



Woodland Academy Trust



Revealing the champion within
“growing in our thinking, learning and feeling together”

BEXLEY HUB OF SCHOOLS ADMISSIONS POLICY 2021-2022

Approved by:	Board of Trustees	Date: February 2019
Next review due:	February 2021 (updated Sept 2021 in line with new School Admission Code 2021)	

The Governing Body has agreed this Policy and as such, it applies to all schools in the Bexley hub of the Woodland Academy Trust.

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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.

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

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

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.

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

Please note, pupils already attending our nursery (if applicable) will not transfer automatically into the main school. 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.

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 Head Teacher'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 schools in the Bexley hub of the Woodland Academy Trust have an agreed admission number of the following: Northumberland Heath – 90 pupils; Peareswood – 60 pupils and Willow Bank – 60 pupils

6.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose statement of special educational needs (SEND) 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 looked after children and all previously looked after children who apply for a place at the school.
2. Priority will next be given to children with siblings at the school. Siblings include step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address. Priority will not be given to children with siblings who are former pupils of the school.
3. Priority will next be given to children on the basis of social or medical need. Definition of medical, health, social and special access reasons will be applied in accordance with the school's legal obligations, in particular those under the Equality Act 2010. Priority will be given to those children whose mental or physical impairment means they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Equally this priority will apply to children whose parents'/guardians', physical or mental health or social needs means that they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Such claims will need to be supported by written evidence from a suitably qualified medical or other practitioner who can demonstrate a special connection between these needs and the particular school.

6.4 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. Distance will be measured in a straight line from the child's home address to the school's front gates. 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.

6.5 Children below compulsory school age – deferred entry

Parents offered a place in reception for their child have a right to defer the date their child is admitted, or to take the place up part-time, until the child reaches compulsory school age. Places cannot be deferred beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made.

Children reach compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their 5th birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 August, 31 December and 31 March.

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.

The school will publish a link to the LA's in-year admissions arrangements on the school website by 31 October 2021.

Applications for in-year admissions should be sent to the school office.

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 set out the grounds for your appeal in writing. Details of the appeals procedure can be obtained by contacting the school office.

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

9. Nursery Admissions

The school is responsible for the admission arrangements for the nursery. Children born from 1 September 2017 to 31 August 2018 will be admitted to nursery classes in September 2021. The number of nursery places for the academic year 2021/2022 will be a maximum of 52, which will include a limited amount of 30 hour extended childcare places.

Morning session: 24 to 26 places available 08.30 – 11.30. Afternoon session: 16 to 18 places available 12.30 – 15.30. The 30 hour extended day will be 8.30-3.30 Monday to Thursday with an optional choice of hours on a Friday.

All applications for the 30 hour extended childcare offer will not be considered unless they meet the Government's eligibility criteria.

All children will be admitted in September (subject to spaces being available).

Applications should be made online at www.bexley.gov.uk/admissions or on the Local Authority's primary common application form and submitted by the closing date published by Bexley.

A waiting list will be kept by the school of applicants who are refused admission due to oversubscription. The waiting list will be kept until January 2022. The over-subscription criteria is the same as admission for pupils to Reception and is detailed within para 6.2. If there are vacancies, they will be offered on a first come, first served basis to children who are already three and can demonstrate that they are ready.

There is no right to appeal against decisions not to offer a nursery place.

Please contact the school office for details on the limited amount of 30 hour extended childcare places which are available.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the governing body every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the governing board will publicly consult on these changes.

