



Admissions Arrangements

2027/28

Date Approved by The Board of Trustees	11.12.25
Effective period	2027/28
Reviewer	Jan McColl
Next Review Due	Sept 2026
Next Review Due	Policy for subsequent years reviewed and approved annually

This policy was subject to consultation in January 2026

The next scheduled consultation will take place in January 2033. However, the policy will be consulted on sooner if there are changes to relevant legislation or statutory guidance



HMFA Multi-Academy Trust is the admissions authority for all schools within the Trust. The implementation of this policy is delegated to the Advocate Boards (Local Governing Boards) of each school. This policy outlines the principles and procedures for admissions across all Trust schools, ensuring fairness, transparency, and compliance with the School Admissions Code.

Herefordshire Marches Federation of Academies (HMFA) caters for pupils between the ages of 2 and 11. The Academy Trust have the following admission numbers;

Each school within the Trust has a Published Admission Number (PAN). The following table outlines the PAN at each of the academies:

Lord Scudamore Academy –	88 pupils
Sutton Primary Academy –	30 pupils
Kings Caple Primary Academy –	10 pupils
St Weonards Primary Academy -	10 pupils

The Board of Trustees, as the admission authority, determines the academies admission policy and arrangements and is responsible for taking decisions on applications for admission. The Academy Trust follows the Local Authority criteria and works with them in order to ensure admissions are co-ordinated within the County.

Oversubscription Criteria

Should the number of applications for admission exceed the admission number the Trustees/Governors will apply the following criteria (in the rank shown) to decide the order in which places will be allocated. This will also apply to waiting lists. The Local Authority will keep a waiting list on behalf of the academy for the normal-round of admissions, up until the end of the Autumn term.

Children with a Statement of Special Education Needs or an Educational, Health & Care Plan which names a particular school will be allocated places, after which places are allocated according to an agreed set of criteria, in strict order of priority.

Priority 1 – Children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be due to being adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order *

Priority 2 – Children living within the defined catchment area** of the academy with an older sibling*** already attending. A sibling is defined as a brother or sister, half brother or half sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister or the child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case the child should be living at the same address. The sibling must be in the academy at the time of application and be likely to remain in the academy at the proposed date of admission.

Priority 3 - Children living within the **defined catchment area**** of the school;

Priority 4 - Sibling connection - Children who have an **older sibling**** at the preferred school not only at the time of application but also when the younger child is due to start;

Priority 5 - Staff - Pupils whose parent/parents are employed by the Academy for two years or more or recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. This is the 5th priority to recognise the importance of daily family life for the employees of the academy, including travel arrangements and wrap around/child care issues.

Priority 6 - Pre-School Attendance – Children who attend a pre-school located on-site at an Academy and operated by Herefordshire Marches Federation of Academy may be given priority for admission to the associated Academy's Reception class. To meet this criterion, the child must have attended the pre-school for at least one full academic year (starting September 2026) prior to entering the Reception class. The table below outlines which academies have an on-site pre-school run by the Trust:

Priority 7 - Exceptional circumstances - Children with exceptional **medical, social or compassionate** grounds for admission and whose parents can show that entry to a particular school only is necessary for the wellbeing of their child. Parents are required to produce a medical certificate or other appropriate information preferably from an independent source. Applications on such grounds will not be considered by the Director of Children's Wellbeing's advisory panel unless this supporting information is emailed to schooladmissions@herefordshire.gov.uk by 15th January 2027 (primary schools);

Priority 8 - Home to school distances**** are calculated using the Herefordshire Council routing software Routefinder Pro, for full details please see: [Find a school – Herefordshire Council](#)

*(An adoption order is an order under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders).

A 'child arrangements order' is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 as amended by Section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

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).

** In order to determine the relevant catchment area, the home address of a child is defined as the only or main permanent residential address, at the closing date for applications, where the child usually resides and which is the usual address of the parent/carer with main responsibility for the child. If arrangements are such that a child resides at two addresses for equal amounts of time, then parents must decide which address to use for admissions purposes. Where more than one parent submits an application for a child, or where there is a parent not in agreement with the preferences, the Trust may not be able to process any application until agreement over the preferences is reached. Failure to ensure agreement prior to submission, may result in a delay in any application being processed and in some instances, where agreement cannot be reached we may not be able to proceed until a legal resolution has been sought and the courts determine which parent can make the final decision on schooling

*** A sibling connection refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or a child of the parents/carer's partner, and in every case the child should be living in the same family unit at the same address.

****Distance is measured by the shortest available walking route using a road and/or made up footpath using the nearest node on the transport network to the property point. The effect of this is to take you to the front door and not take into consideration other entrances (such as rear garden gates/ short cuts). This is particularly pertinent in a rural area like Herefordshire where rural properties can have multiple access points.

Infant Class Sizes

Infant classes (Reception, Year 1, and Year 2) must not exceed 30 pupils per teacher. Exceptions may apply under specific circumstances, including:

- Children with EHCPs admitted outside the normal admissions round.
- Looked After and Previously Looked After Children admitted outside the normal admissions round.
- Children admitted due to procedural errors or successful appeals.
- Children of UK service personnel or those with no other school within reasonable distance.
- Twins or multiple births where one sibling is admitted.
- Children with SEN attending a specialist provision hub within the academy.

In Year Admissions

Requests for admissions to the academy into other year groups should be made on the In-Year application form and in accordance with the Local Authority's coordinated scheme for In-Year admissions. The form is available from the Academy or Local Authority and can also be downloaded from the Local Authority website.

The outcome of in-year applications will be notified in writing within 15 school days.

Admissions Appeals

Any parent (except, temporarily, the parent of a child who has been permanently excluded from two schools), who is refused an academy place for which they have applied, has the right to appeal to an independent appeal panel. The panel is independent of the Academy Trust and the Local Authority Admissions Team. Further details regarding the law on admissions and appeals can be obtained from the Local Authority Admissions Team. Should the appeal panel find in favour of the parent, the decision is binding on the Academy. The panel will consist of people who have experience in education and are acquainted with the area.

Date of Admission

All children will be admitted from the beginning of September in the academic year in which they turn 5.

Option for Delayed Entry

Parents/carers may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented, the parents/carers may seek early entry. Children born in the summer term (i.e. 1 April – 31 August) are not required to start school until a full year after the point at which they could first have been admitted into a reception class (the point at which other children in their age range are beginning year 1). Parents/carers have the option of requesting delayed entry where they hold back their child from joining the correct year group for their age so that they start school a year later than they are due to. Please note this is a request and can be refused.

Paragraph 2.17A of the Admissions Code requires that, in any circumstance where a parents/carers requests their child is admitted out of their normal age group, the admission authority must make a decision based on the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned. The Head Teacher and the Board of Directors will take into account the parents/carers views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely in order to reach a decision as to whether or not it is appropriate for the individual child to delay or accelerate their entry into school and be taught permanently behind or ahead of their chronological age group.

The reasons for the decision must be clearly set out. This process must be completed in advance of the closing date.

In the event that the delayed entry is not approved, parents will need to make an application in time for the 2027 intake (by the 15 January 2027). Please be aware that even if delayed or early entry is agreed, the normal admission arrangements apply and there is no guarantee of a place. Parents should therefore give careful consideration to requesting delayed or early entry.

Deferred Entry – for Summer Born Children

A child is not required to start school until they have reached compulsory school age which is the term following their 5th birthday.

Parents/carers are not obliged to take up places for their children any earlier than the law requires. Schools cannot require children to start sooner than parents/carers wish. Parents/carers therefore have the option of deferring their child's entry until later in the same academic school year. Deferred entry to a school is where a parent decides to request that their child starts school later in the school year that follows their 4th birthday or when the child reaches compulsory school age (the term after the child's 5th birthday). The effect is that the place is held for that child and is not available to be offered to another child. Parents/carers would not however be able to defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday.

If you wish to defer taking up a place for your child, you are strongly advised to discuss the matter first with the school or with the Pupil Admissions Office, and you must apply by the closing date for applications (15 January 2027).

Waiting List (For Reception places only)

In the event of more applications than available places a waiting list will be maintained. These and late applications will go onto this list in a position determined by the criteria. If a place becomes available in the academy it will be offered in accordance with the waiting list priority. The waiting list will be maintained for one term in the academic year of admission. Those wishing to stay on the waiting list will need to reapply in December of that first term.

¹The Fair Access Protocol encourages the local authority and schools to work together in partnership to improve behaviour, tackle persistent absence and help support behaviour and attendance partnerships. This protocol has been updated to take account of new Regulations and incorporates guiding principles against which to place children who may have difficulty securing a school place outside the normal admissions round.

Nursery/Pre-school settings within the Multi-Academy Trust

Lord Scudamore Academy, Sutton Primary Academy and St Weonards Primary Academy all have Pre-school provision. The admission criteria for these Early Years settings is as follows:-

- Availability of places, taking into account the staff: child ratios and the age of the child.
- When the application is received (extra weight is given to those who have been on the waiting list the longest)
- The nursery's ability to provide the facilities necessary for the welfare of the child, including appropriate staffing arrangements
- A child requiring a full-time place may have preference over one requiring a part-time place.
- Any extenuating circumstances affecting the child's welfare or the welfare of his/her family.

We operate an inclusion and equality policy and ensure that all children have access to nursery places and services irrespective of their gender, race, disability, religion or belief or sexual orientation of parents.

Prior to a child attending nursery, parents must complete and sign a registration form. These forms provide the nursery with personal details relating to the child. For example,

name, date of birth, address, emergency contact details, parental responsibilities, dietary requirements, fees and sessions, contact details for parents, doctor's contact details, health visitor contact details, allergies, parental consent and vaccinations etc.

St Weonards Primary Academy also runs a Mainstream Autism Base on behalf of the Local Authority. The entry criteria for this facility is available on request.