



HERTS FOR  
LEARNING  
**MULTI  
ACADEMY  
TRUST**

## **WATERSIDE ACADEMY**

### **Herts for Learning Multi Academy Trust**

#### **ADMISSION POLICY FOR 2019/20**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Waterside Academy (“the Academy”) is a primary academy located within Hertfordshire County Council and is part of Herts for Learning Multi Academy Trust, a multi academy trust (“the Trust”). The Trust is the “admission authority” for the Academy.

#### **EQUALITY AND INCLUSION**

The School is fully inclusive and welcomes applications for the admission of children of all abilities and needs, including those with special educational needs and disabilities. The Academy fully complies with its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

#### **PUBLISHED ADMISSION NUMBER (“PAN”)**

The published admission number (“PAN”) for Reception Year at the Academy is: **30**

This means that the Academy will admit up to that number of children in the September of the school year to which this policy applies.

#### **Oversubscription criteria for the school year 2019/20**

Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the governing bodies of all maintained schools to admit a child with a statement of special educational needs that names their school. Schools must also admit children with an EHC (Education, Health and Care) Plan that names the school.

If there are fewer applications than places available at a school all applicants will be admitted.

If there are more applications than places available, the criteria outlined below will be used to prioritise applications.

## Oversubscription criteria

**Rule 1:** **Children looked after** and children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order).

**Rule 2: Medical or Social**

Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school.

*A panel of officers will determine whether the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet the requirements for this rule. The evidence must relate specifically to the school applied for under Rule 2 and must clearly demonstrate why it is the only school that can meet the child's needs.*

**Rule 3: Linked School**

*This rule only applies to pupils who are currently attending an infant school which has a linked junior school and therefore does not apply to Waterside Academy*

**Rule 4: Sibling**

Children who have a sibling on the roll of the school or linked school at the time of application\*. *This applies to reception through to Year 5 in infant, junior and primary schools; and from reception through to Year 3 in first schools; and from Year 5 to Year 7 in middle schools.*

**Rule 5: Nearest School**

Children for whom it is their nearest school or academy.

*This includes all schools except those which allocate places on the basis of faith.*

**Rule 6: Distance**

Children who live nearest to the school.

*Children not considered under rule 5 will be considered under rule 6.*

These rules are applied in the order they are printed above. If more children qualify under a particular rule than there are places available, a tie break will be used by applying the next rule to those children.

### Tie Break

When there is a need for a tie break where two different addresses are the same distance from a school, in the case of a block of flats for example, the lower door number will be deemed nearest as logically this will be on the ground floor and therefore closer. If there are two identical addresses of separate applicants, the tie break will be random. Every child entered onto the HCC admissions database has an individual random number assigned, between 1 and 1 million, against each preference school. When there is a need for a final tie break the random number is used to allocate the place, with the lowest number given priority.

*\*Please see the 'Explanatory notes and definitions 2019/20 document for a full explanation/definition.*

The following definitions apply to terms used in the admissions criteria:

**Rule 1: Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order<sup>1</sup> or a special guardianship order<sup>2</sup>)**

Places are allocated to children in public care according to Chapter 7, Section 2 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

These children will be prioritised under rule 1.

Highest priority will also be given to children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order.

A “child looked after” 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 (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989)

All children adopted from care who are of compulsory school age are eligible for admission under rule 1.<sup>3</sup>

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under Rule 1.

Children who were not “looked after” **immediately** before being adopted, or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order, **will not** be prioritised under rule 1. Applications made for these children, with suitable supporting professional evidence, can be considered under rule 2.

<sup>1</sup> Child arrangements order

*Under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders, which settle the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.*

<sup>2</sup> Special guardianship order

*Under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian or guardians.*

<sup>3</sup> This definition has been amended in accordance with paragraph 1.7 (footnote 17) of the School Admissions Code that came into force on 19 December 2014.

## **Rule 2: Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school**

Rule 2 applications will only be considered at the time of the initial application, unless there has been a significant and exceptional change of circumstances within the family since the initial application was submitted.

All schools in Hertfordshire have experience in dealing with children with diverse social and medical needs. However, in a few very exceptional cases, there are reasons why a child has to go to one specific school.

Few applications under Rule 2 are agreed.

All applications are considered individually but a successful application should include the following:

- a. Specific recent professional evidence that justifies why only one school can meet a child's individual needs, and/or
- b. Professional evidence that outlines exceptional family circumstances making clear why only one school can meet the child's needs.
- c. If the requested school is not the nearest school to the child's home address clear reasons why the nearest school is not appropriate.
- d. For medical cases – a clear explanation of why the child's severity of illness or disability makes attendance at only a specific school essential.

Evidence should make clear why only one school is appropriate.

Applications under Rule 2 can only be considered when supported by a recent letter from a professional involved with the child or family, for example a doctor, psychologist or police officer. The supporting evidence needs to demonstrate why only one named school can meet the social/medical needs of the child.

Applications for children previously "looked after" but not meeting the specific criteria outlined Rule 1, may be made under this rule.

Further details on the Rule 2 process can be found in the "Rule 2 protocol" available at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/schools-and-education/admissions/admissions-rule-2-process-document.pdf>

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## **Rule 3: Definition of sibling**

A sibling is defined as: the sister, brother, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent/carer or partner or a child looked after or previously looked after<sup>1</sup> and in every case living permanently<sup>2</sup> in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of this application.

A sibling must be on the roll of the named school at the time the younger child starts or have been offered and accepted a place.

If a place is obtained for an older child using fraudulent information, there will be no sibling

connection available to subsequent children from that family.

<sup>1</sup> Children previously looked after are those children adopted or with a special guardianship order or child arrangements order. This definition was amended following a determination by the OSA in August 2014.

<sup>2</sup> A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.

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### **Multiple births**

The Academy will admit over the school's published admission number when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated the last place at a school.

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### **Home address**

The address provided must be the child's current permanent address at the time of application. 'At the time of application' means the closing date for applications. "Permanent" means that the child has lived at that address for at least a year and/or the family own the property or have a tenancy agreement for a minimum of 12 months.

The application can only be processed using one address. If a child lives at more than one address (for example due to a separation) the address used will be the one which the child lives at for the majority of the time. If a child lives at two addresses equally, the address of the parent/carer that claims Child Benefit/Child Tax Credit will be considered as the child's main residence.

If a family is not in receipt of Child Benefit/Tax Credit alternative documentation will be requested.

If a child's residence is in dispute, parents/carers should provide court documentation to evidence the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes.

If two different applications are received for the same child from the same address, e.g. containing different preferences, the application from the parent in receipt of child benefit will be processed if the applications cannot be reconciled.

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## **Fraudulent applications**

The Academy will do as much as possible to prevent applications being made from fraudulent addresses.

Address evidence is frequently requested, monitored and checked and school places will be withdrawn when false information is deliberately provided. Action will be taken in the following circumstances:

- When a child's application address does not match the address of that child at their current school;
- When a child lives at a different address to the applicant;
- When the applicant does not have parental responsibility;
- When a family move shortly after the closing date of applications when one or more of the following applies:
  - The family has moved to a property from which their application was less likely to be successful;
  - The family has returned to an existing property;
  - The family lived in rented accommodation for a short period of time (anything less than a year) over the application period;
  - Council tax information shows a different residence at the time of application.
- When a child starts at the allocated school and their address is different from the address used at the time of application.

Parents/carers will need to show that they have relinquished residency ties with their previous property and they, and their child(ren) are permanently residing at the address given on the application form.

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## **Home to school distance measurement for purposes of admissions**

A 'straight line' distance measurement is used in all home to school distance measurements for community and VC schools in Hertfordshire. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

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## Definition of “nearest school” for primary/junior/middle admissions

The definition of “nearest school” includes all schools and academies (regardless of status) unless that school or academy prioritises applications and allocates places on the basis of faith.

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### Applications from children\* from overseas

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

An application for a school place will only be accepted for such children currently overseas if, for In Year applications, proof is provided that the child will be resident in Hertfordshire within two weeks. In Year allocations are made on the assumption that the child will accept the school place and be on roll within that timescale.

For the Primary and Secondary transfer processes, applications will not normally be accepted from, nor places allocated to, an overseas address. The exception to this (for both In Year and transfer processes) is for children of UK service personnel and crown servants (and from military families who are residents of countries with a Memorandum of Understanding with the UK). In these cases a place will be allocated in advance of the family arriving in the area provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a HCC Unit postal address or quartering area address, for consideration of the application against oversubscription criteria.

Applications will also be considered, and places offered in advance for these families, if the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date but does not provide a quartering or unit address because the family will be residing in private accommodation. In these cases, if the family does not already have a permanent private address in Hertfordshire, the military base or alternative “work” address in Hertfordshire will be used for allocation purposes.

If the family already has an established alternative private address, that address will be used for admission purposes.

We will also consider accepting applications from children<sup>1</sup> whose family can evidence intent to return to and/or permanently reside in Hertfordshire prior to the start of the new academic year. These applications, if accepted, will be processed from the overseas address until sufficient evidence is received to show the child is permanently resident in Hertfordshire. Evidence must be submitted at the time of application.

Evidence submitted after the date for late applications (4 December 2018 for secondary transfer and 2 February 2019 for the Under 11s process) cannot be taken into account before National Allocation Day. Decisions on these applications will be made by a panel of senior officers and communicated with parents within 6 weeks of the closing date for applications.

If an applicant owns a property in Hertfordshire but is not living in it, perhaps because they are working abroad at the time of application, the Hertfordshire address will **not** be accepted for the purposes of admission until the child is resident at that address.

Other children, than those mentioned above, 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

permanently resident in Hertfordshire. Proof of residency such as an endorsed passport or entry visa will be required with the application, in addition to proof of Hertfordshire address, for example a council tax bill or 12 month rental agreement.

*\*Children who hold full British Citizen passports (not British Dependent Territories or British Overseas passports), or have a UK passport describing them as a British citizen or British subject with the right of abode or are European Economic Area nationals normally have unrestricted entry to the UK.*

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### **Age of Admission and Deferral of Places**

Hertfordshire County Council's policy is that children born on and between 1 September 2013 and 31 August 2015\* would normally commence primary school in Reception in the academic year beginning in September 2019. All Hertfordshire infant, first and primary schools provide for the full-time admission of all children offered a place in the Reception year group from the September following their fourth birthday. 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.

Parents can defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the same academic year or until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age. Summer born children are only able to "defer" entry to Reception class until the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made.

Where parents wish, children can attend part-time until they reach compulsory school age. Any parents wishing to take up a part-time place or deferred entry should contact the school to discuss their child's requirements.

### **\*Summer born children (1 April – 31 August) – Entry to Reception**

Legally, a child does not have to start school until the start of the term following their fifth birthday. Children born between 1 April 2015 and 31 August 2015 are categorised as "summer born" and if parents/carers do not believe that their summer born child is ready to join Reception in 2019 they should contact the home LA, and the school, for guidance before making an application.

Summer born applications that are delayed for a year (for entry in September 2020) will be processed in exactly the same way as all other reception applications received at that time; there is no guarantee that a place will be offered at a child's preferred school.

If parents wish to delay their application for a Reception place they are advised to discuss their child's needs/development with their current early years or nursery provider. If parents wish their child to remain in their existing nursery school or class for a further year (rather than moving into the Reception year group) they must let their current school know before the end of the Spring term in 2019 (before the Easter break).

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## **Children Out of Year Group (except applications for reception from summer born)**

The Trust's policy is for children to be educated within their correct chronological year group, with the curriculum differentiated as necessary to meet the needs of individual children. This is in line with DfE guidance, which states that "in general, children should be educated in their normal age group".

If parents/carers believe their child(ren) should be educated in a different year group they should, at the time of application, submit supporting evidence from relevant professionals working with the child and family stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age appropriate cohort. DfE guidance makes clear that "it is reasonable for admission authorities to expect parents to provide them with information in support of their request – since without it they are unlikely to be able to make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case".

For schools within the Trust, the Trust, as the relevant admission authority, through a panel process, will decide whether the application will be accepted on the basis of the information submitted. The panel make decisions based upon the circumstances of each case including the view of parents, the relevant headteacher(s), the child's social, academic and emotional development and whether the child has been previously educated out of year group. There is no guarantee that an application will be accepted on this basis. If the application is not accepted this does not constitute a refusal of a place and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal. Similarly there is no right of appeal for a place in a specific year group at a school. The internal management and organisation of a school, including the placement of pupils in classes, is a matter for the Headteacher and senior leadership of individual schools.

Applications for children to be educated out of year group at Waterside Academy should be submitted to the school office in the first instance. Applications will be considered by the Academy and will be approved by the Board of Trustees of the Herts for Learning Multi Academy Trust.

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## **Nursery Provision**

The admission arrangements detailed in this document do not apply for those being admitted into any nursery or pre-school provision. The responsibility for admission into nursery provision lies with the governing body of Waterside Academy.

Parents of children who are admitted to a nursery provision at a school must apply in the normal way for a place at the school if they want their child to transfer to the reception class. Attendance at the nursery or co-located children's centre does not guarantee admission to the school.

## **Continuing Interest (CI)**

After places have been offered, the Academy will maintain a continuing interest (waiting) list. A child's position on a CI list will be determined by the admission criteria outlined above and a child's place on the list can change as other children join or leave it. The Academy will contact parents/carers if a vacancy becomes available and it can be offered to a child. Continuing interest lists will be maintained for every year group until the end of the summer term. To retain a CI application after this time, parents must make an In Year application. Continuing Interest lists will be retained until 31 December.

## **Fair Access**

The Academy will admit children under the Fair Access Protocol before those on continuing interest, and over the Published Admission Number (PAN) if required.

## **APPLICATIONS FOR ADMISSION**

Applications for admission to Reception Year in September (known as admission “in the normal admission round”) must be made to the Local Authority by completing and submitting their Common Application Form (“CAF”) which is accessible via the Local Authority’s admissions page on its website.

Parents must ensure that they complete all necessary information (for example, details of siblings) in the CAF before it is submitted. Failure to do so by the application deadline will result in the child being placed into the next category that applies.

## **ADMISSION TIMETABLE**

Please see Hertfordshire County Council’s [website](#) for a complete timetable of the important dates for admissions for September 2019.

## **ADMISSION APPEALS**

Parents have a statutory right of appeal against the refusal of a place which will be heard before an independent panel. Full details about the statutory right of appeal, including how and when the request for an appeal must be lodged, will be confirmed in the notification letter/email sent to parents on National Offer Day.

A request for an admission appeal must be accompanied by the grounds for making the appeal (for example, why the parents believe that this Admission Policy is not compliant with admission law, in what way the Admission Policy was incorrectly or partially applied to the application for admission, or why it was unreasonable to refuse the application for admission). Before setting out the grounds of appeal, parents are advised to consider the reason for the refusal stated within the notification letter.

## **IN YEAR ADMISSIONS**

If you have moved, you can apply to change school during the school year. We call this an "in year admission".

You can also apply if you want your child to go to a different school.

Please complete HCC’s ‘In year Admissions Form’ at this [link](#)

In year applications are assessed in line with the oversubscription criteria outlined above.

## **Children taught in a different year group**

If your child is currently being taught in a different year group and you want that to continue, send us supporting evidence from a professional (for example, your child's teacher or Head of Year). This needs to show why your child needs to be educated in a different year group. We only agree these cases in exceptional circumstances. We can't guarantee to offer your child a place in the same year group and if your request is upheld, there is no guarantee that an offer will be made at the preferred school(s).

## **Which address to use**

Use your child's current permanent address when you apply. If you're moving in the near future, the application form will also ask for your child's new address.

## **Email us your proof of address**

We need 2 documents showing your **current address**. At least one of them needs to be a council tax bill, utility bill, solicitor's letter upon completion (exchange of contracts not accepted) or a signed tenancy agreement.

If you're moving, we also need **proof of your new address**. This should be either a tenancy agreement showing the start date of the tenancy or a solicitor's letter confirming the completion date. We won't use the new address until we have proof that the child is living there permanently.

If you're moving to a rented property, send us evidence that you've sold or are in the process of selling your current property, or that your current lease agreement has ended.

You must also send us **proof that you and your child live at the new address**. It's not enough to simply change your address on your online application. We can't process your application without proof of address.

## **Children living at more than one address**

If your child lives at more than one address (for example, due to parents separating), use the address where your child lives for most of the time.

If your child lives at 2 addresses equally, use the address of the parent who claims the Child Benefit or Child Tax Credit.

## **Addresses of UK service personnel and crown servants**

If you're employed as UK service personnel or crown servants, once you've applied online, send us an official letter from either:

- Ministry of Defence (MOD)
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)
- Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ).

The letter must give your relocation date and a unit postal or quartering address in Hertfordshire.

Your application will be processed in advance of your move and a school place offered (as long as it's within a reasonable time).

### **Fraudulent addresses or false information**

We require proof of address before applications are processed though, we may ask for further proof of your address at any time. We will withdraw the offer of a school place if we find a fraudulent address has been used. We may also withdraw the offer of a school place if information is deliberately withheld.

Tell us if you move during the application process.

You'll have the right to appeal an in year admissions decision if you apply for a school and a place can't be offered because the school has no vacancies when you apply.