

Elmhurst School

Admissions Policy 2026/27

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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 (defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014), or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order (defined in section 14A of the Children Act 1989)

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 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.

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.

A **parent** is any individual who holds parental responsibility, as defined under the Children Act 1989, or any person who has care of a child, where the child lives with them either full or part time and they look after that child.

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.

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

5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group. See Buckinghamshire Council's [guide to delaying a school start date](#) for detailed advice.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and 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 Published admission number (PAN)

Our school's published admission number (PAN) for entry into reception is 30.

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. Revisit to section 3 for further detail.

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.

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 on the [Catchment Map](#). For admissions purposes the home address is defined as the address where the child spends the majority of their school week Sunday to Thursday evening. 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 distance between the school and a child's home as a tie breaker to decide between applicants. Priority will be given to children who live closest to the school.

If a child lives in different properties (shared care), parents must provide the address where the child lives for the majority of the week. In cases of equal shared care, both parents must agree which address should be used on the application. For applications made in the normal round, if there is no agreement, the local authority will decide which address will be used.

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 also be admitted.

6.4 Waiting list

Buckinghamshire Council will maintain a clear, fair and objective waiting list until 31 December of each school year of admission. If your application is unsuccessful, your child's name will be added to the waiting list. Where places become available, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria outlined in section 6.2. Priority will not be given to children based on the date their application was received, or when their name was added to the list.

Under the School Admissions Code, looked-after children, previously looked-after children, and those allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol (see section 6.7 below) must take precedence over those on the waiting list.

6.5 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 at the beginning of the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

6.6 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.

6.7 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. Eligibility for the Fair Access Protocol does not limit a parent's right to make an in-year application to any school for their child. Any application will be processed in accordance with the usual in-year admission procedures (see section 7).

6.9 Withdrawing an offer of a place

We will not withdraw an offer unless it has been offered in error, a parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

Where a parent has not responded to the offer, we will give them a further opportunity to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not respond.

If an offer is withdrawn based on misleading information, we will consider the application afresh and a right of appeal will be offered if an offer is refused.

We will not withdraw an offer of a place once a child has started at the school except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In these circumstances, we will consider the length of time that the child has been at the school before deciding whether to withdraw the place.

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 the pupil will always be offered a place.

If there are no spaces available at the time of application, the child's name will be added to the 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 according to the oversubscription criteria listed in section 5 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children because they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Applications for in-year admissions should be made to Buckinghamshire Admissions Team. [Apply to change school during the academic year \(in-year transfer\) | Buckinghamshire Council](#)

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

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. [School appeals | Buckinghamshire Council](#)

Appeals will be heard by an independent appeal panel.

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 PAN, the Local Governing Board will publicly consult on these changes. Consultation will be for a minimum of 6 weeks and will take place between 1 October and 31 January of the school year before the arrangement are to apply. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years.