



Admissions Policy 2023/24

Newbury Academy Trust

October 2021

Admissions Policy for 2023/2024
Fir Tree Primary School

1. Aims	3
2. Legislation and statutory requirements.....	3
3. Definitions	3
4. How to apply in the normal admissions round	4
5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group.....	4
6. Allocation of places	5
7. In-year admissions	7
8. Appeals	7
9. Monitoring arrangements	7

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at the school;
- Set out the school's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply;
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place.

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- [School Admissions Code 2021](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

As an academy, the school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#).

As an Academy, the Board of Trustees for the Newbury Academy Trust is their own admissions authority.

3. Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority.

Children in Care are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order, or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order

This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

A child is of compulsory school age on the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday. Compulsory school age starts at different times as described below:

- > Children becoming 5 years old between 1st January and 31st March are of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term after 1st April.
- > Children becoming 5 years old between 1st April and 31st August are of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term after 1st September.

- > Children becoming 5 years old between 1st September and 31st December are of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term after 1st January.

If you want to delay admission until your child is of 'compulsory school age' and this is after the end of the reception year, you may have difficulties. This is because by this time your child would have missed their reception year and would be going into Year 1. The school may no longer have places in Year 1 for your child.

4. How to apply in the normal admissions round

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the application form provided by your home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools are in). You can use this form to express your preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order. This should be completed by the nationwide closing date.

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority.

Please note, pupils already attending our nursery will not transfer automatically into the main school. A separate application must be made for a place in reception.

5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

This should be made clear on the form with a clear explanation.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- › Parents' 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;
- › Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely;
- › The headteacher's views.

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

6. Allocation of places

6.1 Admission number

The school has an agreed admission number of 30 students for entry in Reception.

6.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plans name the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

In the event that the school receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in order until all places are filled.

1. Highest priority will be given to children in care and all children previously in care who apply for a place at the school.
2. Priority will next be given to children whose permanent address is in the school's designated catchment area as detailed on the West Berkshire Council's website: Where necessary, priority will be given to siblings in catchment. The Home address is taken to be the permanent address at the closing date for applications in the normal admissions round (**15th January 2023**). Where parental responsibilities are equally shared, the home address will normally be considered to be with the parent/carer with whom the child spends the majority of time and nights Monday to Friday; this will normally be expected to be with the parent/carer that receives the pupil's Child Benefit, where this benefit is still available.

It is the child's normal permanent home address where he or she lives with his or her parents/carers that is used to decide in which school's catchment area the child lives.

Temporary addresses cannot be used to obtain school places, e.g., temporary addresses whilst retaining a previous permanent home will not be accepted. If parents/carers plan to move, documentary evidence will be required, such as proof of exchange of contracts or a tenancy agreement to confirm residence at the time of admission. Normally if such evidence is received by 1st January for a secondary place, or for a primary place before allocation processes begin, during a normal admissions' round, the new address will be accepted for the forthcoming allocation.

Confirmation received after these dates will not normally be taken into account until immediately after allocation dates and waiting lists adjusted accordingly. At all other times changes of address will be considered immediately on receipt of evidence. Any child offered a school place based on fraudulent or intentionally misleading information concerning a catchment area permanent home address will have their place withdrawn and a new application will be required, by which time

preferred schools may be full. This may also occur after the child has been admitted to a school.

3. Priority will next be given to children with siblings at the school. Siblings include step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address. Priority will not be given to children with siblings who are former pupils of the school.
4. Priority will next be given to children of staff at the school, in either of the following circumstances:
 - a) The member of staff has been employed at the school for 2 or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, or
 - b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage
5. Priority will next be given to children who attend a Newbury Academy Trust School.
6. All other applicants.

6.3 Tie break

In the case of 2 or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, the school will use the distance between the school and a child's home as a tie breaker to decide between applicants. Priority will be given to children who live closest to the school. Distance will be measured in a straight line from the child's home address to the school's front doors on Fir Tree Lane. A child's home address will be considered to be where they are resident for the majority of nights in a normal school week.

Where the distance between 2 children's homes and the school is the same, random allocation will be used to decide between them. This process will be independently verified.

6.4 Children below compulsory school age

Parents may defer their child's entry to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age, and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year the offer was made for.

Where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

6.5 Challenging behaviour

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. We may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, i.e., where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that isn't the normal point of entry, only in such a case that we have good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour that may adversely affect the provision we can offer. In this case, we will refer these pupils to the Fair Access Protocol. We will not refuse admission on

these grounds to children in care and all children previously in care and children with EHC plans listing the school.

6.6 Fair Access Protocol

We participate in West Berkshire's Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible.

7. In-year admissions

Parents can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose EHC plans name the school will be admitted.

Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for, your child will be offered a place. Unless the year group has a point of prejudice (POP) number.

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by one of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6.2 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Applications for in-year admissions should be sent to the following address:

Admissions@westberks.gov.uk

Parents will be notified of the outcome of your in-year application in writing within 15 school days.

8. Appeals

If your child's application for a place at the school is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals. If you wish to appeal, you must set out the grounds for your appeal in writing and send it to the following address:

Admissions@westberks.gov.uk

You can find details of the school's appeals timetable on the following webpage:

<https://info.westberks.gov.uk/admissionappeals>

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the governing board will publicly consult on these changes. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years.

Approved by:	The Board of Trustees
Approval date:	13 th October 2021
Date for review:	October 2022