ADMISSIONS POLICY 2027-28

The Academy is a co-educational academy and provides education for children aged between 4 to 11 years.

These admission arrangements aim 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

These admission arrangements are based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- School Admissions Code (2021)
- School Admission Appeals Code (2022)

As an academy school, 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.

A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

The normal admissions round is the period during which parents/carers can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry (Reception), using the Common Application Form (CAF) provided by their home local authority.
Parents/carers should use the application form provided by their home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools are in). This form is used to express a preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order.
All parents/carers who submit an on-time application (i.e. by midnight on 15 January) will receive an offer for a school place directly from their local authority on National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day).
Parents/carers living in North Northamptonshire Council should visit the NNC School Admissions website
Please note: attendance at the Nursery provision in Priors Hall – a learning community, does not guarantee admission at Priors Hall – a learning community main school. An application must be made for any transfer from nursery to primary.

The school has an agreed Published Admission Number (PAN) of 60. Places will first be allocated to children who have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan that names the school as appropriate provision.

Oversubscription Criteria

When there are more applications for places than there are places available, priority will be given in the following order:

1. 'Looked after' children or children who were previously looked after but immediately after became subject to adoption, residence or special guardianship order
2. Children of staff who have been employed at the school for two or more years at the time of which the application for admission to the school is made, and / or children of staff who are recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. It is at the absolute discretion of the CEO of Inspiring Futures through Learning to determine when there is a demonstrable skill shortage
3. Children with a sibling* in attendance at the school at the date of admission
4. Children living in the listed catchment area
5. Other children living outside the listed catchment area

Tiebreaker arrangements

If the PAN is exceeded within any criterion, priority will be given to applicants whose home address is closest to the school.

In circumstances where the school admissions number has been exceeded in any of the above categories and there is a need to discriminate within the category, preference will be given to those living closest to the school, measured in a straight line to the school main reception using the Local Authority's computerised distance measuring system, with those living nearer to the school receiving the higher priority.

Where two or more applications cannot otherwise be separated, random allocation will be used to decide who is allocated a place. This will be conducted through a process of random allocation by someone independent of the school.

Siblings and multiple birth groups

In cases where there is one remaining place available and the next child on the waiting list is one of a twin, triplet or other multiple birth groups, all siblings* would be admitted even if this goes above the planned number for the school.

*A sibling is a brother or sister, which for admission purposes means brothers and sisters of whole or half blood, or any other child (including an adopted child) who permanently resides at the same address and for whom the parent also has parental responsibility.

Definitions used in this policy

Looked After Child/Previously Looked After Child

A 'looked after child' is a child who, at the time of making an application to a school, is:

a) In the care of a local authority, or

b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989)

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

• were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders), or

- became subject to a child arrangements order (as defined in Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 and as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014), or
- became subject to a special guardianship order (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).

This includes 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.

Sibling

A sibling is defined as a child's brother or sister. A sibling must be living at the same permanent address and as part of the same family unit (one or two parents plus children) to qualify under this criterion. For School Admissions purposes, the term sibling includes:

- half-brothers and half-sisters
- step-brothers and step-sisters
- adopted children
- children in foster care
- children living in the same family unit, even if they are not biological brothers and sisters – for example when the parents are not married/in a civil relationship.

Cousins are not regarded as siblings.

A sibling must be attending the academy at the same times as their sibling. For example, a child in Year 6 where the child is due to reach their end of phase transfer and therefore would not be attending at the same time as their Year Reception sibling would not be prioritised as a sibling.

Defined Catchment Area

The defined catchment area for the school is:

Home address

The child's home address is defined as the address at which the child normally resides with their parent/carer on the closing date for applications (15 January).

When we refer to a child's home address, we mean the permanent residence of the child. This address should be the child's only or main residence which is;

- owned by the child's parent(s)/carer(s) or
- leased to or rented by the child's parent(s)/carer(s) under a lease or written rental agreement of not less than six months' duration.

When parents live separately and the child spends time with each parent, the home address will be treated as the place where the child sleeps for most of the school week (i.e. Sunday night – Thursday night inclusive).

If the child spends equal amounts of time at two addresses, the parents must agree which address they wish to be the child's main address.

Documentary evidence of ownership or rental agreement may be required together with proof of actual permanent residence at the property concerned.

Places cannot be allocated on the basis of an intended future change of address unless house moves have been confirmed through the exchange of contracts or signing of a formal lease.

Distance Measurements

Distances are measured on a straight-line basis from the address point of the child's home to the address point of the school, using a geographical information system. Each address has a unique address point established by the most valuable elements from the National Land and Property Gazeteer (NPLG), Ordnance Survey Master Map, Royal Mail Postal Address File and The Valuation Office Agency. The address point for a property does not change.

In the case where there are multiple applications from the same shared dwelling (e.g., flats) or where the distance between two or more children's homes to the school (using the system referred to above) is identical, random allocation will be used to decide which child gets priority. Random allocation will be carried out by someone independent of the school.

Fraudulent or Misleading Applications

The admission authority (or the LA processing an application on behalf of the admission authority) has the right to investigate any concerns we may have about an application and to withdraw the offer of a place if it is considered that there is evidence that an applicant has made a fraudulent claim or provided misleading information.

Conflicting Applications

The LA can only process one application. Where more than one adult shares parental responsibility and if the adults live at different addresses, it is important that an agreement be reached on which schools to apply for, prior to making the application.

If multiple applications are received for the same child with conflicting address and/or preferences, or the School Admissions Team is made aware of a dispute between two parents, all applications will be placed on hold and will not be processed until:

- a new single application is made, signed by all parties; or
- written agreement is provided from both parents indicating which application they have agreed on; or
- a court order is provided confirming which parent's application carries precedence.

If no agreement can be made, parents are recommended to seek legal advice. If an agreement cannot be reached before the closing date, this may affect the chances of your child being allocated a place at your preferred school/s.

Late applications

Late applications are any common application forms (for the normal point of entry) received by the local authority after its statutory closing date of 15 January. Late applicants will not receive an offer of a school place by the local authority on National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day).

Late applications will be processed in the subsequent rounds of allocations between May and July (for more details, refer to your local authority's timescales in their co-ordinated scheme on their website).

Children below Compulsory School Age

Where children below compulsory school age are offered a place at the school, they will be entitled to attend the school full-time in the September following their fourth birthday.

Parents/carers may defer their child's entry to the allocated 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 for which the offer was made when the place will cease to be available for the child. Please discuss this with the school directly once a place has been offered.

Where parents/carers wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. Please discuss this with the school directly once you have received an offer of a school place.

Requests for admission outside the normal age group

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.

Requests for admission to Reception outside the normal age group (summer born children)

All children are entitled to a full-time school place in the September following their 4th birthday and most parents are happy for their child to start school at this point. However, parents/carers of summer born children (those born between 1 April and 31 August) who do not reach compulsory school age until a full year after they would normally start school, may wish to delay their child's start to school until the September following the child's 5th birthday.

If parents wish to delay their summer born child's start at school until the September after their 5th birthday, there are 2 options:

1. Parents can make an in-year application for a **Year 1** place for the September following their child's 5th birthday as other children in the child's age group already attending school will be moving from Reception to Year 1 at this point. It is important to remember that some schools are likely to be full in Year 1 and unable to offer a place;
2. If parents do not want their child to miss their Reception year, they may request that children are admitted out of their normal age group i.e. into Reception instead of Year 1. Please note, this is a 'request' and parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group. The school's admission authority is responsible for making the decision about which year group a child should be admitted to.

Parents/carers of summer born children wish to delay their child's school start by a full year but would like them to start in Reception, should still make their application for a Reception place for their child's normal year of entry before the primary application deadline of **15 January** in the offer year (the academic year in which the child turns 4)**.** If a delay is agreed, this application can be withdrawn.

Parent/carers should also, if possible, make their request for admission out of the normal age group to their preferred schools by the same date - **15 January.** This is to enable sufficient time for requests to be processed prior to National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day). Requests will however still be considered after this date.

Parents/carers requests to apply for a Reception place at Priors Hall – a learning community for the September following their child's 5th birthday, should be made in writing (email is sufficient) to the school in the first instance. In their request, parents/carers should provide some information about their child to explain why they think that their child should be educated out of their normal age group. It is important for parents/carers to provide any additional evidence to support their request as this information will help the admission authority to make their decision e.g. parents/carers may be able to provide a report from the child's Early Years setting or evidence from a health or social care professional.

The request will then be considered by our admission authority who have to decide if they will allow the request. The decision must be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. The School Admissions Code (2021) requires admission authorities to consider a number of factors including:

- the parent's/carer's views;
- information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
- where relevant, the child's medical history and the views of a medical professional;
- whether the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely;
- the Head teacher's views.

Parents/carers will be informed of the admission authority's decision on which year group the child should be admitted to when they start school (i.e. Reception or Year 1) and will set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

If the request to be admitted outside normal age group is approved by the admission authority of the school, parents/carers will need to forward this approval to their local authority's School Admissions team to ensure that an application will be accepted in the normal admission round for the September following the child's 5th birthday. Parents/carers will then need to make an application for a place in Reception for the normal round of admissions in the following academic year.

Please note – this does not mean that a child has been, or will be, offered a place in the Reception year at their chosen school. If, in the following normal admissions round, the school is oversubscribed, all applications (including delayed applications) for the school will be ranked in accordance with the school's oversubscription admission criteria and places offered up to the school's published admission number.

If the request to be admitted outside normal age group is rejected by the admission authority of the school, parents/carers have to decide whether to accept a Reception place in the normal year of entry, delay their child's start until the September after their 5th birthday and apply for a Year 1 place, or make a request to other schools to see if they will accept an application for a delayed start in Reception.

Parents/carers who are unhappy with the admission authority's decision to refuse their child a place out of their normal age group, should complain directly to the admission authority.

Parents/carers whose requests for delayed entry into Reception are refused, do not have the right to appeal this decision. They have the right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied but this right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group.

General requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents/carers may seek a place for their child out of their normal age group. They must make a formal request in writing (an email is sufficient) directly to the school in the first instance.

The admission authority of the school will consider the request and make a decision 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/carer's views
- information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- where relevant, the child's medical history and the views of a medical professional
- whether the child has previously been educated out of their normal age group
- whether the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- the views of the Head teacher of the school concerned

The admission authority of the school MUST set out clearly for parents the reasons for their decision about the year group a child should be admitted to.

Parents/carers 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.

Children moving to the UK from overseas

Documentary evidence to verify an address may be required if an application is made following a move to the UK or as a result of an impending move to the UK. A copy of the rental agreement or an exchange of contract letter is usually sufficient. The admission authority reserves the right to seek further documentary evidence as necessary.

In-Year Admissions

An in-year admission refers to an application for a school place made during the school year or an application for admission to a school made at the start of the school year for any year group other than the normal year of entry.
If it is not possible to offer a place at the school, parents/carers can ask for their child's name to be added to the waiting lists (see below for more information).
Applications for in-year admissions should be made online to the local authority on NNC's website: https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/school-admissions

Waiting List

Following an unsuccessful application, parents/carers can request that their child's name be placed on the waiting list. Waiting lists are held for all year groups by the school.

Waiting lists will be cleared after 31 December and at the end of each subsequent school term. If parents/carers would like their child's name to remain on the waiting list for another school term, they should inform the school in writing, by the start of each subsequent term (ie: during the Christmas and Easter breaks) to renew their interest.

Each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria and when a place becomes available it will be allocated to the child at the top of the waiting list. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest and children being allocated places under the Fair Access Protocol will be given priority. A new application will be required for a new academic year.

Appeals

If your child is not successful in obtaining a place at this Academy, you have a right of appeal to an independent panel.

Appeals are administered by the Diocese of Peterborough education team. For more information on the process please see: https://www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/church-schools/admission-and-appeals/

If you wish to appeal please contact the Appeals Administrator by emailing education@peterborough-diocese.org.uk and ask for an appeals pack.