

SWALE ACADEMIES TRUST

WESTLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS POLICY

September 2023 Admission

The following arrangements with respect to the admission of pupils to the school are to be adopted. The governors will provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. The PAN in Reception will be 60 from September 2023 and in subsequent years. Years 1 and 2 will also have a PAN of 60, but years 3, 4, 5 and 6 will have a PAN of 90. Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year. Parents may also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Where applications for admission exceed the number of places available, the following criteria will be applied, in the order set out below, to decide which children to admit. Before the application of oversubscription criteria, children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which names the school will be admitted. As a result of this, the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where applications for admission exceed the number of places available the following criteria will be applied, in the order set out below, to decide which children to admit.

1. 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.

2. Sibling/Current Family Association

A brother or sister attending Westlands Primary School when the child starts; in this context brother or sister means children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers and sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters.

The sibling link is maintained as long as the family live at the same address as when the first child applied, or has moved closer to the school than when the first child was offered a place, or has moved to an address that is less than 2 miles from the school using the distance measured by the method outlined in the distance/nearness of children's home to school criterion.

3. Medical/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 Westlands Primary School. Equally this priority will apply to children whose parents'/guardians' physical or mental health or social needs means that they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend Westlands Primary 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 Westlands Primary School.

4. Distance/Nearness of Children's Home 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.

A block of flats has a single address point of reference, so applicants living in the same block will be regarded as living the same distance away from the school. In the unlikely event that two or more children live in the same block and in all other ways have equal eligibility for the last available space at the school, the names will be issued a number and drawn randomly to decide which child should be given the place.

Child's Home Address

A child's home address is considered to be a residential property that is the child's only or main residence (not an address at which the child may sometimes stay or sleep) and which is either owned by the child's parent, parents, or guardian or leased or rented to them under a lease or written rental agreement. Where partners live apart but share responsibility for the child, and the child lives at two different addresses during the week, we will regard the home address as the one at which the child sleeps for the majority of week days.

Where applications are received after the deadline set by Kent County Council an Enquiry List will be maintained. Priority of admission will be determined by the above criteria. In the event of a "tie breaker" situation the nearness of an applicant's home to school will be the decider. In the event that more than one applicant has the same distance from home to school (as measured by the Local Authority), and then a random selection will be applied.

Tie Breaker

In the unlikely event that two or more children are unable to be separated and in all other ways have equal eligibility for the last available place at the school, the names will be allocated a number and drawn randomly, this must be supervised by someone independent of the school, to decide which child should be given the place.

Appeals

Parents have the right to appeal against any refusal to admit their child. Appeals should be directed to an Appeals Committee established within the terms of the Education Act 1996. Details of the appeals procedure can be obtained from the Admissions Department at Westlands Primary School. The Appeals Committee will notify the Appellant of the outcome:

Appeals must be lodged in line with the LA date, except where the initial application was a late application, in which case the appeal must be lodged within 21 days of the allocation decision being sent to the parents.

The School will acknowledge an appeal within seven working days of it being lodged.

Appeals relating to other admissions can be made at any time.

Right to Withdraw a Place

After a place has been offered the school reserves the right to withdraw the place in the following circumstances:

1. When a parent has failed to respond to an offer within a reasonable time; or
2. When a parent has failed to notify the school of important changes to the application information; or
3. The admission authority offered the place on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent.

Waiting Lists

Parents of children who have not been offered a place at the school may ask for their child's name to be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list, which will be maintained until 31 July 2024, will be operated using the same admissions criteria listed above. Placing a child's name on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available. It is possible that when a child is directed under the Local Authority's fair access protocol they will take precedence over those children already on the list.

In-Year (Casual) Admissions

Requests for applications for a place at the school in-year must initially be made in writing. A Local Authority application form can be collected from the school and returned when completed. The Head of School will offer a place, if one is available and their child meets the criteria for admission. If a place is not offered, parents will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on a waiting list. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

Out of Year Admissions

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1.

This is not an automatic right to choose this option and parents should make an initial request, in writing, to the Head of School prior to the admissions deadline. Decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted the school will set out clearly the reasons for their decision. Where the school agrees to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to a relevant age group (i.e. the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school) the local authority and admission authority must process the application as

part of the main admissions round, unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible, and on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. They must not give the application lower priority on the basis that the child is being admitted out of their normal age group.

Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.