



BiggleswadeAcademy

Admissions Policy 2026-27

Document Detail	
Approved	November 2025
Approved by	TB
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Version	2

Summary of Changes

Date	Version	Summary of Changes
October 2024	1	N/A
March 2025	2	Updated EYFS admissions
November 2025	2	No changes so still version 2

Section 1 – General Principles:

Biggleswade Academy is an age 2-11; Nursery/Pre-school and Primary school.

The main principle of admission to the Academy is to maintain and further develop our character of delivering excellence for all pupils within a truly comprehensive educational setting. We are therefore an inclusive school and welcome all applications.

All documentation relating to Admissions for Biggleswade Academy can be accessed and downloaded from our website here: www.biggleswadeacademy.org

Section 2 – Definitions and details:

As required by the 2012 regulations, the Academy will give first priority to applications on behalf of children in public care (children who are looked after - CLA) in accordance with the definition below:

'Looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after, became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. 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 service functions (see section 22 of the Children Act 1989).

Children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted in accordance to the definition below:

A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

Children with an EHCP naming the school must be admitted and will count towards the Planned Admission Number (PAN) if the information is available before the offer date.

Our priority admission area is as defined by the Local Authority and can currently be accessed here:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/school/admissions/catchment-areas/list.aspx>

Under the oversubscription criteria in section 3 the word Siblings will mean:

- *Children (including adopted or fostered children) living at the same address who have one or both natural parents in common*
- *Children (including adopted or fostered children) living at the same address who are related by a parents marriage.*
- *Children (including adopted or fostered children) living at the same address whose parents are living as partners at this address.*
- *NB / 'Cousins' are not included within our definition of sibling.*

Under the oversubscription criteria in section 3 the words 'Children of' will mean a child who has the same address as, and be living permanently with, the member of staff. Where a child stays with another parent for part of the week, further enquiries may be made in order to determine where the child permanently resides. The word staff will mean all staff employed by the school for at least two years for the purpose of working in the school as follows:

- All full time teaching staff
- All full time support staff – defined as those on a 37 week and above contract
- All part time teaching staff employed on a 0.5 or greater contract.
- All part time support staff who work more than 15 hours per week for 37 weeks or more

The definition **does not** include peripatetic staff.

Home Address

A pupil's home address will be regarded as:

- The address of the parents or carers with parental responsibility with whom the child normally lives (this will not usually include grandparents, aunts or uncles; unless these adults are named as the legal carers in a Special Guardianship Order or Child Arrangement Order).
- Where a child spends time with parents at more than one address, the address used to allocate a school place will be the one at which the pupil is normally resident and where the child spends the majority of the school week (Mondays to Fridays) including nights.

If there is any query on the home address this will be checked against official documentation e.g. council tax bill, a recent utility bill (gas, electricity, water) a rental agreement, child benefit annual statement or family tax credit information.

Admission to Biggleswade Academy is not dependent on any 'voluntary' Contribution.

Section 3 – Points of Intake

Biggleswade Academy (2-11) has 2 'standard' points of intake with separate criteria for oversubscription (where there are more applicants than places available) at each point:

Entry Point 1:

Nursery/Pre-school aged children – (aged 2+ Termly intake: variable sessions)

Entry Point 2: 120 Full Time Places

Statutory aged children entering 'Reception'– Children are usually admitted in September in the Academic year in which they have their fifth birthday. Normally around 120 children per year.
Please note - There is no guarantee of a place for children who attend the academy Pre-school and applications must be made in accordance with the policy set out below.

Entry point 1 (Pre-school & The Lawns Nursery)

Eligibility and Funding

Children are eligible to attend the Academy Pre-school and The Lawns Nursery from the term following their second birthday. Early Years funding for eligible 2-, 3- and 4-year-olds will be applied from the term after the child reaches the relevant age, in line with national cut-off dates of 31 March, 31 August and 31 December.
Application Process and Allocation of Places

Parents and carers must complete an Expression of Interest Form in advance of their preferred start date. Applications are recorded in chronological order based on the date of receipt.

Places are allocated in accordance with the following principles:

- Priority is given to applicants requiring full-time provision.
- Remaining places are allocated to part-time applicants in date order of application.

Places will be offered until the provision reaches capacity. The Academy does not guarantee a place for any child.

As part of the admissions process, parents and carers are required to attend a face-to-face visit, including a tour and/or stay-and-play session. This enables the setting to establish an effective partnership with families and to identify any known or emerging needs, including Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The Academy reserves the right to withdraw an offer where this requirement is not met.

Admissions and Start Dates

Admissions are aligned with three annual intake points: September, January and April. Children will normally start at the beginning of term in line with their agreed attendance pattern. The Academy may admit children during a term where places remain available.

Early Years funding can only be applied up to the Friday preceding the termly School Census Day. Children admitted after this date will not be eligible for funded hours until the subsequent term. All sessions attended prior to this will be chargeable.

Session Allocation and Attendance

There is no minimum session requirement; however, attendance of at least two sessions per week is strongly recommended to support continuity of learning and wellbeing. The Academy does not hold or reserve sessions for future dates. Parents and carers are expected to confirm their required attendance pattern at the point of allocation.

Confirmation and Acceptance of Places

Formal offers of places will be issued in writing and will include allocated sessions, start date and details of any payable fees. Parents and carers must confirm acceptance in writing by the stated deadline. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of the offer.

Changes to Pattern of Attendance

The Academy does not routinely seek confirmation of session changes. Parents and Carers are responsible for submitting requests for changes to attendance.

All requests are subject to availability, staffing ratios and compliance with the Early Years Foundation Stage

Framework.

- Changes to funded hours must be made prior to the Friday preceding the termly School Census Day. After this date, funded attendance patterns cannot be amended until the following term.
- Additional sessions may be agreed, subject to availability, from the first day of a calendar month and will be fully chargeable.
- A minimum of one month's written notice is required to reduce sessions.

Settling-In and Review

All children will undertake a settling-in period. A formal review will be completed by the Setting Manager within four weeks of the child's start date to evaluate the child's adjustment, confirm that needs are being met and identify any required adjustments to provision or attendance.

Attendance, Punctuality and Collection

The Academy operates clear procedures to support safeguarding and the effective running of sessions. Doors will open for ten minutes at the start of each session to allow for arrival. Late arrivals must report to the main office or designated entrance.

At the end of each session, doors will open ten minutes prior to the collection time. Children must be collected promptly. Late collection will incur a Late Collection Charge.

Admissions Criteria

The Academy reserves the right to refuse admission where it is determined that:

- the provision is unsuitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude or SEND;
- admission would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children; or
- admission would not represent the efficient use of resources.

Entry point 2 (Reception)

The Trust Board is the admissions authority for Biggleswade Academy and will apply the criteria below (in the order shown) to decide the order in which places will be allocated when there are more requests from parents than the number of places available:

The admissions number for entry (PAN) into the Academy in Year R is – 120 children

- 1) *All looked after children and all previously looked after children, including 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*
- 2) *Children in catchment with siblings at the Academy*
- 3) *Children of Academy staff*
- 4) *Children in catchment by the closest distance to the school*
- 5) *Non-catchment children with siblings at the Academy*
- 6) *Other non-catchment children by the closest distance to the school*

Points to note relating to entry point 2:

- All children must be in school full time (Academy Year R) by the Statutory School age, which is the term after their 5th birthday.
- Year 1 will have one single point of admission, in the September of each Academic year.
- Children admitted into the Academy pre-school are not guaranteed a place in a Reception class.
- All children starting Reception who have not attended the Academy pre-school will receive a home visit from a member of the foundation stage staff prior to starting.
- The Academy operates a waiting list for entry point 2 based on the oversubscription criteria outlined above.
- Each child added to this list will require the list to be ranked again according to these criteria.
- The Academy will maintain a clear, fair and objective waiting list for children entering Reception until 31st December of each school admission year. If the application is unsuccessful, the child's name will be added to the waiting list. When places become available, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with admission criteria.

Section 4 - Additional Notes:

Admissions at non 'standard' entry points including intake to 'other' Years (excluding pre-school In-year admissions)

Applications can be made through the Local Authority website:

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/5/school_admissions

A hard copy application form is available from our school office.

In the event of other children who apply to join the school outside of the normal admission rounds, admission

will be on the basis of:-

- Places being available in a class with the relevant year group without this prejudicing the education of pupils already on role.
- That projected figures for future intakes indicates the admissions figures will not be exceeded.

A place cannot be guaranteed to a pupil who moves to within the school's catchment area outside of the normal admissions round (or after the allocation process has been completed).

'Tie breaks'

If applying these criteria results in there being more children with an equal right to admission to the school than the number of available places, the school will use the distance the pupil lives from the school, measured in a straight line, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system (or equivalent), those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. The distance will be measured from the address point of the pupil's home to the front door of the Mead End site of the Academy. For the purpose of this policy, a child's home address is defined as the place where they live and sleep the majority of nights in a normal school week.

Where the distance between two children's homes and the school is the same, the tie break arrangement is the random allocation of drawing random sealed envelopes with the name of one child per envelope, with this process being independently verified.

In the event when PAN criteria would be exceeded because of 'Multiple Births' (e.g. there is only one further place available for a child who is one of twins or triplets etc...) it would be usual for places to be granted to all children of such multiple births.

Exceptions:

Pupils who have a Statement of Special Education Needs or EHCP are required to be admitted to the school which is named on the statement, even if the school is full.

Pupils identified for admission through the Fair Access Protocol will also be admitted even if the school is full.

Requests for admission outside the normal age group:

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

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 Principal's / Academy'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. 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.

Waiting List

In the event of more applications to the Academy than places available, the application will be placed on a waiting list. These and late applications (where a place is not available) will go onto this list in a position determined by the criteria (see above). If a place becomes available in the Academy it will be offered to the child that best meets the published admission rules.

Appeals

Parents who have not been allocated a place for their child in the Reception year have the right of appeal to an independent admissions panel.

NB / Parents cannot appeal if a place is not allocated to their child for the pre-school or nursery year.