



Admissions policy 2023-24

Nova Education Trust

Nottingham Free School

Approved by:

Nova Education Trust
Board

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1. Aims

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 Nottingham Free School.

It aims to:

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

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.

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 Nottingham Free School our published admission number (PAN) for entry into Year 7 is 120. Year 8, Year 9, Year 10, Year 11, Year 12 and Year 13 are the other points of entry.

6.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names Nottingham Free 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 Nottingham Free 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. Priority will next be given to children of staff who work for the Nova Education Trust, in either of the following circumstances:
 - a. The member of staff has been employed by the Trust for 2 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
3. Priority will next be given to children who live in the catchment area and who, at the time of admission, will have a sibling attending 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.
4. Priority will next be given to all other children who live in the catchment area.
5. Priority will next be given to children who live outside the catchment area and who, at the time of admission, will have a sibling (see definition above) attending the school.
6. Priority will next be given to children who are eligible for the pupil premium.
7. Priority will next be given to children whose particular medical needs, mobility support needs, special educational needs or other social circumstances are supported by written evidence from a doctor, social worker or other relevant professional stating that the school is the only school that could cater for the child's particular needs, based on evidence presented at the time of application.
8. Priority will next be given to all other children.

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.

Names will be placed in a sealed envelope, one envelope per named child, which will be randomly drawn out of a hat. The process will be overseen by a person independent of the school and Trust.

6.4 Children below compulsory school age (optional)

Where children below compulsory school age are offered a place at Nottingham Free School, they will be entitled to attend the school full-time in the September following their 4th birthday.

Parents may defer their child's entry to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age, and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year the offer was made for.

Where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

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 Nottingham Free School and Looked After Children (LAC), Previously looked after children (PLAC) and Internationally Adopted looked After Children (IAPLAC) will be admitted to that school even if the year group is full.

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.

Nottingham Free School participates in the local fair access protocols and are expected to accept students even if the year group is full except in specified circumstances set out in the DFE schools admissions code.

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 6.2 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 sent to the following address:

Nottingham Free School, The Courtaulds Building, 290 Haydn Road, Nottingham NG5 1EB or email to: contact@nottinghamfreeschool.co.uk

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.

Information on how to appeal a place at Nottingham Free Schools, which is administered through the Nottingham City Council School Admissions Appeals and their application form to complete can be found at;

<http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/schoolappeals>

Please note a form **must** be completed and appeals by letter or email will **not** be accepted.

The deadline for lodging appeals is now **28 days from the date of the decision to refuse a place** (the date on your formal refusal).

The Nottingham City School Appeals team can be contacted by email;

school.appeals@nottinghamcity.gov.uk or telephone 0115 876 4302 or 0115 876 4637

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 Local Governing Board will consult on these changes.

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