



Elmhurst School

Admissions Policy 2025/26

Approved by: Elmhurst Local Governing Board

Date: January 2024

Date of next review: November 2024

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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 2021](#)
- [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](#).

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.

Looked after children 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

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, 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 have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

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.

4. How to apply

Elmhurst School is an academy within the Great Learners Trust, who are the admissions authority. The Board of Trustees has delegated the admissions authority operation to the Local Governing Board of the school. The Governing Body is responsible for deciding on admissions to the school and works closely with the Local Authority (LA) to coordinate these.

Details of the LA's co-ordination arrangements and online application process are on their website: [Apply for a primary school place | Buckinghamshire Council](#)

This site also explains the timetable for applications, how parents will be informed of the result of their application and how parents can express a preference for a school and give reasons for that preference. It also gives details of how applications received after the deadline are processed and how waiting lists will be handled.

5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

For parents / guardians requesting admission outside the normal age group initial queries should be made to Elmhurst School attention of the Co-Headteachers. After an initial enquiry if parents/carers wish to pursue this route they should then send a formal letter to the school regarding their request, along with any supporting evidence. Decisions on each case will be in the best interests of the child, taking all evidence into account.

The school will take account of:

- The parents' views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Advice of SENDCO and other professionals
- Where relevant, the child's 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

Whatever the outcome, the school will make the reasons for the decision clear.

If a child is admitted out of year group, their admission will be managed on the basis of the determined admission arrangements only and the applicant will not have a lower priority of admission because they are out of year group. It should be noted that if a place in the requested age range is refused, but one in the normal age range is offered, then there is no right of appeal. If the decision is made that a child could be placed out of year group, their application will be considered on an equal basis with other applications for that year group.

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 60 pupils for entry in reception.

Places will be allocated according to the following criteria, applied in the following order:

6.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plans name 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.

Criterion 1: Looked after children and previously looked after children.

Highest priority will be given to looked after children and all previously looked after children who apply for a place at the school.

Criterion 2: Exceptional Medical or Social Needs

Children who have exceptional medical or social needs, which can only be met at this school, supported by written evidence from an appropriate professional person.

A panel of educational professionals will decide if the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet the requirements of the rule, on receipt of information from the parent to indicate strong reasons for the child attending a particular school. When making an application parents should send evidence from an independent professional person (this might be a doctor, health visitor, or Education Welfare Officer, for example) who knows about the child and supports the application to the school. It must clearly show why the school is the most suitable and any difficulties if alternate schools were offered. The panel will consider which children can be considered under this rule prior to each admission round.

Criterion 3: Catchment

Children living within the catchment area of the school at the time of entry e.g. living within the area shown in the boundaries [here](#). For admissions purposes the home address is defined as the address where the child spends the majority of their school week Monday to Friday, including nights. This must be where the parent or legal carer of the child live together unless it is proved that the child is resident elsewhere with someone who has legal care and control of the child. The address should be a residential property that is owned, leased or rented by the child's parent(s) or person with legal care and control of the child.

Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week or month, the address where the child lives will be determined by:

- a) Confirmation of the registered address to which Child Benefit is currently being paid, or, if child benefit is not received then the address from which the child in question is registered with the Doctor.
- b) If the above is not applicable then the parent with whom the child spends the greater proportion of the school week from Sunday to Thursday evening.

Criterion 4: Siblings

For the main point of entry: **Siblings** of children who are attending the school in Reception to Year 5 at the time the allocations are made or who have already been offered a place to start in the **current** academic year at the school. *For immediate casual (in year) admission after normal point of entry:* **Siblings** of children who are in **Reception to Year 6** at the time of admission to the school.

Once the above criteria have been applied, then any further places will be offered in distance order; using the distance between the family's normal home address (as defined above) and the school's nearest open entrance gate offering the closest first.

We use a straight line distance. The straight line distance is 'the distance from the address point of the child's normal home address as set out by Ordnance Survey to the nearest open school gate.' As part of the computer system used for school admissions, there is a program that measures the 'straight-line' distance from the nearest open school gate to the child's home address.

The point measured as the child's home address is determined by the Ordnance Survey Address Point which is an Ordnance Survey data product that provides a National Grid Co-Ordinate and a unique reference for each postal address in Great Britain that is on the Royal Mail's Post Office Address File.

6.3 Tie break

In the case of 2 or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, the school will use the straight line distance (as outlined above) for admission purposes.

A child's home address will be considered to be where he/she is 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.

In the case of there being one place available and the next child/children meeting the criteria is a twin/triplets/multiple birth group then the other siblings will be admitted.

A waiting list will be maintained by Buckinghamshire Council for those children not offered a place, the order of priority being the same as the criteria for over-subscription.

Late preferences are considered after preferences expressed by the deadline, in compliance with Buckinghamshire Council arrangements.

6.4 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 may defer their child's entry to the 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 the offer was made for.

Where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

6.5 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 looked after children, previously looked after children and children with EHC plans listing the school.

6.6 Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Buckinghamshire Council'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. Children qualifying under the Fair Access Protocol may be offered a place even if there are no places available in the relevant year group and also take priority for admission over any child on the waiting list.

7. In-year admissions

Parents can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose EHC plans name 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 5 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Applications for in-year admissions should be made to Buckinghamshire Admissions Team.

8. Appeals

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 adhere to the guidance and appeals timetable set by Buckinghamshire County Council.

[Buckinghamshire Council Guidance for parent and guardians on school admission appeals](#)

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Local Governing Board of Elmhurst School every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the Local Governing Board will publicly consult on these changes. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years.