Alsager Highfields Primary School

Mighty oaks from small acorns grow

Admissions Policy 2027-28

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Headteacher

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Presented for approval
At the Full Governing Body Meeting
of Alsager Highfields Primary School
on 07/10/2025 before going to consultation

Date:

Signed Chair of Governors:

Review Date: to be reviewed in the Autumn term 2027

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 Admission 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

3.1
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.

3.2
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,
- Became subject to a child arrangement 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.

A child is eligible to attend 'Little Acorns' the school's pre-school if they are in their final nursery year before starting school, i.e. their fourth birthday falls between September 1st and August 31st.

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.

Alsager Highfields Primary school is hereafter referred to as 'the school'.

The Cornovii Trust is hereafter referred to as the 'Trust'.

Staff in 6.6 includes staff who are currently employed to work at the school/support the school.

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.

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 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

This policy is effective for all admissions from September 2027.

6.1 The school has an agreed admission number of 30 pupils for entry into reception for 2026.

6.2 Oversubscription criteria All children whose 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. Looked after and previously looked after children
A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a Local Authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions, in England. This includes children who appear to (in the view of the Admissions Authority) have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

2. Children with a sibling at the school
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. Children of staff who work at the school
Children of staff who have been employed at the school, or Trust staff who have **directly** supported the school through their role for two or more years at the time at which the application to the school is made. (This does not include volunteers, casual contracts or wider Trust staff).

4. Children resident within the designated catchment area of the school and attend Alsager Highfields Pre-school – Little Acorns
Children will be classed within this criterion if they and their parents are resident within the designated catchment of the school and their child attends the school's pre-school commencing in the autumn term and continues for the whole academic year, immediately before entry to reception.

5. Children resident within the designated catchment area of the school
Children resident within the designated catchment area of the school. Children will be classed within this category if they and their parents/carers are resident within the area served the school as

defined by the Cheshire East Council Catchment map
https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/admissions/school-locationsandcatchment-areas.aspx

6. Children attending Alsager Highfields pre-school class 'Little Acorns' and NOT within the designated catchment area.
Any child attending the school's preschool commencing in the autumn term and continues for the whole academic year, immediately before entry to reception.

7. Pupils living nearest the school
This is measured using the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) in straight line distances in miles from the school's coordinate point to the point of residence's coordinate point.

6.3 **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.

6.4 Fair Access Protocol We participate in Cheshire East'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.

7. In-year admissions

Parents 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 EHC plan names the school will be admitted. Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group or class group you are applying for, your child will always be offered a place. Whether there is an available space in the requested year group will be determined by the admission authority and they will consider whether further admissions would cause prejudice to the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

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. Applications for in-year admissions should be via the Cheshire East Primary Admissions website https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/admissions/in-year-applications.aspx

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. The appeal must be made in writing by completing an appeals form within 20 school days from the date of notification of the decision not to offer a place. Appeal forms can be requested from and should be returned to the academy at the following address:

Chair of Governors
c/o Alsager Highfields
Fairview Avenue
Alsager
ST7 2NW

Where an in-year application and subsequent appeal are unsuccessful the Admissions Authority will not consider a repeat application within the same academic year unless there has been a relevant and significant change of circumstances relating to the application, or a place has become available in school.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the governing board 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. If nothing changes, we will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years.