

# Admissions Policy

(including Out of Year Admissions, Summer Born Children and Deferred Entry)

## for the academic year 2018 / 2019



<b>Statutory guidance:</b>	School Admissions Code, 19 December 2014 DfE
<b>Non-statutory guidance:</b>	Advice on admissions of summer born children, December 2014, DfE
<b>Admitting Authority:</b>	The Governing Body
<b>Date of issue:</b>	March 2017
<b>Revision frequency:</b>	Annually

**Our Mission Statement:** Celebrating children, learning, leading

### Introduction

Thank you for your interest in Harpenden Academy Admissions process.



Harpenden Academy complies with the legal requirements of the DfE published Admissions Code.

Harpenden Academy operates an unbiased admissions process.

Harpenden Academy will form part of Hertfordshire County Council's Co-ordinated Admissions process for Reception places until further notice. We will co-ordinate and share data with Herts County Council.

Harpenden Academy will admit up to 30 pupils to the Reception Year each academic year and will gradually build the school to a full admission of 420 pupils across a minimum of 7 years.

#### **A. Summary of policy:**

Harpenden Academy operates an admissions policy based on 2 concentric geographic areas with a percentage allocation of approx 50% to the first area and the remaining 50% to the combined areas.

#### **B. Rationale**

Harpenden Academy has three main tenets to the admissions policy.

- i. **Ethos:** Harpenden Academy wishes to support, without bias, the applications of those who believe in its unique ethos and approach.
- ii. **Community:** Harpenden Academy wishes to be a community hub and therefore seeks to take 50% of children from its immediate local area and the remaining 50% from an extended area which includes the immediate local area.
- iii. **Without artificial financial barriers:** Harpenden Academy wishes to prevent the "doughnut" effect surrounding popular schools with the resulting effect on house prices and the consequential affordability of school places for families. For this reason it has an extended catchment area for a portion of applications. In this way we hope to create no artificial financial barriers to entry and to actively discourage families relocating specifically for school admissions.

Harpenden Academy also considers the following point important in their policy formulation.

**Environment:** Harpenden Academy wishes to be a "green" school and therefore seeks to take the majority of children from within a reasonable walking or cycling distance from the school - and expects parents to support this in their travel arrangements.

#### **C. Process and guidance**

**Summary:** Harpenden Academy operates an admissions policy based on 2 geographic areas with a percentage allocation of approx 50% to the first area and the remaining 50% to the combined areas.

**Those geographically closest:** Those living locally to the school will be included in the allocation of both the first 50% and second 50% of places at Reception Year entry (after allocations for those with a statement of SEN which names Harpenden Academy, looked after and previously looked after children, those entitled to a Pupil Premium, the children of staff and siblings of current pupils).

**Those at a greater geographical distance:** those living further from the school will not be excluded from the possibility of a place but will be included only in the allocation of the final 50% of places as a reflection of their distance from the school. Parish or county boundaries will not exclude applicants from an allocation.

**Siblings:** Siblings will be given preference in all allocations including where they have been unsuccessful in the allocation of the first 50% of places. The 2 area process means that siblings living at a significant distance will only be considered in the allocation of the second 50% of places, after first children living closer to the school but with preference over first children applying from within the second geographic area. This means that within each allocation siblings will be selected first and after that there will be no further criteria applied to determine an offer of a place to a sibling.

**Random selection:** Applications will be given a computer generated random reference and these references will be supervised by someone independent of the school, usually (but not always) a member of the County Council admissions team.

**Summer Born Children:** we will consider application for Summer Born Children in line with DFE guidance—see

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/389448/Summer\\_born\\_admissions\\_advice\\_Dec\\_2014.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/389448/Summer_born_admissions_advice_Dec_2014.pdf).

**Deferred Entry during Reception Year:** parents can opt to defer entry or send their child part-time until compulsory school age (see section I).

**Out of Year Admissions:** Harpenden Academy expects that all children will complete their schooling in the correct academic year group for their chronological age. Exceptions to this will be considered in line with this policy.

#### **D. Entry to Reception Year**

Harpenden Academy will admit up to 30 pupils to the Reception year group each academic year.

Class sizes will not exceed 30 pupils unless required to do so in order to admit permitted KS1 exceptions.

The school will admit all children with a Statement of SEN that names Harpenden Academy, or an Education Health Care Plan that names Harpenden Academy.

Additional places will be allocated on the following criteria.

#### **Oversubscription criteria for all year groups, including Reception Year**

If there are fewer applications than places available, all applicants will be offered a place. If the school is oversubscribed places will be offered on the basis of the following criteria, and in this order.

1. Looked after children 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). For full eligibility under this criterion of admission please see definition below

2. Up to a maximum of 15 places will be allocated to children who are entitled to a Pupil Premium on the day after the close of applications (Herts County deadline), and whose permanent home address is within Harpenden Town Parish boundary – see Appendix 1. If the number of applications received under this rule exceeds 15, random selection will be used to allocate places. Entitlement to Pupil Premium is assessed using your National Insurance number. Please visit [www.hertsdirect.org/freeschoolmeals](http://www.hertsdirect.org/freeschoolmeals) for more information on the most up-to-date criteria required to qualify for Pupil Premium. Families wishing to apply under this rule will also need to complete the Schools Supplementary Information Form (SIF) which is available on the school website at <http://harpendenacademy.org/>. The completed SIF should be returned directly to Harpenden Academy by the Herts County deadline..
3. Children of staff employed by the school as at the date of admission, in line with definition below (in section J).
4. Allocation 1 - 50% of the remaining places (to be rounded up to whole places) for those whose permanent home address is within Harpenden Town Parish boundary. If there are more applications than places available, then places will be allocated as follows:
  - i. to siblings (please see section J for a full definition of a sibling)
  - ii. by random selection
5. Allocation 2 - 50% of the remaining places (to be rounded down to whole places) for any other applicant regardless of geographical proximity or county boundaries, including those who were unsuccessful in Allocation 1. If there are more applications than places available, then places will be allocated as follows:
  - i. to siblings (please see section J for a full definition of a sibling)
  - ii. by random selection
6. Remaining places

If places still remain available they can be offered to children still requiring places who have not expressed a preference for Harpenden Academy and whose permanent home address is within Hertfordshire. These will be allocated in order of geographical proximity, in a straight line, as measured by Hertfordshire County Council's measurement system as part of co-ordinated admissions.

#### **E. Late Applications**

Applications made after the closing date for the applications process as published by Hertfordshire County Council will be considered using the above criteria only after the applications received on time have been fully processed, in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council's scheme of co-ordination or Harpenden Academy's own Admissions Criteria.

#### **F. In Year Applications for New and Existing Year Groups.**

Harpenden Academy will not admit children with a date of birth earlier than 1<sup>st</sup> September 2005.

Harpenden Academy will ultimately have a maximum number of 60 pupils per year group and will adhere to infant class size legislation.

The school will follow the same process as outlined above for the Reception place allocations for applications for new year groups within Harpenden Academy and for children making an In Year transfer at the date at which a new year group is opened or at the date at which a space in a year group becomes confirmed as available.

The sibling rule will apply to those children whose younger sibling have been offered and have accepted a place at Harpenden Academy. Places will be allocated starting with the lowest year group.

Siblings applying for new year groups excluding the Reception year will qualify for sibling allocation as soon as one child has been allocated a place. Places will be allocated starting with the lowest year group.

#### **G. Allocation of places from a waiting list**

Harpenden Academy will operate a continuous waiting list.

Allocations to existing year groups will only be made where such allocation does not take the year group above the published admissions number (or alternatively agreed for a specific year group by the Board of Governors). Applications will be considered using the same criteria as used of Reception applicants where there are more applicants than spaces available.

Harpenden Academy will hold, if required, a waiting list – throughout the year. For each added child, Harpenden Academy will re-rank the list again in line with the Over-subscriptions Policy in this document and award a space as soon as one becomes available. In the event that applicants multiple applicants wish to start in future terms (e.g. applications made in September for a January start), offers will be made 2 weeks before the end of each preceding term (e.g. December).

Priority will not be based on the date the application was received or their name was added to the list.

The school participates in the County Council's Fair Access Protocol and will admit children under this protocol before children on the continuing interest list.

#### **H. Appeals**

All unsuccessful applicants have the right to appeal to an independent panel for a place to be made available for their child. Parents wishing to register an appeal should contact the Hertfordshire County Council Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request an appeal pack. Hertfordshire parents wishing to appeal, who applied on line, should log on to their online application and click on the link "register an appeal". If application was not made using

Hertfordshire's on line application system parents should contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request an appeal pack.

For In Year applications - parents wishing to appeal should contact the school directly in the first instance.

## **I. Out of year group applications, Summer Born and Deferred Entry during Reception Year**

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

Decisions to admit pupils out of their chronological legal school year will be taken on a case by case basis.

The school'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. The application should demonstrate why an out of year admission is in the best interests of the child and make reference to the following types of information as relevant to the individual child.

- i. The academic, social and emotional development of the child to date.
- ii. Any relevant medical history or professional opinion, including be born premature.
- iii. Factors which indicate the child is not ready for school or a particular year group.
- iv. The possible impact of the child on entering their normal chronological year in relation to social, emotional, physical, cognitive and academic development.
- v. Any external professional opinions in relation to the child (for example Educational Psychologist reports, professional counsellors).
- vi. Proposed actions the parents will undertake to ensure the child's readiness for the adjusted year group.
- vii. Wider research relevant to this child.

Decisions will be made by the Governing Board, based on:

- i. the knowledge they have of the individual child, including their social, emotional and academic fit
- ii. the knowledge they have of the dynamics of different year groups and where the child would best fit into Harpenden Academy
- iii. the medical history of the child and the views of a medical professional (where appropriate)
- iv. whether the child has previously been educated outside of their normal age group
- v. whether the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely

- vi. in the best interests of the individual child and their holistic development throughout the Harpenden Academy school phase
- vii. allowing for the child's social development within their peer group
- viii. taking into account the best interests of other children for whom Harpenden Academy carries responsibility.

The decision will include:

- i. The age group into which the child can be admitted
- ii. The application of oversubscription criteria for that age group
- iii. The full reason for the decision including the points made above

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".

There is no guarantee that an application will be accepted on the basis of the evidence provided. If the application for a place in an adjusted year group is refused this does not constitute a refusal of a place within the child's chronological year group and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal. Parents are able to apply for a place within the child's normal chronological year group through the standard Admissions process and must do this alongside any application for an adjusted year group. This is in line with the DfE guidance which states "Parents who are refused a place at a school for which they have applied have the right of appeal to an independent admission appeal panel. As the purpose of the appeals process is to consider whether a child should be admitted to a particular school, parents do not have a right of appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like." Parents can raise concerns with the school by contacting the office to arrange a meeting or by making a complaint to through the Complaints Policy if they wish to raise an objection.

Once a child has been admitted it is for the Principal to decide how best to educate them. In some cases it may be appropriate for a child who has been admitted out of their normal age group to be moved to their normal age group, but in others it will not. Any decision to move a child to a different age group should be based on sound educational reasons considering the holistic development of the individual child and will be made in consultation with the parents. This will be reviewed annually and parents will be provided, in July, with a written statement by the school of concerns and successes of the placement of a child into an adjusted year group.

#### **Summer Born children (1<sup>st</sup> April – 31<sup>st</sup> August)**

Legally, a child does not have to start school until the start of the term following their fifth birthday. Recent guidance from the Minister of State for Schools, Nick Gibb MP, has indicated that the government intends to amend the School Admissions Code to allow summer born children to be admitted to the reception class at age 5 if it is in line with their parents' wishes. Currently summer born children are expected to start reception at the age of 4.

In anticipation of this change to the School Admissions Code, which will require public consultation, the school has amended its policy regarding summer born children. If your child was born between 1 April and 31 August 2013, and you do not believe they will be ready to start Reception in the 2018/19 academic year, you may instead make an application for your child to start Reception in September 2019.



## Deferred entry during Reception Year

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. 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.

### J. Definitions

- **Looked After Children (or previously looked after)**

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) at the time of making an application to a school

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.

All children adopted from care who are of compulsory school age are eligible for admission under rule 1.\*

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.

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.

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.

\* 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.



- **Children of staff criteria:**  
This criterion applies to staff with parental responsibility for the child for whom admission is made.
  - a) where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made,
  - b) and/or
  - c) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
- **Sibling** - Siblings include all blood or adoptive siblings, half-siblings, foster siblings of Looked After Children and step siblings. Siblings must all live at the same address as the child applying from Monday to Friday. Proof of the sibling relationship may be required.
- **Permanent address** – the address to which a child is registered with their GP and in which they spend a minimum of 4 nights per week (Monday to Friday). This must be the permanent residence of at least one adult with parental responsibility as evidenced in Council Tax records and the like. Proof may be required.

To establish an applicant's permanent rather than temporary home address the following is required;

1. Closing accounts for the original property,
  2. Official confirmation of the end of tenancy or house sale for the original property,
    - 3a. Tenancy agreement via a commercial letting agency for a period of 12 months or more. The period of the tenancy must extend beyond the start of the academic year in which the child is due to be admitted or
    - 3b. Solicitors' confirmation of the completion of the purchase of the new property.
- **Random allocation** – applications will be given a computer generated random reference and draws of these references will then be supervised by someone independent of the school, usually, but not always, a member of the County Council admissions team.
  - **Parents** – parents or legal guardians
  - **Pupil Premium** – this entitlement is assessed using your National Insurance number. You may be entitled if you receive one of the following: income support, income-based job seekers allowance, income related Employment and Support Allowance, some forms of Child Tax Credit, support under part VI of Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, Working Tax Credit in some cases. See [www.hertsdirect.org/freeschoolmeals](http://www.hertsdirect.org/freeschoolmeals) for the most up to date criteria.
  - **Multiple births** – multiple births will qualify for sibling allocation as soon as one sibling has been allocated a place.

**Appendix 1 – Harpenden Town Parish Boundary**

