Woodlands Academy

Admissions Policy

Committee with oversight for this policy –	Full Governing Board
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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

The school is required to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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 Ealing 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. Allocation of places

4.1 Admission number
The school has an agreed admission number of 30 pupils for entry in Reception and KS1 and a maximum of 32 pupils in each KS2 class.

4.2 Oversubscription criteria
All children whose statement of special educational needs (SEN) 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.

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

Priority will next be given to children on the basis of social or medical need. The school requires an EHCP as supporting evidence if you are making an application on the basis of social or medical need.

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.

Priority will next be given to children of staff at the school, in either of the following circumstances:

a) The member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, or

b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage

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

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.

5. How to apply

For applications in the normal admissions round for Reception you should use the on-line application form provided by Ealing Local Authority through the website www.eadmissions.org.uk You can use this form to express your preference for a maximum of 6/minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order. If you are unable to complete an on-line form, please ask the school for additional support. The deadline for Reception application is 15th January preceding the September intake for both online and paper applications.
You will receive an offer for a school place directly from Ealing Local Authority.

6. In-year admissions

ALL IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS ARE COORDINATED BY THE LONDON BOROUGH OF EALING

You can apply for a place for your child at any time outside the normal admissions round.

If there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for, your child will always be offered a place.

All children whose statement of SEN or EHC plan names the school will be entitled to a consultation with the school to review whether their individual needs can be met.

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 made on-line, via the following website: www.eadmissions.org.uk or by visiting https://synergyweb.ealing.gov.uk/Synergy/Parents/default.aspx

All preferences are treated equally and the Local Authority will offer the highest preference that is able to be offered. Therefore parents should rank the schools in order of their preference.

It is advisable to use all the preferences (6) and make one of the preferences the Priority Area school (applicable from primary applicants only) and, one preference where vacancies have been shown on the vacancy grid published online at www.ealing.gov.uk/inyearadmissions

If the Local Authority is unable to offer a preferred school after 4-6 school weeks, the applicant will be offered a place at the nearest school that has an available vacancy. Therefore it is important that they make realistic preferences by checking available vacancies and for primary applicants identifying the Priority Area school.

Application Forms (Online and Hard Copy)

Parents should apply online except for parents who have a child who has an education, health and care (EHC) plan (who must contact their SEN Officer) and parents who wish to apply for schools located outside of the borough of Ealing.

The online application is available for all UK residents who wish to apply for Ealing schools and can be accessed at: www.ealing.gov.uk/inyearadmissions or direct through www.eadmissions.org.uk

There is no cut-off date for in-year applications; however offers will only be communicated during term time. Weekly cut off times apply during term time of 4pm each Friday.

If a parent is unable to apply online they can request a paper copy at Perceval House. The school can also contact their in-year admissions contact to request copies electronically to be printed at the school or a limited number of forms can be posted to the school.

Supplementary Documents

The in-year admissions team require proof of the pupil's date of birth and will accept one of the following:

1. A copy of the pupil's passport
2. A copy of the short or long birth certificate
3. A copy of the UKBA Identity Card.

We will also require proof of the parent/carer's address and will accept one of the following documentation:

1. Current year's council tax bill
2. Recent child benefit or child tax credit letter
3. Letter confirming entitlement to benefits (housing, income support, Jobseekers etc.)
4. Tenancy agreement from a registered lettings agency

5. Private tenancy agreement with copies of 2 bills/documents.
6. Letter from social services, or the National Asylum Support Service (NASS), or the United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA) or housing department confirming placement at your address

If the parent is renting shared accommodation or living with family or friends and are unable to provide any of the above we will accept the following documents as evidence:

1. Written confirmation from the landlord/registered tenant that the parent is living at the address, the date the applicant family moved in and how long they intend to stay with copies of 2 bills/documents in the parent's name at this address.
2. Acceptable bills/documents to provide with a tenancy agreement or written confirmation from the landlord/registered tenant (not sufficient on their own).
3. Bank statement/credit card statement
4. Mobile phone bill
5. Utility bill (e.g. gas/electric/water)
6. Wage slip

Schools must obtain proof of date of birth and proof of address for their admission file as the in-year admissions team cannot guarantee the receipt of such documents during the admission process.

If proof of address cannot be shown, the school office will make contact with Ealing admissions to seek advice.

Should the school administrator viewing the documents have any concerns regarding their authenticity, they can send the documents to Ealing admissions to support with queries.

Home visits are regarded by the Ealing Admissions Teams as a sufficient proof of address. The Local Authority will only ever withdraw an application due to an incorrect address if they have solid evidence that the applicant was fraudulently made with the intent to falsify information in order to ensure they have a place or higher position on the waiting list of their preference school.

School Offers

The in-year admission team allocates places to schools participating in the coordinated in-year admission scheme on a weekly basis during term based on the vacancies returned by the school weekly. The published school admission criteria will determine the priority of applicants on a waiting list and the vacancy will be allocated to the pupil at the top of the list.

For confirmed Previously Looked After Children, the in-year admissions team will contact the school to liaise about the admission.

Non-preference allocations also called 'no choice allocations' will be determined by distance and availability which is individual from applicant to applicant. This type of allocation is undertaken if a pupil is out of school for 4-6 school weeks from receipt of their in-year application.

Successful applicants are sent a formal offer letter with advice to contact the school they are offered.

Offers are available for 10 school days; a further 5 consecutive day grace period is extended to the applicant allowing time to return a firm decision.

In line with the School Admissions Code an offer cannot be withdrawn unless:

a) The parent/carer has written their intention to decline the offered school.
b) The parent/carer does not contact us after 10 school days + 5 consecutive days with

their decision.
c) An administration error has been made by the in-year admissions team.

The Local Authority has a duty to track pupils into education, therefore when there are grounds to withdraw an offer, further investigation must be undertaken to determine the education arrangements for a child before the offer is withdrawn.

7. School Procedures for Admissions (Nursery, Reception and In-Year)

When a child joins the school, the following procedures will be followed in welcoming them to the school:

Our administrator will manage the applications from the SAM database or school waiting list for nursery. She will then make the initial contact with the family and arrange for them to bring in the proofs of date of birth and proof of address to complete the application form: capturing information related to contact details, meal patterns, eligibility for the Pupil Premium, ethnicity and first language, mode of travel to and from school and the signing of the Home-School Agreement and consent form. The application form will then be passed on to the Senior Leadership Team. These forms can be collected from the school or emailed, depending on parental preference.

A member of the Senior Leadership Team or Early Years Team will then arrange a home visit or school tour to meet with the family and in best case scenario, the pupil prior to starting. During this visit key information regarding the pupil will be taken by the senior leader related to any Social Services Involvement, SEND issues and to complete the form on who can and cannot collect their child from school. Medical needs will be discussed to ensure that the school has an up-to-date record of key healthcare information including allergies and medication.

The completed forms will be returned to the administrator who will be advised of the child's start date and their respective class to enter into SIMS.

A Senior Leader will confirm the start date with the parents and the administrator will send out the notification to the teacher regarding the first day at school.

The pupil's first day at the school will involve the following:
Arriving slightly before the start of the school day where their new class teacher will meet with them. A designated pupil within the class will be given the role of 'Buddy' whilst the pupil settles into school life. Where the new pupil has limited English every effort will be made to pair them up with a classmate who speaks the same home language. If no one is available in their class, if possible, they will be introduced to an older child in school who may be able to support them.

The school is committed to having an In-Year Admission start at the school within two weeks of accepting the place.

8. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside 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.

9. Procedures for Families who have Missing Documentation

1. No Proof of address

Where a family is unable to provide the required proof of residence from a landlord; two bills or other accepted proof are not forthcoming, then the school takes the view that safeguarding the child takes precedence. The Senior Administrator will inform the SLT if this arises.
In this situation two members of staff will perform a home visit before admitting the child into the school as a means of establishing that the family reside at the address and to perform a general wellbeing check. Any concerns following the visit should be communicated to the In Year Admissions Team at Ealing LA.

2. No Documentary Proof of Birth

Where a family is unable to produce documentary proof of birth when meeting the Senior Administrator; the Senior Leadership Team must be informed in order to establish the correct year group for the pupil to join. The following considerations will also be made; whether the adults are the child's parents; whether the child is subject to a private fostering arrangement; or whether the child has been subject to human trafficking.

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.

10. Nursery Admissions

If spaces are available, we are able to admit children in the term after their third birthday. Woodlands Nursery is able to offer children 15 hours per week, term time only. Parents will be allocated five mornings or five afternoons per week with each session lasting 3 hours. For eligible parents, we also offer 30 hours "free" childcare, for details see https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare for details. Parents who do not meet the eligibility criteria may also access 15 paid additional hours, details are available from the school office.

Children must attend for at least a term.

Applications for September 2027, should be submitted to the school by the end of Spring Term 2024 (4th April 2027) for consideration. All applications received by this time will be prioritised for spaces in the 2027-28 academic year. Any applications received after this time, will be considered, with pupils turning 4 given priority due to their need to prepare for the transition to reception.

If applications exceed the number of available places, these criteria are applied in order and priority will be given to children who will be of statutory school age in the following academic year. The criteria, in order of priority, are:

1. Children Looked After or children who were previously looked after but then became subject to an adoption, child arrangements order or special guardianship order.
2. Children with a brother or sister who are attending the main school (not Nursery) at the time of application. NOTE: The terms brother and sister refer to all blood, half, foster, step and adoptive brothers and sisters (not cousins) who live at the same home and in the same family unit as the child on a permanent basis or for the majority of the calendar year. A sibling relationship does not apply when the older child(ren) will leave before the younger one starts.
3. The distance between home and school is measured by straight line, from a point in the property to a point in the school determined by the grid references for the centre of the school's postcode (W13 0DH). The measuring system used is provided by UKPostcode.net. If 2 or more children have equal priority under the criteria, the criterion of distance will then be applied.

If there are no places currently available in the Nursery, the office will hold a waiting list and parents will be contacted as and when places become available.

Please also note the following:

Woodlands Nursery can admit children each term if places are available.

Parents will be asked for their National Insurance Number, documentary proof of the child's date of birth and proof of address.

Unsuccessful applicants will be considered with the next group of applicants if the criteria are still met.

It should be noted that a place in Woodlands Nursery does not automatically guarantee a place in Reception at Woodlands Academy. You still need to apply for a Reception place to the London Borough of Ealing.

We are unable to permit pupils to continue with any allocated place at Woodlands Nursery beyond the end of the current scholastic year (ended July), in which they turn four years old i.e. child turns four years old between September and August of an academic year, the place ends at the end of the summer term for that academic year.

This aspect of the admissions policy allows Woodlands Nursery to operate in line with the admission age and criteria for Reception Classes at Primary Schools within Ealing Borough.

Documentation Required Prior to Starting Nursery

The school require proof of the pupil's date of birth and will accept one of the following:

- A copy of the pupil's passport
- A copy of the short or long birth certificate
- A copy of the UKBA Identity Card.

We will also require proof of the parent/carer's address and will accept one of the following documentation:

- Current year's council tax bill
- Recent child benefit or child tax credit letter
- Letter confirming entitlement to benefits (housing, income support, Jobseekers etc.)

- Tenancy agreement from a registered lettings agency
- Private tenancy agreement with copies of 2 bills/documents.
- Letter from social services, or the National Asylum Support Service (NASS), or the United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA) or housing department confirming placement at your address

If the parent is renting shared accommodation or living with family or friends and is unable to provide any of the above we will accept the following documents as evidence:

- Written confirmation from the landlord/registered tenant that the parent is living at the address, the date the applicant family moved in and how long they intend to stay with copies of 2 bills/documents in the parent's name at this address.
- Acceptable bills/documents to provide with a tenancy agreement or written confirmation from the landlord/registered tenant (not sufficient on their own).
- Bank statement/credit card statement
- Mobile phone bill
- Utility bill (e.g. gas/electric/water)
- Wage slip

If proof of address cannot be shown, the Early Years Phase Leader/School Administrator will make contact with Ealing admissions to seek advice.

Should the school administrator viewing the documents have any concerns regarding their authenticity, they can send the documents to Ealing admissions for support with queries.

Absences

Where a pupil has been on a long term absence (10 days) and fails to return on the agreed return date and no mitigating circumstances, such as illness certified by a Doctor, have been offered, schools have the power to remove the child from the school roll. If the child does not return on the agreed date the school will contact the family by phone and if there is no reply a letter will be sent.

Pupils returning to school, who have been taken off roll will be readmitted to the school only if the school has a place available. Where a place is not available, the parents must apply for a place at an alternative setting.

Nursery Application Procedures

1. A Parent/Carer should visit the school office and ask for a nursery initial application form. When it is returned to the school office, your child will be placed on the waiting list. If your child has an EHCP, you should contact their caseworker and ask them to send an application to the school for a consultation. Should any of your contact information change, please let the school office know asap, so we can update our records.

2. The Early Years Lead will contact you to arrange a school tour, at which you will be provided with the full application form. Availability of places in the Nursery may be discussed at this time.

3. If you are given a place in our nursery, the office will contact you to arrange a home visit from the Early Years Lead and another member of staff.

4. A member of the Senior Leadership Team or EYFS Team will do a home visit and provide you with a start date.

Please note, pupils already attending our nursery will not transfer automatically into the main school. A separate application must be made for a place in reception to the London Borough of Ealing via www.eadmissions.org.uk

11. School Admission 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. As admissions for Reception are made through the Local Authority, these are organised by Ealing Admissions.

If you wish to appeal for a Nursery place, you must set out the grounds for your appeal in writing and send it to the following address:

Chair of Governors at Woodlands Academy, Hathaway Gardens, Ealing, W13 0DH

12. Responsibilities

The Governing Board is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.
The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support.

13. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Full Governing Board every year.