

Admissions Policy

Meir Heath Academy



Approved by: Mrs M Southern / Mr J Spencer **Date:** April 2026

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Admission Arrangements 2026-2027

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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain **how to apply** for a place at the Academy
- Set out the Academy'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](#).

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). Meir Heath Academy is a Staffordshire school, but if you live in Stoke on Trent, you need to apply through Stoke Local Authority. You can use this form to express your preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order.

Parents wishing to apply for a place at Meir Heath Academy can apply online at

(Staffordshire Parents) <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Admissions-primary/Apply/Overview.aspx>
(Stoke on Trent Parents)

https://www.stoke.gov.uk/info/20033/school_admissions/132/reception_class_admissions

or complete the Admission Application Form, which is available from the academy. This should then be returned directly to the Local Authority by the published closing date.

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority on National Offer Day (16 April)

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.

Admissions into year groups other than at the normal point of entry will be on an in year transfer application form, directly to the Academy and the allocation of places will be made in line with the oversubscription criteria detailed in section 6.2

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 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. Deferred Entry to Reception Class

Parents may request that their child be admitted to Reception Class on a part-time basis, or that their child be admitted to school later in the same academic year until the child reaches compulsory school age (i.e beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday). The effect is that the place will be held for the child in Reception and is not available to be offered to any other child within the same academic year in which it has been offered.

Before deciding whether to defer the child's entry to school, parents should visit the Academy to clarify how we cater for the youngest children in Reception and how the needs of these children are met as they move up through the school.

7. Allocation of places / Criteria

7.1 Admission number

The school has an agreed admission number of 45 pupils for entry in Reception.

7.2 Oversubscription criteria

If the Academy is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

In the event that the Academy receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be allocated in line with the oversubscription criteria detailed below.

The admission of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs/Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) are dealt with by a separate procedure. These children will be admitted to the Academy if our school is named on the statement/EHCP. This is a statutory entitlement under S.324 of the Education Act 1996 and will reduce the number of places available for all other applicants

1.) Children in care and children who ceased to be in care because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order), including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted

Children in care means children who are looked after by a local authority in accordance with section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989 and who is (a) in care of a Local Authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see definition in Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school. This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).

- 2.) Child arrangements orders are defined in s.8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by s.12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.
- 3.) Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a special guardianship order as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).
- 4.) Children who (at the time of application) have an elder sibling in attendance at the Academy and who will still be attending at the proposed admission date.

Siblings are considered to be those children who live at the same address and either:

- Have one or both natural parents in common
- OR
- Are related by a parent's marriage or related by parents living as partners at this address
- OR
- Are adopted or fostered by a common parent
- OR
- Children not adopted, fostered or related by a parent's marriage or with one natural parent in common, who are brought together as a family by a same sex civil partnership and who are living at the same address, are also considered to be siblings.

We do not include cousins within our definition of siblings.

- 5.) Children who reside in the catchment area of the Academy.
- 6.) Other students arranged in order of priority according to how near their home address point is to the main gate of the Academy, determined by a straight-line measurement as calculated by the local authority's Geographical Information System. Distances is measured in miles and calculated using Ordnance Survey (OS data). The co-ordinates of an applicant's home address is determined and provided by the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and OS Address Point data.

Where it is not possible to accommodate all children applying for places within a particular category then the Academy will allocate the available places in accordance with the remaining criteria. If for instance all siblings cannot be accommodated, siblings will be arranged in order of priority according to the distance criterion.

7.3 Additional Notes

The local authority uses a Geographical Information System to calculate how to school distances in miles. The measurement is calculated using Ordnance Survey (OS data). The applicant's home address is determined and provided by the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and OS Address Point data.

Home Address – the home address is considered to be the child's along with their parent/carer's main and genuine principle place of residence at the time of allocation of places. If a child lives with parents with

shared responsibilities, each for part of the week, the 'home address' will be the one at which the child is resident for the greatest part of the school week. Where this is equally shared, the home address will be the one used when applying for child benefit.

Tie Break – if the Academy is unable to distinguish between applicants using the criteria listed, such as in the case of children who live in the same block of flats, the children or children who will be offered the available spaces will be randomly selected. This process will be independently verified. .

Infant Class Size – the requirement of the Academy to meet the infant class size legislation may result in the refusal of an application where a class has already reached the limit of 30 pupils. However, the Academy will consider offering places above the admission number to applications from children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted even when there are no other vacant places.

Waiting Lists – Unsuccessful applicants will be places in a waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. As places become available they will be offered according to the child at the top of the waiting list. The waiting list will operate until the cohort concerned leaves Year 2. Inclusion on the waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available. A child's position on the waiting list is not fixed and is subject to change as the list must be re-ranked each time a child is added. It is expected that parents will agree on school places before an application is made, and it may be necessary to request evidence from you that this is the case. The Academy is not in a position to intervene in disputes between parents and will asked that these are resolved privately.

8. 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 Academy will be admitted.

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 6.3 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Admissions into year groups other than at the normal point of entry will be on an in year transfer application form, directly to the Academy and the allocation of places will be made in line with the above oversubscription criteria.

9. Appeals

If your child's application for a place at the Academy is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information on how to appeal which can be found at:

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Admissionappeals/home.aspx>

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Chair of Governors 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.

Mrs Melanie Southern

(Principal, Meir Heath Academy)

