



Admissions Policy 2024/2025

Nova Education Trust

Westdale Junior School



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1. Aims

This policy set out the admissions policy for a place at Westdale Junior School, which is part of Nova Education Trust . It aims to:

- › Explain how to apply for a place at a school in Nova Education Trust

This policy sets out the admissions policy of Nova Education Trust

Sections 6 and 7 set out the oversubscription criteria, and approach to in-year admissions, specific to Westdale Junior School.

- › Set out the 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 statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE):

- › [School Admissions Code](#)
- › [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

We are required by our 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 a 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.
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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 one of our infant schools will not transfer automatically into one of 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. Parents may request in writing, to the school, admission out of normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced health problems. Once a decision has been made a written response will be sent.

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
- › Headteachers' 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 but it is not in their preferred age group.

6. Allocation of places

6.1 Admission numbers

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) plan names Westdale Junior 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 Westdale Junior School receives more applications than the number of places 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. The 2021 Code requires 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 to be given equal first priority in admission arrangements, alongside looked after children (LAC) and children who were previously looked after by English local authorities (PLAC). This advice refers to these children as internationally adopted previously looked after children – “IAPLAC”.
2. 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
3. Other children who attend the linked school (Westdale Infant School) at the closing date for applications.
4. 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
5. Other children who live outside the catchment area.
6. 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.
7. Other children who live outside the catchment at the close of the application.

6.4 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 sealed envelopes with name of one child per envelope, from a hat.

Waiting lists

During a normal admissions round where an application has been refused and the number of applications received has exceeded the number of places available, waiting lists will be maintained from offer day.

-Applications are only placed on the waiting list for a school where they have been refused a place and where it is ranked above a preference that has been allocated.

- Priority on the waiting list will be determined by reference to the admission oversubscription criteria and not by the date an application was received.

-Waiting lists are maintained until the end of the Autumn Term in partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council. Inclusion on a waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available. Places on the waiting list are determined by the published oversubscription criteria.

For in-year applications, Westdale Junior School does operate waiting lists for in year applications as well as for late applications for intake rounds (Year 3) where waiting lists are still in place for the autumn term. These applications will be included within waiting list processes albeit managed as an in-year application.

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.

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 Nova Board of trustees every year.

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

The board of trustees will consult on the admission arrangements at least once every 7 years, even if there have been no changes during that period.

Annex – Frequently asked questions on implementing the new provisions on Fair Access Protocols and admissions priority for children adopted from state care outside of England

Fair Access Protocols (FAPs)

The new School Admissions Code 2021 (the 2021 Code) sets out a number of new provisions in relation to FAPs. These include:

- extending the mandatory categories of children who can be placed via the FAP to include children on a Child in Need/Child Protection Plan, children in refuge, children in formal kinship care arrangements, children who have been out of education for four or more weeks and previously looked after children for whom the local authority has been unable to promptly secure a school place;
- removing the ability for local authorities to introduce their own FAP categories and prohibiting the routine use of FAPs in place of the usual in-year admissions process;
- requiring that placement decisions need to be made within 20 school days of a child being referred to the FAP.

When should new FAPs come into operation in order to comply with the new provisions in the 2021 Code?

Local authorities must make changes to their existing FAPs in order to give effect to the new provisions in the 2021 Code, which come into force on 1 September. This means that a new FAP will be operational on 1 September.

As the 2021 Code requires FAPs to be consulted upon and developed in partnership with all schools in the area, local authorities must consult all the admission authorities in their area about the changes they intend to take forward before doing so.

Admissions priority for children adopted from state care outside of England

The 2021 Code requires 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 to be given equal first priority in admission arrangements, alongside looked after children (LAC) and children who were previously looked after by English local authorities (PLAC). This advice refers to these children as internationally adopted previously looked after children – “IAPLAC”.

What action must admission authorities take in order to comply with the new IAPLAC provision?

Paragraph 1.7 of the 2021 Code will require that highest priority is given to “looked after children and all previously looked after children, 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”.

This new provision will necessitate variations to determined admission arrangements to take effect from 1 September 2021. Admission authorities will need to vary their admission arrangements for 2021/22 (which would have been determined by 15 February 2020) and their admission arrangements for 2022/23 (which would have been determined by 15 February 2021). Without these variations, admission arrangements that have already been determined will not comply with the 2021 Code.

We expect admission authorities to hold a meeting sometime between now and 31 August 2021 to determine the necessary variations to admission arrangements for 2021/2022 and 2022/2023. All such variations should come into effect on 1 September 2021.

As these variations will be necessary to comply with a mandatory requirement of the Code, it will not be necessary to refer a variation request to either the Schools Adjudicator (in respect of maintained schools) or the ESFA (in respect of academies). See paragraphs 3.6 – 3.7 of the 2021 Code for further information on variations.

How will the new IAPLAC provision affect admissions in 2021/22?

All applications received before 1 September 2021 will have been processed in accordance with the existing (2014) Code, and offers made and places allocated will be unchanged. This includes those applications received before 1 September but where the decision has not yet been made by 1 September.

Any applications received on or after 1 September 2021 will need to be processed in accordance with the 2021 Code. By way of example, when dealing with in-year applications for the 2021/2022 academic year, children who are determined as being IAPLAC must be given equal highest priority with LAC and PLAC.

A school's waiting list must be ranked in accordance with its oversubscription criteria. This means that where a child is added to a waiting list before 1 September 2021, but meets the definition of an IAPLAC, the waiting list must be ranked again on 1 September following the 2021 Code coming into force, so that the child is given equal highest priority with LAC and PLAC. This may mean other children who were higher up on the waiting list, may be moved lower down the list.

Other references to previously looked after children in the Code

All references to previously looked after children in the 2021 Code mean children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after **as well as** 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.

This means that the other provisions in the 2021 Code which apply to PLAC (for example, in relation to the admission arrangements of schools with a religious character, selective arrangements, and boarding priority) apply to IAPLAC in exactly the same way as they do to PLAC.

In-year admissions

The 2021 Code requires local authorities, admission authorities and governing bodies to publish information about how in-year applications for their school(s) will be dealt with. For this year only, details about how in-year applications will be dealt between 1 November 2021 until 31 August 2022 must be published by 31 October. In all subsequent years, such information must be published by 31 August at the latest each year, to explain how in-year applications can be made and how they will be dealt with from 1 September until the following 31 August.

Taking forward other changes to give effect to the new provisions in the 2021 Code

Where an admission authority deems it necessary to make other changes to its admission arrangements in order to comply with a mandatory provision in the Code, it is not required to refer a variation request to either the Schools Adjudicator (in respect of maintained schools) or the ESFA (in respect of academies).