

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

This policy was updated in July 2021 to be compliant with the Admissions Code which comes into force on September 2021, to expand upon the criteria giving priority to previously looked after children

1. Arrangements for admission to 11-16 Provision

The admission arrangements for Orchards Academy for the year 2021/2022 and, subject to any changes approved or required by the Secretary of State, for subsequent years are:

- a. Orchards Academy has an agreed admission number of 120 students. The Academy will accordingly admit up to 120 students in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are received.
- b. Orchards Academy may set a higher admission number as its Published Admission Number for any specific year. Students will not be admitted above the Published Admission Number unless exceptional circumstances apply and such circumstances shall be reported to the Secretary of State.

2. Process of application

Applications for places at the Academy will be made in accordance with Kent County Council's co-ordinated admission arrangements and will be made on the Secondary Common Application Form (SCAF) provided and administered by the Kent County Council. Orchards Academy will use the following timetable for applications each year (exact dates within the months may vary from year to year) which, whenever possible, will fit in with the common timetable agreed by Kent County Council or its Admissions Forum.

- a. By September – Orchards Academy will publish, on its website, information about the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria, for the following September (e.g. in September 2021 for admission in September 2022). This will include details of open evenings and other opportunities for prospective students and their parents to visit the school. The Academy will also provide information to the Local Authority for inclusion in the composite prospectus, as required;
- b. September/October – Orchards Academy will provide opportunities for parents to visit the Academy;
- c. October/November - SCAF to be completed and returned to the Local Authority to administer;
- d. the Local Authority sends applications to the Academy;
- e. February – the Local Authority applies agreed scheme for own schools, informing other Local Authorities of offers to be made to their residents;
- f. March - offers made to parents.

3. Consideration of applications

Procedures where Orchards Academy is oversubscribed

All students with statements of Special Educational Needs (when Orchards Academy is named on the statement) will be allocated places before the oversubscription is applied.

Where the total number of applications for admission is greater than the published admissions number, applications will be considered against the following criteria, and applied in the order in which they are set out below:

a. Looked After Children and previously 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) at the time of making an application to a school.

A previously looked after child means such children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after and those children who appear to the admission authority to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

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. admission of students whose siblings currently attend the school and who will continue to do so at the time of entry. (Note; the term 'sibling' includes full- half-, and step-siblings and those living as siblings in the same family unit on the role of Orchards Academy);

c. Health and Special Access Reasons – Medical, health, social and special access reasons will be applied in accordance with the school's legal obligations, in particular those under the Equality Act 2010. Priority will be given to those children whose mental or physical impairment means they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Equally this priority will apply to children whose parents'/guardians' physical or mental health or social needs mean that they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Such claims will need to be supported by written evidence from a suitably qualified medical or other practitioner who can demonstrate a special connection between these needs and the particular school.

d. Nearness of children's homes to school - we use the distance between the child's permanent home address and the school, measured in a straight line using the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) address point data. Distances are measured from a point defined as within the child's home to a point defined as within the school as specified by NLPG. The same address point on the school site is used for everybody.

e. Where two children have an otherwise equal priority under the oversubscription criteria random selection will be used to establish which is ranked ahead of the other.

f. If siblings from multiple births (twins, triplets, etc) apply for a school and the school would reach its Published Admission Number (PAN) after admitting one or more, but before admitting all of those siblings, the LA will offer a place to each of the siblings, even if doing so takes the school above its PAN.

4. Operation of waiting lists

Subject to any provisions regarding waiting lists in Kent County Council's co-ordinated admission scheme, Orchards Academy will operate a waiting list. Where in any year the Academy receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until the end of the first term. This will be maintained by Orchards Academy and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.

Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out in paragraph 3a)-3d) above. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

Requests for admission to Year 7 outside of the normal age group should be made to the Executive Headteacher of the school as early as possible to allow the school and admissions authority sufficient time to make a decision before the closing date.

Where a parent is requesting for their child to apply a year early, they should contact the school at the start of the application process related to the year they wish their child to start.

Where a parent is requesting for their child to apply a year later than expected, they should make their request at the start of the application process associated with the child's date of birth. Parents are required to complete an application for the normal point of entry at the same time, in case their request is declined. This application can be cancelled if the school agrees to accept a deferred application for entry into Year 7 the following year.

Parents are not expected to provide evidence to support their request to defer their application, however where provided it must be specific to the child in question. This might include medical or Educational Psychologist reports. There is no legal requirement for this medical or educational evidence to be secured from an appropriate professional, however, failure to provide this may impede a school's ability to agree to deferral or early admission to their secondary phase of education.

The school will take into account the year group the child has been taught in leading up to transition. If the request is declined, a school may offer a year 8 place as an alternative or simply refuse admission if the child is younger than the normal entry age. Deferred applications must be made via paper SCAF to the LA, with written confirmation from each named school attached. Early or deferred applications will be processed in the same way as all applications for the cohort in the following admissions round, and offers will be made in accordance with each school's oversubscription criteria. Further advice is available at www.kent.gov.uk/schooladmissions.

5. Arrangements for admission to post-16 provision

Orchards Academy will publish specific criteria in relation to minimum entrance requirements for the sixth form and for the range of courses available based upon GCSE grades or other measures of prior attainment. These criteria are the same for internal and external transfers and will be subject to consultation with those in paragraph 8 below. All internal applicants who meet the criteria will be admitted to the 6th form, even if this number is greater than the planned admissions number. The academic entry criteria will be published in the autumn immediately preceding the year of admissions (that is autumn 2021) for September 2022 admissions. The criteria will be included within the Academy's prospectus and within the local authority composite admission prospectus.

If 100 or more students from within Orchards Academy meet the admissions criteria and wish to enter Y12 of the 6th form, no external applicants will be considered.

Where there are more external applicants for any available 6th form places than places available, after the admission of students with special educational needs where the Academy is named on the statement, the oversubscription criteria in paragraph 3a)-3d) above will be applied to determine who is admitted.

There will be a right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel for unsuccessful applicants, whether they are internal or external applicants.

6. Arrangements for admitting students to other year groups, including replacing any students who have left Orchards Academy

Subject to any provisions in Kent County Council's co-ordinated admission arrangements relating to applications submitted for years other than the normal year of entry, Orchards Academy will consider all such applications and if the year group applied for has a place available, admit the child unless one of the permitted reliefs apply. If more applications are received than there are places available, the oversubscription criteria in paragraph 3a)–3d) shall apply. Parents whose application is turned down are entitled to appeal.

Orchards Academy will participate in Kent County Council's In-Year Fair Access Protocol.

ANNUAL PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

7. Consultation

Orchards Academy will consult each year on its proposed admission arrangements:

- a. Kent County Council;
- b. The admission forum for Kent County Council;
- c. Any other admission authorities for primary and secondary schools located within the relevant area for consultation set by the Local Authority;
- d. Any other governing body for primary and secondary schools (as far as not falling within paragraph c) located within the relevant area for consultation;
- e. Affected admission authorities in neighbouring Local Authority areas.

8. Publication of admission arrangements

Orchards Academy will publish its admission arrangements each year once these have been determined, by:

- a. copies being sent to primary and secondary schools in the relevant scheme of education within Kent County Council Local Authority area;
- b. copies being sent to the offices of Kent County Council;
- c. copies being made available without charge on request from the Academy;
- d. copies being sent to public libraries in the appropriate areas of Kent for the purposes of being made available at such libraries for reference by parents and other persons.

The published arrangements will set out:

- a. the name and address of Orchards Academy and contact details;
- b. a summary of the admissions policy, including oversubscription criteria;
- c. a statement of any religious affiliation [none];
- d. numbers of places and applications for those places in the previous year; and
- e. arrangements for hearing appeals.