Admissions Policy 2026-2027

Policy reviewed and updated	April 25
Date of next review	January 26
This policy will be subject to ongoing review and may be amended prior to the scheduled date of the next review in order to reflect changes in legislation where appropriate	

1. Introduction

1.1 This admissions policy will affect applications that are made for children starting secondary school for the first time, transferring from Year 6 into Year 7 in September 2026. For in-year applications this admissions policy will affect children's applications from September 2026.

1.2 PLT Trust ('the Trust') is the admissions authority for Harefield School and the admission of students is controlled by the Governing Body. During the normal admissions round, Hillingdon Council ('the LA') operates a co-ordinated admissions scheme which includes Harefield School. Parents wishing to apply for a place should put Harefield School down as a preference on the common application form. Outside of the normal admission round the Trust manages these directly. Further details on how to apply can be found below.

1.3 The procedure to be followed in applying for a place at Harefield School is as set out in this Policy. The Governors will not accept applications that are not made in accordance with this Policy.

1.4 Parents who wish to apply for a place for their child at Harefield School will fall into one of the following two categories:

i. Parents who are applying for a place for a child who is starting secondary school for the first time (i.e. a child who is transferring from primary to secondary school). All applications are processed centrally through the LA. Late applications (after 31 October) are processed through the LA and not direct to Harefield School. Further details on applying can be found on the LA's website.

ii. All other applications for a place at Harefield School (i.e. 'in-year' applications for a place in Years 7-11). In-year applications are processed by Harefield School.

1.5 All references to 'parents' in this Policy shall be interpreted referring to parents or legal guardians.

2. Information for Parents of Prospective Students

2.1 Full information about Harefield School will be found in the School Brochure and on the Website.

2.2 An Open Evening will be held for parents of prospective students to visit Harefield School in September or October of each year.

2.3 Should a place not be offered, details of how to appeal will be contained in the refusal letter, including the deadline for lodging the appeal and who to contact. Parents must set out their grounds for appeal as part of their application. Where an appeal is successful, Harefield School must admit the child.

2.4 Should a place be offered, further information about Harefield School will be provided to the parents.

3. The Published Admissions Number (PAN)

3.1 Harefield School has a PAN of 90 for entry into Year 7 in 2026. If the number of applications exceeds the PAN, then the oversubscription criteria below will be used to determine which applicants will be provided with a place.

4. Oversubscription Criteria

4.1 Governors will admit students in Year 7 without reference to their ability or aptitude.

4.2 If the number of applications for places is greater than the PAN and after the admission of any children with an EHCP that names Harefield School, Governors will use the following criteria in the order shown to decide which children to admit:

- Looked after children (LAC) or a previously looked after child
- Children who have a sibling at Harefield School at the time of admission
- Children of staff who have been employed at Harefield School for at least two years at the time of the application or are recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage. To qualify under this criterion, the staff member must be a 'direct employee'. This includes any member of staff (teaching or non-teaching) with two years continuous employment with Harefield School or seasonal employment totalling two years. Staff contracted in to provide services to Harefield School do not count as 'direct employees'. For the purposes of this criterion, 'children of staff' is taken to include a son, daughter or step-son/daughter, or child who is adopted or fostered or for whom a special guardianship order is in place, in all cases providing they are residing at the same address as the parent who is employed by Harefield School
- Children live nearest to Harefield School by distance, measured in a straight line from the centre point of Harefield School to the centre point of their home address (see Section 5.4).

4.3 A 'looked after child' is a child (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.

4.4 A 'previously looked after child' is a child that ceased to be looked after because they were adopted, became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order. This includes children who appear to the Trust to have been in state care outside of England but ceased to be so because they were adopted.

4.5 'Sibling' means a brother or sister, half brother or sister or legally adopted child being regarded as a brother or sister. Parents are required to provide on the application form sufficient details of the brother or sister (who forms the basis of the the application under this criterion) to enable the Governors to satisfy themselves that a valid qualifying relationship exists.

4.6 The 'home address' is the address at which the child spends the majority of their week during term time. If arrangements are such that a child resides at two addresses for equal amounts of time, then parents must decide which address to use for admissions purposes. Failure to agree on the address to use on the child's application for a school by the national closing date where multiple applications are made will result in a random number generator to determine which application to process.

5. Further Information relating to the Admissions Criteria

5.1 The Governors reserve the right to make such enquiries as they consider necessary to verify the information provided in support of an application for admission under any

of the admission criteria. By applying for admission, the applicant is deemed to have given consent to such enquiries being made.

5.2 The Governors will rely upon the information contained in the application form for admission and if it transpires that any information is false or misleading in a material way, the Governors reserve the right to withdraw the offer of admission. The Governors may also decide to withdraw a place offered where the offer has been made in error or where a parent has not responded to the offer even after chasing.

5.3 Where there are two or more applicants in a criterion who have equal priority for admission and there are insufficient places available, random allocation will be used to determine which child shall be given a place. The use of random allocation will be supervised by someone independent of the Trust.

5.4 The procedure to admit a child who is starting secondary school for the first time is administered centrally by the LA in conjunction with Harefield School.

5.5 If your child attends a primary school in the LA, a Starting Secondary School leaflet will be provided by your child's current primary school in September when they are in Year 6. The leaflet will detail the application process.

5.6 If your child does not attend a primary school in the LA the single Secondary School application form and the booklet ‘Starting Secondary School' is available from the Admissions Team at the London Borough of Hillingdon (01895 556644). It can also be downloaded from their website. Applications outside of the LA must be made through the parents’ ‘home LA’ i.e.: where they pay their Council Tax.

5.7 Applicants must complete the Secondary School application form provided by the LA or ‘home LA’ to apply for a place, providing the information required to choose a place.

5.8 The completed application form must be returned in accordance with the instructions given by the LA. The application form must not be returned to Harefield School.

5.9 The completed Secondary School application form must be returned by the time of the published closing date. Children for whom applications are received after this date will not be offered a place in the first instance (if the school is oversubscribed) but will be placed on the waiting list and be subject to its procedures.

5.10 The Secondary School application form gives parents the right to apply for a place for their child in up to 6 schools of their choice and parents are asked to list these schools in order of preference. Each school stated as a preference is treated equally (i.e. individual schools are not informed of the order of preference; each secondary school will consider the application as a first preference).

5.11 The LA will pass application information for admission to Harefield School via the school allocation system (SAS) Package. Harefield School will rank places in accordance with the admissions criteria via the SAS package. Harefield School will inform the LA (via the SAS programme) of the allocation of places. The LA will inform parents of the outcome of their application on the published date. (1 March in any year or the Monday following if this falls on a Saturday or Sunday).

5.12 The LA will send by first class post notification of the outcome to resident applicants who applied on a paper application form, and the LA will request that a place is accepted or declined within two weeks of the date of an offer. All online applications will receive notification of their outcome via the E-Admissions website.

5.13 The Acceptance Form must be returned to the LA and must not be returned to Harefield School. Failure to accept the offer within the two weeks will result in the offer of admission being withdrawn and the place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list. The applicant will receive written confirmation of such a withdrawal of a place from the LA and Harefield School will be informed.

5.14 If upon receiving an offer of admission to Harefield School, the applicant decides not to accept the place they are asked to tick the second option on the 'Offer of Admission' and when completed, it should be returned to the Admissions Team at the LA as soon as possible after the offer of admission has been received.

5.15 If a place is not offered and if Harefield School was a higher preference than the school offered by the LA the child's name will be placed on a waiting list for the year group. The child will be placed on the waiting list according to the admissions criteria. In the event that a place becomes available the Governors will offer admission to the next child on the waiting list, via the LA. Every time a child is added to the list, it will be re-ranked in accordance with the oversubscription criteria with no priority given to the date of the application.

5.16 The child's name will remain on the waiting list until the parents ask Harefield School in writing to remove it, or a place is offered whichever comes first. Applicants are written to ask if they wish to remain on the waiting list and given a deadline to reply. If no such reply is received their name will be removed.

5.17 If a place is not offered the applicant has the right to lodge an appeal with an Independent Appeal Panel (IAP) appointed by Harefield School. Appeals against a decision by the Admissions Authority or Governing Body not to offer a place to a child will be dealt with under the appeals procedure of the Independent Appeal Panel. Information about the appeals procedure, including the date by which an appeal must be lodged, will be included with the letter notifying the result of the application. Appeals will be heard within 40 school days of the appeal being lodged by the parent.

5.18 Children of UK Service personnel

Children of service personnel will not be disadvantaged in the admission process as stated in the School Admissions Code 2021. For those families with a confirmed posting to this area, places will be allocated in advance of the family arriving in the area. The application must be accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a Unit postal address.

5.19 Children of Crown Servants

The School Admissions Code requires that for families of Crown servants returning from overseas to live in that area, admission authorities must allocate a school place in advance of the family arriving in the area, provided their application is accompanied by an official letter declaring a relocation date.

Confirmation of relocation address. It is important that parents are able to provide admission authorities with some certainty as to their relocation address, in order to ensure that places are allocated fairly and in accordance with each school's admissions criteria. Where a parent is unable to provide any confirmation of a relocation address, they are advised to provide an indication of the area, narrowed down as far as possible, to which the family intends to return. Parents should keep admission authorities informed of any changes to their planned address during the application process and should note that without being able to provide any confirmation of a relocation address, an admissions authority may not be able to process their application.

5.20 Applications from Abroad

If your child holds a full British Citizen passport that is endorsed to show a right to abode in the UK, an application could be accepted, even though they are not resident here yet. For the purpose of allocation, the abroad address must be used to process the application. This does not apply to Crown Servants and UK Service Personnel.

Evidence will be required to provide a link to an address in the London Borough of Hillingdon when the application is submitted. Evidence might include:

- Booked flights
- End of lease/notice to tenants in property
- Start of employment contact in area
- End of employment contact abroad

If this evidence cannot be provided the application may not be processed.

6. 'In Year' Applications

6.1 Details on how to apply for a place outside of the normal admissions round can be found on Harefield School's website. The outcome of the application will be provided within 15 school days.

6.2 The procedure for deciding which children to admit and notifying parents of the outcome of an application will be carried out by the Governing Body Admissions Committee in accordance with the published admissions criteria and offer letters will be administered by Harefield School for 'In Year' applications only.

6.3 The Governors reserve the right to withdraw an offer of admission made in error.

6.4 If a place is not offered, the child's name will be placed on a waiting list for the year group. The child will be placed on the waiting list according to the admissions criteria. In the event that a place becomes available the Governors Admissions Committee will make an offer of admission to the next child on the waiting list, a meeting at Harefield School will be arranged and an offer made informing the LA on a weekly return. If the application is for a place in Year 7-11 the child's name will remain on the waiting list until a place is offered or until the parents ask Harefield School in writing to remove it, whichever comes first.

6.5 If a place is not offered the applicant has the right to lodge an appeal with the Independent Appeal Panel. Appeals against a decision not to offer a place to a child will initially be dealt with by the Governing Body and an independent panel will be formed. Parents can appeal at any time, regardless of deadlines. Deadlines are only referred to so that parents can have their appeal heard by the end of term.

6.7 Where multiple applications are received and Harefield School does not have sufficient places for every child that has applied for one, places will be allocated on the basis of the oversubscription criteria.

7. Admission to Year 12 & 13 (Sixth Form)

7.1 Harefield School operates a Sixth Form provision for both internal and external applicants. A separate Sixth Form Admissions Policy outlines the specific entry requirements, application process, and timeline. This policy is available on the school's website or upon request from the school office.

7.2 Admission to Year 12 is dependent on students meeting the required academic qualifications for their chosen courses. Entry requirements for each subject are reviewed annually and published as part of the Sixth Form prospectus.

7.3 Internal applicants must also meet the entry criteria and will be offered guidance and support to ensure appropriate course selection. External applicants are welcomed, and offers are made subject to availability of places, suitability for courses, and academic eligibility.

7.4 In the event of oversubscription to the Sixth Form, priority will be given based on the following:

- Students currently attending Harefield School
- Looked After Children or Previously Looked After Children

- Students meeting all academic entry requirements and applying by the published deadline.
- Distance from home to Harefield School, measured in a straight line using GIS data.

7.5 All applicants who are not offered a place have the right to appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel.

8. Applying for a Year Group Outside of Chronological Age Group

8.1 Where parents want their child to be educated outside of their chronological age group, an application should be made in writing to info@hfschool.org.uk at the same time as the application for a place. This should explain why the parents wish for their child to be educated outside of their chronological age group and enclose any evidence that supports it. The views of the headteacher will also be considered.

8.2 Parents will be notified of the decision on the application, which will be based on the circumstances of the case and what is in the best interests of the child, in writing once it has been made. This decision is separate from the decision on whether a place is granted.

9. Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)

9.1 Children with an EHCP will be placed under the latest Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) regulations. Children with an EHCP that names a school will be allocated a place before other children are considered. In this way, the number of places available will be reduced by the number of children with an EHCP that has named the school. Placements in special schools and special resource units located in Hillingdon are determined outside of these arrangements using the London Borough of Hillingdon SEND published protocols.

10. Multiple Births

10.1 Twins and children from multiple births when one of the siblings is the last child to be admitted at a community school will be offered over the published admission number unless to do so would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources. In such cases, Hillingdon Council will use a computerised random allocation to determine which child should be given priority.

10.2 Where it is not possible to offer each child a place the child(ren) ranked the highest will retain their offer and the applicant will be advised of their right of appeal and informed about waiting lists.

11. Requests for admission to school outside a child's age group

11.1 Children are educated in school with others of their age group. However, parents may request that their child is exceptionally admitted outside their age group. The Admission Authority of a school will decide whether or not the individual child's circumstances make this appropriate on educational grounds. Such requests will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances.

11.2 Parents requesting admission to an age group below the child's actual age should submit an application for the child's actual age group before the closing date of allocation. The request for later admission should accompany the application. This enables the application to be processed and a school place secured in the child's actual age group if the request is refused by an Admission Authority. If the Admission Authority approves the request, the parent will be advised to re-apply in the following year and provide a copy of the decision. However, there can be no guarantee of a place being available at the school, as this is dependent on the number of applicants that year. It is not possible to reserve a place for the following year. Parents are therefore advised to have alternative arrangements in place.

11.3 Any decision is applicable only to the school for which the Admission Authority is responsible.

11. 4 How to apply

When a parent feels their child should be educated in a higher chronological age group, parents will need to apply for admission the year before the child would normally apply for school.

Or when a parent would like their child educated in a lower chronological age group, parents would need to apply as part of the normal admissions round for a school, they should initially apply for a school place by 15 January in the year of the chronological cohort.

In both instances, parents should put forward their request for their child to be educated out of their chronological year group along with any supporting evidence that they may have. They can complete the 'out of cohort request application' available on our web page. Whilst there is no expectation for parents to obtain professional evidence that they do not already have, it may be useful to demonstrate why it would be in the child's best interests to be admitted out of their chronological year group. This process will ensure that an in-principle decision can be made in good time and that the child does not miss out on accessing a year of education should the request to educate out of the chronological year be refused.

11.5 However, any offer of a place in a child's correct chronological year group cannot be held until the following academic year. As such, if an admission authority agrees in principle that an out of year group placement would be appropriate, the parent would have to a pply again in the following year in order for their child's application to be considered according to the admission criteria for that school alongside other applicants in that year. In addition, one admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority. Parents should therefore consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all their preference schools rather than just their first preference. Where requests are received the decision will be made according to the circumstances of the case and what is in the best interest of the child. In each case, the decision will be made by the admission authority for the school, taking into consideration the following;

- Parent's views
- Head teacher's views
- Information about child's academic, social and emotional development
- Relevant medical history and views of a medical professional
- Previous experience of education outside of the child's normal age group
- Premature children who would be in a lower age group if not born prematurely

12 Consultation/Determination

Each year, the Local Authority is required to draw up, consult on and determine:

12.1 Co-ordinated admission arrangements (schemes) for all schools in the Local Authority area for entry at the normal time of admission (Year R for Infant and Primary schools, Year 3 for Junior schools, Year 7 for Secondary schools and Year 10 for UTC's and Studio colleges). This can be found as a separate document (Hillingdon's Scheme of Coordination) on the website Admission arrangements for Hillingdon community schools - Hillingdon Council

12.2 This determined admission arrangements (2025-26) consultation was open from the 23 October 2023 until the 18 December 2023. This consultation period allowed parents, other schools, religious authorities, and the local community to raise any concerns about the proposed admission arrangements. Hillingdon Council made it clear in its consultation that it would constitute full acceptance to the proposed scheme, if no one chose to.

13.Distance criterion

13.1 Distance is measured in a straight line from the child's home address to the school, using a Graphical Information System (GIS) which is based on ordnance survey data. The measurement is from the address point for the home address to the agreed address point for the school. Distance is also used to determine priority within each criterion where there is more than one applicant who meets that criteria.

14.Additional information

14.1 Temporary Addresses and Residence Verification

A temporary address may not be accepted if parents/guardians still own a property that was previously used as a home address, or if the temporary address is considered by the Admissions Authority to be used solely or mainly to obtain a school place. Where families own more than one property, the given address will only be considered if the family has resided there for at least one year prior to the application deadline. This includes rented, owned, or family-shared accommodation.

The Governors reserve the right to seek further evidence to verify the authenticity of an address. This may include utility bills, tenancy or mortgage agreements, or benefit documents. Harefield School may also verify information with Hillingdon Council and other Local Authorities.

14.2 Fair Access Protocol

Harefield School participates in Hillingdon's Fair Access Protocol to ensure that vulnerable and unplaced children, especially those with challenging circumstances, are offered a place promptly. The School will not refuse to admit a child thought to be potentially disruptive or likely to exhibit challenging behaviour on the grounds that an assessment of special educational needs has not been completed.

The Fair Access Protocol includes, but is not limited to:

- Children from the criminal justice system or PRUs.
- Children out of education for two months or more
- Children from Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller backgrounds
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Homeless children
- Children with unsupportive family backgrounds or no active application for a school place
- Young carers
- Children with SEND, disabilities or medical needs (without an EHCP)

14.3 Managed Moves and Behaviour

Where appropriate, Harefield School may consider a managed move for students with a history of challenging behaviour. However, the school will not automatically refuse admission based on behavioural concerns unless the case is formally referred under the Fair Access Protocol and justified under statutory guidance (e.g. a high proportion of previously excluded students).

14.4 Withdrawal of Offers

Harefield School reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a place where:

- The offer was made in error
- The place was obtained through a fraudulent or misleading application
- A parent/carer fails to respond to an offer despite follow-up communications

If an offer is withdrawn due to misleading information, the application will be reconsidered afresh, and a right of appeal will be offered.