Admissions Policy 2026-2027

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Author:	Headteacher
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Staploe Education Trust
Excellence through partnership

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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
- 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.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

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

Children previously in care are children who were in care, 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 the Admission Authority to have been in state care (i.e. in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation or any other provider whose sole/main purpose is to benefit society) outside of England but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted only.

A child is eligible to start school the September following their fourth birthday, but legally must be accessing full time education from the term following their fifth birthday.

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.

Admission Authority: Staploe Education Trust is the admission authority for the School. This means that the Academy Trust sets and applies the admissions policy for the School. All decisions regarding the admission of children into the School are made by Staploe Education Trust. The responsibility for the administration of the admissions process remains with the Local Authority.

4.How to apply

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. Parent/Carers living in Cambridgeshire can apply online via this link.

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

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

All parents are advised to read the LA booklet for parents on primary admissions before submitting an application. Parents wishing to visit the school prior to submitting an application are welcome to do so. We encourage parents to attend one of the group open evening or afternoon sessions Please note that visits are not interviews and do not affect any decision regarding the availability of a place. Please contact the school to find out dates and make arrangements

5. Requests for Accelerating or Deferring your child's place outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place outside your child's normal age group if, for example, your child is summer born, gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. For more information on acceleration or deferrals please contact the Local Authority Admissions Team.

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 pupils for entry in Reception.

6.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan names 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 with siblings at the school. Sibling means a brother or sister, a half-brother or sister, a legally adopted brother or sister or half-brother or sister, a stepbrother or sister or any other child, who, at time of application and also admission, is living in the same household as part of the same family.
3.

4. Children living in the villages of Barway and Barcham.

5. Children living in Soham.

6. 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 two 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.

7. Children living outside of the catchment area of the school.

In cases of equal merit, priority will go to the child closest to the school by the shortest straight line distance from the reference point of the home to the reference point of the school both as determined by the National Land and Property Gazateer (NLPG). These distances are produced by the LA Admissions Team for the school. For families who live outside the area covered by the Cambridgeshire mapping system, distances are determined using a combination of local maps and online resources. 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.

When an application is refused, the child's details are automatically placed on a reserve list for the year group, ranked according to the oversubscription criteria. The Local Authority Admissions Team holds a reserve list on behalf of the school until the end of the autumn term in the initial year of intake.

7.3 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, children previously in care and children with EHC plans listing the school.

7.4 Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Cambridgeshire'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

You can apply for a place for your child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose statement of SEN or EHC plan names the school will be admitted.

Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for, your child will always be offered a place.

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.

If no place is allocated during the current school year then parents must submit a new In Year admissions form for the new academic year. Your child will not remain on the existing waiting list.

Soham operates as a single catchment area. The Shade will not usually accept children above the PAN for any class in KS1, and will not accept a child into a KS2 class over PAN if there is a school place available in another Soham primary school.

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

The LA Admissions Team: email: admissions@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or telephone 0345 045 1370

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

8. Appeals

You have a right of appeal if your child is not offered a place at any of your preferred schools.

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 by completing this form and send it to the following address:

admissionappeals@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

You can find details of the school's appeals timetable here.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the School Advisory Body every year.

The Trust Board determines admission arrangements annually. Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the Trust Board will publicly consult on these changes.