'). 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.

- 8.2 In the unlikely event that two or more applicants competing for a single place at the School live the same distance from the School, the place will be offered to one applicant on the basis of lots drawn by a person who is independent of the School.

9. **Home Address**

- 9.1 As part of the tie-breaker process proof of residence may be required by the co-ordinated scheme. The School will check allegations of false addresses or other false information given on the CAF1 and will withdraw offers of places if the details are found to be deliberately false or misleading.

- 9.2 Where a child lives part of the week with one parent and part with another member of the family, 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. We will not treat your child as ordinarily resident if you rent or own a second home in the catchment area or if you use another address to give the impression that your child lives in the catchment area so that you have a higher priority for a place at that school. 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.

10. **Medical Need**

Exceptional medical circumstances supported by written medical evidence may override all but the first criterion. Any such applications must be received by the closing date in the co-ordinated scheme and will be considered by the Admissions Committee of the school. The extent and circumstances in which medical need would override those above would relate to situations in which e.g. a hospital consultant has stated in writing that attendance at Thomas Gainsborough was an essential in terms meeting the medical needs of the child. The evidence should come, however, from at least one registered health professional and should set out the particular reasons why Thomas Gainsborough is the most suitable school.

11. **Admission of children out of their normal age group**

It is expected that children will normally be educated within their chronological year group. However, when requested to do so by the parent, admission authorities 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 (December 2014). We are expecting further guidance or a change to the School Admissions Code regarding this and would comply with new legislation.

For foundation, voluntary aided, free schools and academies parents or carers should make a request to the admission authority for each school in writing. This will need to include, where relevant, any supporting evidence. The governing body or academy trust will make a decision on the request, taking into account the views of the headteacher. The school will write to the parent or carer with the outcome including the reasons for the decision. If the request is refused, details of how to complain to the school should be given. A CAF1 application form must be sent to the LA along with the decision letter(s) from the own admissions authority school(s) 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.

12. Multiple births

The school's policy is not to separate multiple births. If the final place available at a school is offered to a twin, triplet, or other multiple births and the remaining sibling/s would ordinarily be refused, the academy trust will offer places to the remaining sibling/s.

13. Waiting Lists and in year admissions

Under the co-ordinated scheme the Local Authority will hold a waiting list of all those unsuccessful in their initial application until 31 December. The school will continue to maintain a waiting list for subsequent terms.

Names are placed on the waiting list in the priority order set out in our admissions oversubscription criteria. The order of children on a waiting list 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. Having your child's name on a waiting list will not affect your right to appeal for a school place in any of the schools you have applied for. If a place becomes available, we will offer it to children 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.

We also maintain waiting lists for all 'full' year groups.

Applications received in the Summer Term for the following school year will carry over to the following year and be added to the waiting list if it has not been possible to allocate a place prior to September. In all other situations a parent or guardian will need to make a fresh application if they wish their child to be considered for a place in new school year.

RIGHT TO APPEAL

When an applicant is unsuccessful there is an automatic right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel