



Hensingham Primary School

Admission Policy

2027 - 2028

Introduction

1. This Admission Policy is part of the admission arrangements for Hensingham Primary School (**Academy**), a mainstream primary academy managed by Cumbria Education Trust (**Trust**), a multi academy trust.
2. The Academy admits children of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (**SEND**). Children are usually admitted into Reception Year and then remain on the roll until Year 6 before transferring to a secondary school.
3. The Academy has a nursery which caters for children from the age of three years old. There is no automatic transfer from the nursery to Reception Year – an application must be made at the usual time. The Academy does give some priority to children attending the nursery in its oversubscription criteria for Reception Year. The Nursery Entry Arrangements are published on the Academy's website.
4. The 'admission authority' for the School is the Trust (via its Board of Trustees), which delegates its responsibilities and decision making under admission law, the School Admissions Code 2021 (**Admissions Code**) and School Admission Appeals Code 2022 (**Appeals Code**) to an Admission Committee of at least three members appointed by the Local Advisory Board (**LAB**) of the Academy.
5. In education law and this policy, a 'parent' includes the biological parents of a child (regardless of whether they have care of, contact with or parental responsibility for the child), as well as other persons who have care of and/or parental responsibility for the child. Only one parent is able to submit an application for admission – the Academy is not permitted to obtain the details of more than one parent during the application process.
6. As confirmed by the Department for Education (**DfE**), caselaw states that all persons with parental responsibility must be consulted before important decisions are made such as removing a child from their school, leaving a school and/or which school they should attend. This places an obligation to consult on parents, not the Academy. Where an application from one parent is received, it will be processed and a place offered or refused in the usual way. If parents are in dispute, they will need to resolve this between themselves, or through their family lawyers and/or the family court. Parents must not try to draw the Academy into parental disputes.

Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

7. Children with an EHCP are not admitted under this policy, they are admitted under a separate legal process set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice. Their EHCPs are maintained by the Local Authority covering their home address (**Home LA**), which is responsible for deciding which educational setting will be named in Section I as the one the child will attend.
8. If parents of a child with an EHCP want them to attend the Academy, they should discuss this with the SEND team at their Home LA, which may then consult the Academy on the suitability and compatibility of the placement before deciding whether to name it in Section I.
9. Where the Academy is named in Section I of a child's EHCP, the child will be admitted. Where this happens in the 'normal admissions round' (i.e. admission to Reception Year at the start of September), their place will usually be allocated within the PAN before any others, reducing the number of places remaining. At any other time, the child will be admitted regardless of pupil numbers.
10. The Academy has a Specialist Resource Provision (**SRP**) catering for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (**ASD**).

Maximum Infant Class Size

11. The law sets a maximum infant class size for Reception Year, Year 1, and Year 2 of 30 pupils per class with a single teacher.
12. Some categories of children may still be admitted over the legal maximum. These are set out in regulations and summarised at Para. 2.15 of the Admissions Code. Where this happens, the additional pupils are known as 'excepted pupils' and do not count towards the class size until it has fallen back to 30.

Age at Admission and Compulsory School Age (CSA)

13. All children are entitled to a full-time place in Reception Year in the September following their fourth birthday. However, they do not reach CSA (the age at which they are legally required to attend school full-time) until the first of three prescribed dates after their fifth birthday:
 - Children born 1 September to 31 December reach CSA on 31 December on or after their fifth birthday.
 - Children born 1 January to 31 March reach CSA on 31 March on or after their fifth birthday.
 - Children born 1 April to 31 August reach CSA on 31 August on or after their fifth birthday (these children are informally known as 'summer born children').

Deferred Entry, Delayed Entry and Part-Time Attendance

14. Parents have a right to decide that their child will not start school until they reach CSA.
15. Where this is for one or two terms, this is known as 'deferred entry' and the child's place will be retained until they start school. Where it is for a whole year (in the case of a summer born child), this is known as 'delayed entry,' the place will be given up, and a new application must be made the following year. This is because entry cannot be deferred longer than the start of the last term of the school year.
16. Parents also have a right to decide that their child will attend school part-time until they reach CSA. Unlike deferred entry, this can happen throughout the school year in the case of summer born children. It can also be combined with the right to defer entry. For example:
 - Children born 1 September to 31 December can defer entry or attend part-time during the first term.
 - Children born 1 January to 31 March can defer entry for one or two terms, or attend part-time for one or two terms, or defer entry for the first term and then attend part-time during the second.
 - Summer born children born 1 April to 31 August can defer entry for one or two terms, attend part-time for the whole school year, or defer for one or two terms and then attend part-time for one or two terms until the end of the school year.
17. In all cases, parents are asked to let the Academy know what their plans are as early as possible, for planning and operational reasons.
18. Where the parents of a summer born child decide to delay entry for a whole school year, their child's normal age group will be Year 1 the following year when they need to apply. If they want their child to be admitted to Reception Year instead, they will need to make a Request for Admission Outside Normal Age Group and obtain agreement to this first.

Requests for Admission Outside Normal Age Group

19. Parents who want their child to be admitted to a year group other than their normal year group have a right to ask the 'admission authority' for their preferred school(s) for permission for this to happen. This is known as 'admission outside normal age group' and it can be to any year group above or below. It can be for any reason, for example gifted children, children who have suffered illness or been educated in a different country.
20. Most commonly, requests are made for summer born children to be admitted one year lower than normal, having delayed entry for a year. In these cases, the Admission Committee will follow the DfE's separate guidance on the admission of summer born children.
21. Parents do not have an absolute right to decide their child will be admitted to a lower or higher year group in the way they do with deferred and delayed entry, for example. The request must be considered by the 'admission authority' for the school who will decide whether to agree it (this is essentially an 'in principle' decision – a separate admission application will still need to be made and processed). Decisions are not made by the Headteacher, but their views will be taken into account.
22. Parents are strongly encouraged to make these requests as early as possible, ideally well ahead of any application deadlines for their child's normal age group, so that they are in a position to make informed decisions once they know the outcome(s) before deciding on preferences and submitting applications.
23. Decisions are made by the 'admission authority' on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the parents' views, the Headteacher's views, information about the child's academic, social and emotional development, the child's medical history and the views of their medical professionals, whether they have previously been educated or attended nursery out of their normal age group, and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. This is not an exhaustive list - parents may put forward any matters or documents for consideration.
24. To make a request to the Academy, parents must complete a **Request for Admission Outside Normal Age Group Form** (published on the Academy's website or available in hard copy form from the Academy's main office) and submitting it to the Admission Manager by email to office@hensingham.cumbria.sch.uk or by post/hand delivery to the Academy's main office marked for the attention of the Admission Manager, along with any supporting documentation the parent thinks may be helpful.
25. On behalf of the Admission Committee, the Admission Manager will notify parents of the outcome of their request in writing, with clear reasons for the decision. Where the request is agreed, parents should submit a copy of it with their application for admission.
26. Parents do not have a legal right of appeal against a refusal of a request for admission outside normal age group, as they do against the refusal of a place, however they may make a complaint under the Academy's Complaints Policy.

Published Admission Number (PAN)

27. The PAN for Reception Year is 30 pupils.
28. The Academy has a Specialist Resource Provision (**SRP**) which has 12 places for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (**ASD**). These places are spread across all year groups. Places in the SRP for Reception Year pupils transferring to the Academy in September will be allocated within the PAN in the 'normal admissions round' (see below).

Oversubscription Criteria

29. Where there are fewer applications than places in the PAN, all children will be offered a place. Where there are more applications than places in the PAN, the order of priority in which places will be allocated will be:

29.1. **Looked after and previously looked after children**

A 'looked after child' is one, who is (a) in the care of a Local Authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of its social services functions, in England.

A 'previously looked after child' is one who (a) was looked after in England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship order, or (b) appears to have been in state care outside of England (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) but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted.

Applications in this category may need to be supported by documentary evidence such as a signed letter from the child's current or former Social Worker confirming their status, and/or an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order. In the case of children adopted from state care outside of England, evidence of having been in state care outside of England and of being adopted may be required, ideally accompanying the application.

When considering the evidence provided, the DfE's current guidance will be followed. Where the Virtual School Head (**VSH**) at the Local Authority has already verified the child's status and the Academy is able to confirm this with them, there will be no need for evidence to be provided with the application.

29.2. **Children with a sibling at Hensingham Primary School**

The sibling must be on the roll at the Hensingham Primary School at the time of application and admission of the applicant child. This will not therefore include siblings in Year 6 at the time of application who will have transferred to secondary school when the applicant child is admitted.

A 'sibling' means a full brother or sister (sharing both parents), a half brother or sister (sharing one parent), an adopted brother or sister (sharing one or both parents), a long-term foster brother or sister (a looked after child), a step brother or sister (where one child's parent is married or in a civil partnership with the other child's parent) and a child of the applicant child's parent's cohabiting partner.

In all cases, the sibling must live at the applicant child's home address (as defined in this policy) and be part of the same core family unit. For the avoidance of doubt, a child of a friend or extended family member (e.g. cousin or grandchild) will not be a 'sibling' even if they live at the same address as the applicant child, unless a formal kinship arrangement is in place with the applicant child's parent.

29.3. **Children living in the catchment area of Hensingham Primary School**

The applicant child's home address (as defined in this policy) must be within the catchment area of Hensingham Primary School at the time of application. The Catchment Area Map is published on the Academy's website alongside this policy.

29.4. **Children of staff working at Hensingham Primary School**

The staff member must have been:

- employed by the Trust at the Hensingham Primary School for two or more years at the time of application; and/or
- recruited by the Trust to fill a vacant post at the Hensingham Primary School for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

This includes teaching and support staff, full and part-time staff, and staff employed on consecutive fixed term annual contracts. It does not include casual or peripatetic staff. The staff member must be based at the Academy for more than 50% of their normal working week during term time. Priority cannot be given at more than one academy within the Trust.

A 'child of a staff member' includes their natural or adoptive children irrespective of where they live, as well as the child of their spouse, civil partner, or cohabiting partner where they live with the employed staff member at the address held in their personnel file.

Applications for priority in this category must be accompanied by a signed and dated letter from the employed parent's HR Manager confirming that they meet the eligibility criteria.

The Academy is not permitted to obtain the details of more than one parent during the application process. This means that, where this priority applies, the employed parent's details must be given in the application form.

29.5. **Children who attend Hensingham Nursery**

The applicant child must attend Hensingham Nursery at the time of application and will continue to attend until the end of the school year.

29.6. **All other children**

Children not meeting the criteria for any category above will be allocated places in this category.

Tie Breaker

30. Where there are more applicant children in any of the oversubscription categories above than there are places remaining, the order in which places will be allocated within that category is by distance, with those living closer to the Academy having higher priority.
31. Distance will be measured by reference to the shortest walking route by road between the child's home address and the nearest entrance to the Academy using Cumberland Council's Geographical Information System (GIS) mapping software.
32. Where the distance is equal for two or more applicant children, the order in which places will be allocated will be determined by random allocation in front of someone independent of the Academy.
33. Where applications are received for the admission of twins, triplets or siblings of a higher multiple birth to the same year group at the same time, but not all of them can be allocated a place where the tie breaker is needed, all of them will be allocated a place anyway even where this means exceeding the PAN or the normal pupil limit for the year group. In Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2, these children

are 'excepted pupils' and do not count for the purpose of the legal maximum infant class size, until it falls back to the maximum.

Child's Home Address

34. The child's home address is defined in this policy – it is the address meeting this definition that will be used when processing the application for the purpose of determining whether the address is in the catchment area and applying the tie breaker.
35. The child's home address is the residential (not business) address at which the child will live and sleep for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Thursday night during term time, at the time of their admission. Where the child lives with more than one parent and the pattern for overnight stays is irregular, this will be assessed over the most recent five term time weeks.
36. Parents will be expected to provide satisfactory documentary evidence of the child's home address and, where applicable, of siblings, where requested. This may include family court orders setting out child arrangements, proof of ownership or renting, and/or registration with a GP, dentist, and/or optician.
37. If the child moves address during the application process in the 'normal admissions round', parents must provide their Home LA and (if different) Cumberland Council with satisfactory documentary evidence that the new address will meet the definition set out above, be permanent, and what the intended moving date is, as soon as possible in order for the new address to be used.
38. Applications are welcomed for the admission of the children of UK Armed Forces personnel and Crown Servants. Where the family is relocating from overseas, the address used will be the address at which the applicant will live when they return as long as the parents provide some evidence of this address. Alternatively, a Unit or Quarters address may be used, at the parent's request.

Application Process in the 'Normal Admissions Round'

39. All Local Authorities are required to coordinate admission in the 'normal admissions round' for all schools in their area, and all schools must participate in their Local Authority's scheme.
40. The 'normal admissions round' covers applications for admission to a 'relevant age group' (i.e. an entry year group for that school) which are made in time for a place to be offered on 'national offer day.' The closing date for applications for Reception Year in the 'normal admissions round' is **15 January 2027** and 'national offer day' is **16 April 2027**.
41. A 'late application' is defined in the Admissions Code one which is received before the first day of term in September, but not in time for a place to be offered on 'national offer day'. Late applications cannot be processed until the first round of place allocations have already happened, which will significantly reduce the chance of achieving a place at a preferred school.

In-Year Applications

42. An 'in-year application' is one made for Reception Year on or after the first day of term in September, and an application for any other year group at any time.
43. The PAN set for Reception Year applies throughout the year of admission but ceases to apply after that. This means that in-year applications for Reception Year may be refused on the basis that there are no places available within the PAN.
44. However, in-year applications for Years 1 to 6 may only be refused where admitting an additional child

would prejudice the efficient provision of education and/or the efficient use of resources at the Academy. This will take into account many different operational and other factors and is not based solely on pupil numbers.

45. Where multiple in-year applications for the same year group are received and processed at the same time, and some but not all children can be offered a place, the oversubscription criteria and tie breaker will be used to decide between the applications.
46. Applications for in-year admission must be made directly to the Academy (not the Local Authority) by completing an **In-Year Admission Application Form** (published on the Academy's website or available in hard copy form from the Academy's main office) and submitting it with any supporting documents to the Admission Manager by email to office@hensingham.cumbria.sch.uk or by post/hand delivery to the Academy's main office marked for the attention of the Admission Manager.
47. The outcome of in-year applications will be notified to parents in writing within a maximum of 15 school days of receipt, with clear reasons if the application is refused, and information about the right of appeal. Where a place is offered, arrangements will be made for the child to be admitted as soon as possible.

Right of Appeal

48. Parents have a legal right of appeal against the refusal of a place which will be heard by an independent Admission Appeal Panel. Information about the right of appeal will be included in the refusal letter, with the deadline by which the appeal grounds must be submitted and where it must be sent.
49. The Academy will publish an admission appeal timetable for appeals in the 'normal admissions round' on or before 28 February 2027.

Waiting List

50. The Academy maintains a permanent waiting list for all year groups throughout the entire school year. At the end of the school year or start of the next, the Academy will email parents on the waiting list to ask them if they still want their child's name to be included the following year. If the parent does not respond within 15 school days, the child's name will be removed.
51. The waiting list is ranked by reference to the oversubscription criteria set out above, not by reference to the date the child's name was added. This means that a child's name can go down as well as up the waiting list as further children with higher priority are added.
52. When a place becomes available in any year group, it will be offered to the child at the top of the list. If there is more than one child in the highest category, the tie breaker will be freshly applied to determine which child will be allocated the place (i.e. distance and, if distance is equal, random allocation).
53. Children allocated a place at the Academy under the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol (**FAP**) have priority over children on the waiting list. All schools are required to participate in the FAP and take their fair share of eligible children who are struggling to secure a place at school.

Reviewing the Admission Arrangements

54. The Academy's admission arrangements are reviewed every year in the Autumn before being determined on or before 28 February. Where any changes are proposed, they must be consulted on for a minimum of 6 calendar weeks between 1 October and 31 January ahead of determination. Once determined, admission arrangements cannot be varied except as set out in Paras. 3.6 and 3.7 of the

Admissions Code.

55. The exception to this is an increase in PAN, which does not require consultation. Alternatively, schools can choose to admit a number of children (often a whole class) over PAN without formally increasing it. Reductions in PAN must be consulted on.