



Hunsbury Park Primary School

Admissions Policy

Last updated: September 2023

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Statement of intent

At Hunsbury Park Primary School, we welcome all pupils, and places at the school are offered in an open and fair way.

The number of places available is determined by the capacity of the school, and is called the 'agreed admissions number'. Our published admissions number (PAN) is published admissions number.

The table below sets out who the admission authority is and other responsible bodies in our school.

| Type of school | Who is the admission authority? | Who deals with complaints about arrangements? | Who is responsible for arranging/providing for an appeal against refusal of a place at the school? |
|------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Community school | LA | Schools Adjudicator | LA |

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2022) 'School Admission Appeals Code'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- SEN Information Report
- Admissions Policy Appendix: Changes to Procedures for Admissions and Admission Appeals until 30 September 2022

2. Roles and responsibilities

The admission authority is responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with the relevant legislation and guidance when carrying out the overall admission of pupils into the school.
- Ensuring that there is a link on the school website directing to the admission arrangements published on the LA's website.
- Clearly communicating any reasons for rejecting the admission of a pupil, as well as the parent's right to appeal and the appeal process.
- Implementing any advice or recommendations given by the Schools Adjudicator without undue delay.
- Determining the admission arrangements on an annual basis and publicly consulting stakeholders on any proposed changes to the admission arrangements.
- Setting clear, fair and effective oversubscription criteria which do not discriminate against any pupil.
- Communicating oversubscription criteria clearly to parents.
- Notifying the LA of any in-year admissions and their outcomes.

The Schools Adjudicator is responsible for:

- Acting in line with the relevant legislation and guidance pertaining to admissions.
- Receiving concerns and objections regarding the admission of pupils and making recommendations to the admission authority as a result of these concerns and objections.
- Approving variations to determined admissions arrangements where there has been a major change in circumstances or law.

The appeals clerk is responsible for:

- Having an in-depth knowledge of the relevant appeals codes and other relevant law.
- Providing an independent and impartial service for admission appeals.
- Making the necessary administrative arrangements for hearings.
- Notifying all parties of the order of proceedings in advance of an appeals hearing.
- Responding to queries from appellants in advance of an appeals hearing or identifying who will be appropriate to respond.
- Being an independent source of advice on procedure and admissions law.
- Keeping accurate records of proceedings and providing written notification of the appeals panel's decisions.

3. Determining a PAN

The number of places available is determined by the capacity of the school. The PAN for new Reception pupils is 45.

The admission authority will consult with the governing board where it proposes to increase, decrease or keep the same PAN. Where the admission authority has set a PAN lower than the school's wishes, the school will submit an objection to the Schools Adjudicator, where appropriate.

4. Oversubscription criteria

In the event of there being an oversubscription of applicants to the school, the following oversubscription criteria for each relevant age group will be applied:

- Children of staff at the school will be given priority

The school will be consulted on all pupils who wish to name the school in their EHC plan.

When formulating their admission arrangements, the admission authority will not:

- Place any conditions on the consideration of any application other than those in the oversubscription criteria published in their admission arrangements.
- Take into account any previous schools attended, unless it is a feeder school.
- Give priority to children whose parents rank preferred schools in their application.
- Introduce any new selection by ability.
- Give priority to children based on any practical or financial support their parents give to the school or associated parties, including any affiliated religious organisation.
- Give priority to children according to the occupational, marital, financial or educational status of parents applying – apart from where these factors determine a child's pupil premium eligibility, and for children whose parents work at school.
- Discriminate against any protected characteristic.
- Give priority based on a child's or their parents' past or present hobbies or activities.
- Name fee-paying independent schools as feeder schools.
- Interview children or parents.
- Request financial contributions as part of the admissions process.

- Request photographs of children – apart from for proof of identity when sitting selection tests.

Catchment areas

The point within the school grounds from which the school will measure any distance or radii is the door of the school reception. This point will be used to determine the school's catchment area. This will be measured using the child's primary address. The catchment area is a 5-mile radius from the school as the crow flies.

The school will accept pupils from outside the catchment area – oversubscription criteria will apply where applicable.

Siblings of pupils and children of staff

For the purpose of this policy, "sibling" is defined as any brother or sister related by blood or marriage and any fostered or adopted siblings.

Where oversubscribed, the school will give priority to children whose siblings are currently at the school or who attended the school within the last six years.

Where oversubscribed, the school will give priority to children for whom staff have parental responsibility, where the staff member has been employed by the school for two or more years at the time at which the application was made, and where the member of staff has been recruited to fill a vacant post where there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

Governors of the school are included in the staff criteria with regard to admissions for children.

Selective criteria

Admissions procedures

The school will offer open events and school visits to all potential applicants, irrespective of any protected characteristics. Where necessary, the school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants or disabled parents.

The school may assess its ability to cater to the applicant's needs by:

- Inviting the applicant to attend the school for half a day.
- Visiting the applicant's home.
- Visiting the applicant's current education provision.

Consultation and determination

The admission authority will consult on any proposed changes to the admissions arrangements. Consultation will last for a minimum of six weeks and will take place between 1 October and 31 January in the determination year. The admission authority will consult on admissions arrangements at least once every seven years, even if no changes have been made in that time.

The admission authority will consult with the following:

- Parents of all pupils
- Stakeholders
- Other admission authorities within the relevant area [
- The governing board and the LA who are not the admission authority
- Neighbouring LAs
- Any LAs in which pupils have historically come from

The admission authority will publish a copy of the full proposed admission arrangements and the contact details of the individual responsible for admissions liaison on the school website. A copy of the proposed admission arrangements will be made available upon request.

Admission arrangements will be determined by 28 February in the determination year on an annual basis, even when no changes to the arrangements have been made.

Finalised admission arrangements will be published on the school website.

Any objections to the admission arrangements will be directed to the Schools Adjudicator by 15 May in the determination year.

5. Applications and offers

Parents will be provided with a common application form (CAF) where they will note their three preferred schools, along with a brief explanation, in rank order – the schools do not have to be located in the LA area where the parents live. Parents will provide LAs with the following information within the CAF:

- Their name and their child's name and date of birth
- Their and their child's address and proof of residence

The CAF will be submitted to the parents' LA. Parents are not guaranteed to have their preferences met. The admission authority will request supplementary information for the purpose of processing applications where necessary; however, they will have due regard to [section 4](#) of this policy. The admission authority will not request any of the following:

- Any personal details, including information on criminal convictions or financial status
- The first language of the parent or child
- Details about the parents' or child's disability, medical or SEND requirements
- Any parental agreement to follow the ethos of the school in a practical way
- For the child to complete any part of the form or for two parents to provide signatures
- Once a place has been offered, the admission authority may ask for the child's short birth certificate as proof of birth date.

For previously LAC (PLAC) and LAC, the admission authority will request a copy of the adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order, and a letter from the LA confirming that the child was looked after immediately prior to the order being made.

A clear, fair and objective waiting list will be provided until 31 December of each year. Priority will not be given to pupils based on the date they were placed on the list. LAC and PLAC will take priority over the waiting list.

An offer will only be withdrawn if it has been made in error, a parent has not responded within 20 working days, or if the offer was made via a fraudulent or misleading application. Where an offer has not been responded to within the designated time frame, the admission authority will give the parent a further opportunity to respond and will explain that the offer will be withdrawn if they do not. If any application is found to be fraudulent after a child has started at the school in the first term of the new academic year, the school may withdraw the place. If the fraudulent application is found after this time, the pupil will not be removed.

All offers will be made on National Offer Day, i.e. 16 April or the next working day.

The admission authority will maintain a waiting list for oversubscribed schools. The admission authority will make clear in the admissions arrangements the process for requesting admission outside of the normal age group for the admissions round.

The headteacher will assist the admission authority with deciding on which year group a child will enter. Once a decision has been reached, the child's parents will be informed in writing along with an explanation of how the decision was reached and any reasons why.

Pupils not of usual school age will not be given less of a priority where the school is oversubscribed.

Applications for children coming from overseas will be treated in accordance with Home Office rules.

For children of UK service professionals, the following procedure will be adhered to:

- A place will be allocated to the child in advance of the family arriving in the area named in the application form.
- The application must be accompanied with an official letter confirming the relocation date and the service unit's postal address or quartering area address when considering the application against the oversubscription criteria.
- The application will not be refused on the grounds of the child not currently living in the area, nor will places be uniquely reserved.
- The arrangements for service children will be in line with the government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children.
- The school will be consulted on all pupils who wish to name the school in their EHC plan.

Children with SEND who do not have an EHC plan will be treated equally to all other applicants in the admissions process. This includes children who may need extra support or reasonable adjustments to be made. The details of the school's SEND provision can be found in our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy and SEN Information Report.

6. In-year admissions

The school will follow the same process for in-year admissions as for admissions at the start of the academic year.

In-year admissions forms can be acquired through the LA or by contacting the school directly.

The school will consider all such applications and if the year group applied for has space available, then a place will be offered. If a place is not available, then the child's parent can ask for their child's name to be added to the appropriate waiting list. As with admissions at the start of the academic year, parents whose applications are turned down are entitled to appeal through the process outlined below.

7. Waiting list

For admissions at the start of the academic year, the school will operate a waiting list which is maintained until 31 December on year of entry. The list will set out the priority for places in the same order set out in the oversubscription criteria. When additional children are placed on the waiting list, the list will be re-ordered in line with the oversubscription criteria.

Parents may request that their child is placed on the waiting list if they are not successful in receiving a place. Where a place becomes available, it will be offered to the parents of the child at the top of the list.

For in-year admissions, if there is a waiting list for that year, the child will be placed on a waiting list until a space becomes available, or the child finds a new school setting. The list will set out the priority for places in the same order as admissions at the start of the year – when a place becomes available, it will be offered to the parents of the child at the top of the list.

If a child on the waiting list is offered a position at the school, the parents will be notified by letter and will have the option of accepting or rejecting the place within 20 days.

8. Admissions appeals

In circumstances where a school place is refused, parents, and in some circumstances their children, will have the right to appeal against an LA's decision to refuse admission.

Where this is the case, the LA will establish an independent appeals panel to hear the appeal. The appeal panel will perform its judicial function in a transparent, accessible, independent and impartial manner, and operate according to principles of natural justice.

The LA and appeal panel will ensure that it acts in accordance with this Code, the School Admissions (Appeal Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012, the School Admissions Code, other law relating to admissions, and relevant human rights and equalities legislation, for example, the Equality Act 2010.

The procedures outlined within this section will apply to all appeals lodged on or after 1 October 2022. Appeals lodged on or before 30 September 2022 will be heard in accordance with the 'School Admissions Appeals Code' 2012 and the School Admissions (Appeal Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended.

The governing board will be aware of and, where relevant, assist the LA with the admissions appeals procedure.

Timetable

The LA will set a timetable for organising and hearing appeals that:

- Includes a deadline for lodging appeals which allows appellants at least **20 school days** from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful to prepare and lodge their written appeal.
- Ensures that appellants receive at least **10 school days'** notice of their appeal hearing.
- Includes reasonable deadlines for appellants to submit additional evidence, for admission authorities to submit their evidence, and for the clerk to send appeal papers to the panel and parties.
- Ensures that decision letters are sent within **5 school days** of the hearing wherever possible.

The LA will publish the appeals timetable on their website by **28 February each year**.

The LA will ensure that appeals lodged by the appropriate deadlines are heard within the following timescales:

- For applications made in the normal admissions round, appeals will be heard within **40 school days** of the deadline for lodging appeals
- For late applications, appeals will be heard within **40 school days** from the deadline for lodging appeals where possible, or within **30 school days** of the appeal being lodged.
- for applications for in-year admissions, appeals will be heard within **30 school days** of the appeal being lodged.

Any appeals submitted after the appropriate deadline will still be heard, in accordance with the timescales set out in the table published by the LA.

Notifying appellants of the right to appeal and the appeal hearing

When informing a parent of their unsuccessful admissions application, the LA will send written notification of their decision. This will include:

- The reason why admission was refused.
- Information about the right to appeal.
- The deadline for lodging an appeal.
- Contact details for making an appeal.

Parents will be informed in the letter that, if they wish to appeal, they must make the appeal in writing. The LA will not limit the grounds on which an appeal can be made.

The LA will provide appellants with written notification of the date and all final arrangements of the appeal hearing no later than **10 school days** before the hearing. This notification will include the deadline for the submission of any further evidence that was not sent in the original appeal.

The LA will comply with any reasonable request for information from parents to help them prepare their case for the appeals hearing.

The LA will ask appellants whether they intend to call any witnesses or be represented at the hearing and inform them that they may waive their right to **10 school days'** notice of the hearing if they so wish.

Constitution of appeals panels

The LA will appoint a clerk to the appeal panel who is independent of the school and the education functions of the LA. The clerk will have sufficient knowledge of the 'School Admission Appeals Code', the 'School Admissions Code', other law relating to admissions and other relevant law, as well as being able to offer advice to enable the panel to undertake its judicial function.

The appeals panel will comprise of a chair and at least **two** other panel members.

The panel will also include at least one lay person **and** one or more people with experience in education.

In accordance with 'The School Admissions (Appeal Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012, the clerk to the panel will ensure that no disqualified person is allowed membership of the panel. A person will be disqualified if they are:

- A member of the LA which is the admission authority or LA in whose area the school is located.
- A member or former member of the governing board of the school.
- An employee at the LA or governing board of the school, other than a teacher or TA.
- Any person who has, or at any time has had, any connection with the LA, school or LA who may not act impartially.
- Any person who has not attended training required by the LA arranging the appeals panel.

The LA will ensure that panel members and clerks will not take part in hearings until they have received appropriate training as outlined within the School Admissions Appeals Code'.

The LA will ensure that panel members are independent from the school and will remain independent for the duration of their service.

The chair of the appeals panel is responsible for the conduct of the hearing, including introducing parties, explaining the roles of the clerk and the panel and how the hearing will be conducted, and ensuring that parties have sufficient opportunity to state their case and ask questions.

The LA will indemnify the members of the appeals panel against any legal costs and expenses they incur in connection with any decision taken in good faith whilst acting as a member of the appeals panel.

Members of the appeals panel will be eligible to receive travel and subsistence allowances where applicable, and will, where appropriate, be compensated for any loss of earnings or expenses.

Evidence

All evidence relating to the appeal hearing will be passed on to the clerk. This evidence will include details of:

- How the admission arrangements and the co-ordinated admissions scheme apply to the appellant's application.

- Reasons for the decision to refuse admission.
- How the admission would cause prejudice to the education provision of the school.

The clerk will send all the papers required for the hearing to both parties and the members of the panel seven days before the hearing.

Attendance and representation

It will be the LA's responsibility to make arrangements for appeal hearings. Appeal hearings may be held in person, remotely by video conference or a mixture of the two (a hybrid hearing).

Appeal hearings held entirely by telephone will only be permitted where video conferencing cannot be used relating to connectivity or accessibility and if the appellant and presenting officer both agree.

Regardless of the forum chosen, appeal panels will allow appellants the opportunity to make oral representations.

The LA will provide a presenting officer to attend the hearing and present the LA's case to the panel, ensuring that this person is a member of staff who is well acquainted with the school.

The presenting officer will be responsible for relaying to the attendees the decision not to admit the child, and answer questions where necessary, either in person or remotely

Appellants may attend in person or be represented by another individual. Where appellants cannot attend, a decision will be made based on the written evidence.

Appeals hearings

Where appeal hearings are held in person, the LA will take all reasonable steps to ensure the venue is appropriate, accessible to appellants, and has a suitable area for appellants and presenting officers to wait separately from the panel before and between appeals.

Appeal hearings that are held remotely will be held in such a way that means the appeal is capable of being heard fairly and transparently. Attending parties will be able to present their cases fully and the LA will be satisfied that each participant has access to facilities that allow them to engage in the hearing at all times.

Where a hybrid hearing is to take place, the arrangements above will be complied with as appropriate.

Hearings, whether conducted in-person or remotely, will be held in private.

The order of appeal hearings will be as below:

- Case for the LA.
- Questioning by the appellant(s) and panel.
- Case for the appellant(s).
- Questioning by the LA and panel.
- Summing up by the LA.
- Summing up by the appellant(s).

Reaching a decision

When reaching a decision, the LA will follow the specific two stage process outlined in section three of the 'School Admission Appeals Code'.

Decisions will be decided by a simple majority of votes cast. If votes are split equally, the chair will make the casting vote. The panel will either uphold or dismiss an appeal and will not uphold an appeal subject to any specified conditions.

To communicate the decision made, the panel will send a letter to the appellant, signed by the clerk or chair of the appeals panel, no later than **five school days** after the decision has been made.

The decision letter will contain clear reasons for the panel's decision and a summary of the relevant factors raised by the parties and considered during the hearing. In the case of applications outside the normal admissions round, the LA will ensure that the pupil is admitted to the school without unnecessary delay.

Appeals by the parent of a child with an EHC plan against the choice of school named in the EHC plan will be considered by the First-tier Tribunal (SEND) and not the appeals panel.

In cases where there are multiple appeals, the LA will ensure that, where possible, all appeals are heard by the same appeals panel with the same members, and that no decisions are made until all the appeals have been heard.

In all hearings the clerk to the panel will ensure that an accurate record is taken of the points raised at the hearing, including the proceedings, attendance, voting and reasons for decisions. These notes will be kept securely by the LA for a minimum of two years and are, in most cases, exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Further appeals and complaints

Appellants will not have the right to more than one appeal in respect of the same school for the same academic year unless, in exceptional circumstances, the LA has accepted a second application from the appellant due to a material change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school but still refused admission. Appellants can apply for a place at the school for a different academic year.

Appellants may complain about maladministration on the part of an appeal panel to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsmen. The LA will inform parents about the arrangements for making a complaint.

9. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the governing board on an annual basis. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all staff and other interested parties.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2024.