

Admissions policy for 25/26

Nova Education Trust
Westdale Junior School



Approved by:	Nova Education Trust Board	Date: 22.09.23
Published:	September 2023	
Expires:	September 2026	

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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](#).

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 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 accordance with section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of making an application to a school.

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order). This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 and children who were adopted under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

Child arrangements orders are defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 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. 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).

Multiple births: Where one child of a multiple birth can be admitted, the other child/children will also be admitted.

Infant Class size: The law limits the size of an infant class (a class in which the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6 and 7 during the school year) to 30 pupils per school teacher. The class size legislation makes allowance for the entry of an additional child in certain limited circumstances. The School Admissions Code 2014 (section 2.15) sets out these exceptions. This information is also available at www.dfe.gov.uk.

Home Address: The child's place of residence is taken to be the parental home, other than in the case of children fostered by a local authority, where either the parental address or that of the foster parent may be used.

If a child's parents live at separate addresses, the address where the child permanently spends at least three 'school' nights (that is, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday) will be taken to be the place of residence.

Addresses of other relatives or friends will not be considered as the place of residence, even if the child stays there for all or part of the week.

Evidence that a child's place of residence is permanent may also be sought and this should prove that a child lived at the address at the time of the application. Informal arrangements between parents will not be taken into consideration.

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area or crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area, Nottinghamshire County Council will accept a Unit postal address or quartering area address for a service child.

Parents:

- the mother of the child
- the father of the child where he was married to the mother either when the child was born or at a later date
- the father of the child if (since 1 December 2003) he was registered as the father on the birth certificate
- an adoptive parent
- any other person who has acquired 'parental responsibility' through the courts; evidence of this may be required.

Siblings (brothers or sisters):

- brothers and/or sisters who share the same parents(s)
- a half-brother, half-sister or legally adopted child living at the same address
- a child looked after by a local authority placed in a foster family with other school age children

- a stepchild or children who are not related but live as a family unit, where parents both live at the same address as the child.

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

Catchment Area

Parents can determine which catchment area their address falls in by searching Nottinghamshire County Council's website <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/education/school-admissions/school-catchment-areas>

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 one of our nurseries will not transfer automatically into reception in the attached school (or any of our other schools). A separate application must be made for a place in reception.

Please note, pupils attending Westdale Infant School will not transfer automatically into our junior schools. A separate application must be made for a place.

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 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 Admission number

At Westdale Junior School our published admission number (PAN) for entry into all year groups is 60.

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.

1. A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order⁹⁰ including those 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. 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 (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).
2. Children whose parent is an employee of Westdale Junior School and has been employed for two or more years at the time at which the application for submission to the school is made, or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
3. Children who attend Westdale Infant School and who, at the closing date for applications, have a sibling (brother or sister) who attend Westdale Junior School
4. Other children who attend the linked school (Westdale Infant School) at the closing date for applications.
5. Children who live inside the catchment area, who do not attend Westdale Infant School but at the closing date for applications have a sibling (brother or sister) who attend the school
6. Other children who live outside the catchment area.
7. Children who live outside the catchment area, who at the time of admission will have a sibling (brother or sister) who attends Westdale junior School.
8. Other children who live outside the catchment at the close of the application.

6.3 Tie break

In the case of 2 or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, we 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 they are resident for the majority of nights in a normal school week.

Where the distance between 2 or more children's homes and the school is the same, random allocation will be used to decide between them. This process will be independently verified. This process will involve drawing random envelopes with the child's name inside.

6.4 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.

If the school is not full, 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.

6.5 Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Westdale Junior School'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

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 EHC plan names Westdale Junior School will be admitted to that school.

Likewise, if there are spaces available at the school 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 at the school. 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.

Applications for in-year admissions should be made through the Nottinghamshire County Council admissions portal.

Applications for in-year admissions should be sent to the following address:

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 one of our trust's schools 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 and send it to the following address:

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/education/school-admissions/appeal-a-school-admission-decision>

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, it will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years.