



Admissions policy

Approval of the Governing Body

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for:

Admissions policy

at Lugwardine Primary Academy

It has been agreed and is supported by the teaching staff and the governing body

Signatures

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Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set out in clear terms the Academy's procedures regarding admission of pupils and also to ensure the smooth and trouble free transition from pre-school to the Academy.

Planned admission number

The capacity of the Academy is 210 children and our Planned Admission Number for the Reception Year is currently 30.

Age of admission

Parents are not obliged to take up places for their children any earlier than the law requires (i.e. currently from the term following the 5th birthday.) However, in Herefordshire most children start school at least a term earlier than the law requires, with most of those starting in the September after their fourth birthday. At Lugwardine, the expectation is that all pupils enter the reception class together in September.

How to apply

Parents are encouraged to visit the Academy before making their final decision. All parents of preschool age children will be sent a PA1 form by the Local Authority (LA). Parents fill in the form and send it directly to the LA, indicating a first, second and third choice of school. The parents are told by the LA which school their child/children will be admitted to. The Academy will also require parents to fill in additional forms giving general information about the child's circumstances. This will include confidential information regarding any disability a child may have. It is the parents' responsibility to check that the LA have received their form.

Allocation of places

Priority 1: Looked after children and children who were looked after, but ceased to be because they were adopted or became subject to residence order or special guardianship order; (see Footnote 1).

Priority 2 : Children living within the defined catchment area of the school; (see Footnote 2).

Priority 3: Sibling connection – children who have an older sibling at the preferred school not only at the time of application but also when the younger child is due to start; (see Footnote 3).

Priority 4: Exceptional circumstances – children with exceptional medical, social or compassionate grounds for admission and whose parents can show that entry to a particular school only is necessary for the well-being of their child. Parents are required to produce a medical certificate or other appropriate information preferably from an independent source. Applications on such groups will not be considered by the Governors unless supporting information is attached to application forms.

Priority 5: Distance – children who live nearest to the school by the shortest available walking route.

General Notes

No priority is given to pupils living outside but attending a primary school within the catchment area of the relevant high school, i.e. the determining factor is the child's home address.

Footnote 1: This is the 1st priority because the Council wishes to protect children who were or are in public care from further disadvantage that can arise from possible changes of school when the care placement changes.

Footnote 2: This is the 2nd priority because the Council gives high importance to try to ensure that children are able to attend the school within their local community.

Footnote 3: This is the 3rd priority to recognise the importance to daily family life, including travel arrangements, of having brothers/sisters at the same school where possible. The rule is not intended to favour parents with a previous but no longer current family connection with the school. In all matters of admission the LA make the final decision. Parents are invited to consult the LA's "Information for Parents" booklet which outlines the legal rights of parents and other general information regarding admission and transfers to school. The booklet is available from the Local Authority.

Procedures regarding admission

The process of admission is assisted by Lugwardine's close relationship with local pre-school settings. Lugwardine staff endeavour to visit local pre-school settings of children who are due to take up places at Lugwardine. This allows staff to get to know children before admission. The children are also invited to Lugwardine for a series of induction days in the summer term prior to them starting. An Introductory Evening for parents is held prior to the induction days to share information and to discuss the ways in which parents and school can work together to ensure the children's start at Lugwardine is happy and trouble free.

Review of procedures

All procedures for admissions are reviewed annually by the Academy in consultation with all staff and the full Governing Body.

Admission Arrangements for 2024/2025

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA FOR LUGWARDINE PRIMARY ACADEMY

Children with a Statement of Educational Needs which names a particular school will be allocated places, after which places are allocated according to an agreed set of criteria, in strict order of priority.

Priority 1: Looked after children¹ and previously looked after children² who have since been adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order³ or special guardianship order,⁴ 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.

Priority 2: Children living within the defined catchment area* of the school;

Priority 3: Sibling connection - Children who have a sibling** at the preferred school not only at the time of application but also when the child is due to start

Priority 4: Exceptional circumstances - Children with exceptional medical, social or compassionate grounds for admission and whose parents can show that entry to a particular school only is necessary for the wellbeing of their child. Parents are required to produce a medical certificate or other appropriate information preferably from an independent source.

Priority 5: Distance*** - Children who live nearest to the school by the shortest available walking route.

General Notes

No priority is given to pupils living outside but attending a primary school within the catchment area of the relevant high school, i.e. the determining factor is the child's home address. Where, at any school, applications exceed the number of places, the priorities will

¹ 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.

² This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).

³ 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.

^{3a} Child arrangements orders are defined in s.8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by s.12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.

⁴ See Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

be applied in the sequence indicated above, i.e. after children who either currently are or were in the 'looked after' system it will be catchment area children second, siblings third, ****exceptional circumstances fourth, then according to distance, each assessed as indicated above.

If the admission of the top three categories can be satisfied, but there are insufficient places for all out of area siblings, priorities will be decided first by reference to exceptional circumstances, then according to distance, with those living nearest to the school using the distance calculations outlined below *** taking priority.

Following the allocation of the top two categories there may be an occasion when it is not possible to offer places for all children living in the catchment area. In this situation the places will be allocated in the sequence of the criteria listed above, i.e. first to children with siblings who would still be at the school in September 2023, next to pupils with exceptional circumstances, and finally according to distance from the school.

In cases where distance is not the final deciding factor i.e. two applications are at exactly the same distance, then the final tie breaker will be a lottery undertaken by an individual independent of the Children and Families directorate.

* In order to determine the relevant catchment area, the home address of a child is defined as the only or main permanent residential address, at the closing date for applications, where the child usually resides and which is the usual address of the parent/carer with main responsibility for the child. 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. Where more than one parent submits an application for a child, or where there is a parent not in agreement with the preferences, the Local Authority may not be able to process any application until agreement over the preferences is reached. Failure to ensure agreement prior to submission, may result in a delay in any application being processed and in some instances, where agreement cannot be reached we may not be able to proceed until a legal resolution has been sought and the courts determine which parent can make the final decision on schooling. Copies of catchment area maps, if required are available from the LA, or can be viewed in schools. To find the catchment school for a postcode please visit [Find a school – Herefordshire Council](#).

** A sibling connection refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or a child of the parents/carer's partner, and in every case the child must be living in the same family unit at the same address.

***Distance is measured by the shortest available walking route using a road and/or made up footpath using the nearest node on the transport network to the property point. The effect of this is to take you to the front door and not take into consideration other entrances (such as rear garden gates/ short cuts). This is particularly pertinent in a rural area like Herefordshire where rural properties can have multiple access points.