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Admissions Policy

Published admission number (PAN) 2019-2020: 30

There is no guarantee of a place in the school. In the event of oversubscription, places will be allocated using the following criteria in the order given:

- 1. 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 (as defined in Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989).
- 2. Children from within the priority admissions area (or PAA) with a sibling attending the school.** The definition of sibling is a brother or sister (sibling) or a step brother/sister living at the same address who will be on the register of the School for years R – 5 at the time of application and determination.
- 3. Other children from within the priority admissions area, or PAA.**
- 4. Children from outside the priority admissions area with a sibling attending the school.**
- 5. Other applicants.**

In case of oversubscription in each category, admission is to be determined by straight-line distance from the school, measured by the Local Authority by use of a Geographical Information System which accurately measures the straight line distance from the home address to the school.

Where, based on distance from home to school, measured as above, there is the need for a tie-break, then that will be carried out by way of the drawing of lots by an independent third party.

Definitions:

Looked after Children

A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangement order or special guardianship order will be given first priority in oversubscription criteria ahead of all other applicants in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2014. 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 (as defined in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health and Care Plan

Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that name the school on the statement/plan are required to be admitted to a school regardless of their place in the priority order. The school will follow the accepted protocols in this regard which currently state that 1. Admission cannot be prejudicial to the education of the rest of the class and 2. The school must be able to meet the child's needs as outlined in the professional reports provided with the admission request managed by the Essex Local Authority SENCAN team.

Age of Admission

Hatfield Heath Primary School adopts Essex County Council's policy that children born on and between 1 September 2014 and 31 August 2015 would normally commence primary school in Reception in the academic year beginning in September 2019.

As required by law, Hatfield Heath Primary School provides for the full-time admission of all children offered a place in the Reception year group from the September following their fourth birthday. Therefore, if a parent wants a full-time place for their child from September (at the school at which a place has been offered) then they are entitled to that full-time place.

Where the child has not yet reached compulsory school age, parents have the right to defer entry until later in the school year until the child reaches compulsory school age. The law does not require a child to start school until the start of the term following their fifth birthday. Compulsory school age is reached at that point.

Where entry is deferred, the school will hold the place for that child and not offer it to another child. The parent would not however be able to defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the academic year for which the original application was accepted.

Parents also have the right for their child to attend part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. Any parents interested in taking up a part-time place initially should contact the school for further details to fully discuss what this option would entail.

Where parents choose to defer entry, Hatfield Heath Primary School would reasonably expect that the child would start at the beginning of a new school term/half term.

Where a parent of a 'summer-born' child (1 April – 31 August) wishes their child to start school in the autumn term following their fifth birthday, they will need to apply for a place at the correct time for the normal admission round for the following academic year. Supporting evidence from relevant professionals, working with the child and family stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age appropriate cohort should be submitted. The School will take account of evidence provided by the parent and professionals and reach its decision, based on what is in the best interests of the child and decide whether the application for a Reception place will be accepted or whether it will be treated as an application for a Year 1 place, the child's normal age appropriate cohort. If the application for a Reception place is not accepted, this does not constitute a refusal of the place and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal.

Applying for a school place

The application process is in accordance with the co-ordinated scheme for primary admissions and involves completion of the Common Application Form – either online or by paper. Offers of places will be sent out by the Local Authority on 16th April 2019.

Closing date for applications

The closing date for applications is determined and published by Essex Local Authority annually. This will be 15th January 2019.

Home address

Applications will normally be processed on the basis of the home address for the child at the time of application and determination, unless, where there is a new home address, proof of an exchange of contracts or copy of a tenancy agreement can be provided to the Local Authority by the published date. The home address is considered to be the address at which the child resides on a permanent basis or is 'ordinarily resident'. This is generally the address of the parent/carer. In some cases, children may be 'ordinarily resident' for the majority of the school week, including overnight, with another relative or carer, such as a grandparent. Where this is the case, the application may be processed on the basis of that address and proof of address and residence arrangement will be required with the application. The child must be living with the relative or carer 24 hours per day, for the majority of the school week. Arrangements where parents can leave and collect children from another relative or carer on a daily basis will be regarded as childcare arrangements; the child will not be deemed to be 'ordinarily resident' with that person. In all cases we expect that the adult with whom the child is 'ordinarily resident' receives the child benefit for the child (where eligible).

Distance tie breaker

All straight-line distances are calculated electronically by the LA, on the schools behalf, 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 straight-line distance is measured and reported to three decimal places. In the unlikely event of two or more applicants with an identical distance competing for a single place at the school, in order to be fair, open and honest, the place will be drawn via anonymous ballot, by a person independent of the Trust and the Local Authority personnel involved in the admissions process.

Address checking

Where residency is relevant to an application for a school place, the School will ask a random sample of applicants to provide proof of their home address. This must be a copy of one of the following:

- UK driving licence;
- Council tax notification;
- Two utility bills dated within the last 6 months (gas, electricity, water or landline phone)

Where there is reasonable doubt as to the validity of a home address, the School reserves the right to take additional checking measures including, in some cases, unannounced home visits. If a school place is secured through false information regarding a home address, the School may withdraw the place offered.

Admission of children from overseas

All children of compulsory school age (5 to 16 years) in the UK have a right of access to education. However, where a child is in the UK for a short period only, for example less than half a term, it may be reasonable to refuse admission to a school.

Children who hold full British Citizen passports (not British Dependent Territories or British Overseas passports), have a passport endorsed to show a right of abode in the UK, or are European Economic Area nationals, have unrestricted entry to the UK. An application for a school place will be accepted for such children, even though they may not be resident in the UK at the time of application. The application may however be processed on the basis of the overseas address.

If an applicant meeting the above criteria owns a property in Essex but is not living in it, perhaps because they are working abroad at the time of application, but they intend to take up residency at the Essex home before the start of the autumn term, the application will be processed using the Essex address. Any offer of a school place will then be conditional upon receipt of evidence of taking up residency at that property in Essex.

Other children from overseas do not generally have automatic right of entry to the UK. An application for a school place will not therefore be accepted until they are resident in the UK. Proof of residency will be required with the application.

Siblings

For applications made in the normal admission round a relevant sibling is a child who has a brother, sister, adopted brother or sister or stepbrother or stepsister living in the same family unit in the same family household and address who attends the preferred school in any year group excluding the final year. Biological siblings who attend the preferred school in any year group excluding the final year will also be treated as siblings irrespective of place of residence. Children residing in the same household as part of an extended family, such as cousins, will not be treated as siblings. For mid-year applications a sibling is a child who has a brother, sister, adopted brother or sister or stepbrother or stepsister living in the same family unit in the same family household and address as a child who attends or has been offered a place at the preferred school at the time of application and determination and with a reasonable expectation that the sibling will be attending at the time of admission.

Priority Admission Area

There is no guarantee of a place to children living in the priority admission area of a particular school. Details, including maps of priority admission areas are available on request from the school office.

Twins, Triplets etc.

For applications made in the normal admission round, if children of multiple birth (twins and triplets) are tied for the final place, those siblings will be admitted over PAN as permitted by the class size rules.

Withdrawal of an offer

If a school place has been secured through false information or has been offered in error, the offer of the place may be withdrawn.

Waiting lists

In the event of oversubscription, the school will hold a waiting list until the end of the autumn term and continue to allocate places from this list, if spaces become available. For mid-year applications or other year groups, a waiting list may be kept by the school for parents who wish to be informed when a vacancy arises, at their request.

Applicants will be ranked on the relevant waiting list in priority order, according to the school's admission criteria. The School will maintain a waiting list and make contact with them should a vacancy arise.

Late Applications

Late applications will be considered after those admitted on time, but will be offered a place if space remains. Where the school is oversubscribed, late applications will be refused and ranked according to the admissions criteria. These will be kept on a waiting list.

Changing primary schools

The opportunity to transfer depends on places being available at the preferred school. If approved, a place is usually made available at the start of the following term. If no places are available, the application will be refused and the right of appeal will be given and an application form for return to School Admissions to help secure a school place elsewhere. In cases where a child moves into a district area (proof of address required) and as a result of the move, the child would be without a school place the application will be dealt with immediately. A child should not be withdrawn from the current school until a place has been secured elsewhere.

Admission Outside of the 'Normal Age Group'

Parents may seek a place at a school outside of a child's normal age group, for example if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. Any such request must be made in writing with an application setting out clearly the reasons, with any supporting evidence from relevant professionals such as teachers or doctors. Each such case will be considered by the School on an individual basis – external advice may be sought. The views of the Headteacher will be sought. There is no guarantee that a request for a place outside of a child's normal age group will be agreed but the school will reach its decision based on the best interests of the child.

Applications made after the start of the autumn term

On receipt of an application after the start of the autumn term the LA will contact the school in writing for the up-to-date numbers. If there are spaces in the year group an offer will be made, or if not a refusal will be sent and the right of appeal given, if it was a first application for the year group. Unless there is a significant and material change in circumstances, a second application for the same school received in the same academic year does not have to be determined by the LA and no second right of appeal will be given. When there are more applications received on the same day, than the number of places available, the school's admission criteria will be used to determine any offers that can be made. A waiting list is kept by the school for parents who wish to be informed when a vacancy arises. In the case of more than one person being on the relevant class list the normal admissions policy criteria will then be applied.

Appeals against admission decisions

Parents have the right to appeal against admission decisions to an Independent Appeal Panel. Information about how to appeal against a refusal of a school place will be sent with the offer pack. Notice of appeal should be sent to:

The Clerk to the Independent Appeal Panel, PO Box 11, Chelmsford, CM1 1LX.