

Admissions Policy

Summary

Woodham Academy is committed to ensuring that all students are able to achieve their potential and beyond, within an ethos of unconditional mutual respect as reflected in our school mission “Achievement for All”. All maintained schools and academies in County Durham have agreed their admission arrangements from September 2021.

You can see the arrangements for community and voluntary-controlled schools below.

Please note that foundation schools, and academies (non-faith) have the same criteria, as appropriate.

Woodham Academy has adopted the Durham County Council’s Admission Policy: -

<https://www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions>

Date adopted: September 2020

Review date: Annually

Last Reviewed: September 2022

Key staff involved in the Admissions policy

Role	Name(s)
Headteacher	Andrew Bell
Other	N/A

How secondary school places are offered

1. What happens when a school has more applications than the number of places available

If a school or academy has too many applications for the places available, it is known as an oversubscribed school. In this case we must strictly apply our published oversubscription criteria to decide who gets a place.

2. Oversubscription criteria

(i) Children who are 'looked after' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence/child arrangements, or special

guardianship order or, 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

A "looked after" child is a child who is, at the time of making an application to a school, in the care of a local authority in England, or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in England in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

An adoption order is an order under Section 12 of the Adoption Act 1976 or Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. 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 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).

(ii) Medical reasons - children with very exceptional medical factors directly related to school placement

Some admission authorities will consider individual applications for children with very exceptional medical factors directly related to school placement. This type of application must be supported in writing by relevant professional agencies such as a doctor and it is the parents' responsibility to provide the relevant documentation. This supporting evidence should be wholly persuasive. It must explain why the school you wish your child to attend is the only school based on fact, not opinion, that can meet your child's medical or social needs and the difficulties that would be caused if they had to attend another school. Reasons such as food allergies and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) will not be considered as exceptional medical factors as all schools are able to effectively manage these. Supporting evidence will be considered by the relevant admission authority and may require liaison with relevant health care professionals. The provision of any information or evidence does not necessarily in itself guarantee the offer of a place at your desired school. The relevant admission authority will make the final decision on the application.

(iii) Sibling links - Children who have a sibling already attending the school and who is expected to be on roll at the school at the time of admission.

Sibling is defined as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, half brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or stepsisters and children of the parent or carer's partner. Parents should indicate when applying if there is a sibling currently attending the school for which they have applied.

If parents are separated and the sibling lives with each parent an equal amount of time during the school year, you must either agree between each other, or if that is not possible, provide a Court Order as to which address should be considered as the main address for this purpose. An offer of a school place will not be made unless/until only one home address has been agreed.

(iv) Applicants to their nearest school - those children who have applied for a place at the nearest school to their home address measured by the shortest walking route

If parents are separated and the child lives with each parent an equal amount of time during the school year, you must either agree between each other, or if that is not possible, provide a Court Order as to which address should be considered as the main address for this purpose. An offer of a school place will not be made unless/until only one home address has been agreed.

(v) All other applicants

This category covers all applicants who do not meet the requirements for criteria (i) to (iv) and are applying for a school which is not their nearest.

3. Tie Breaker - Where the school is oversubscribed within any of the above criteria, the following tiebreaker will be applied

Priority will be given to those children who live nearest to the school applied for. Otherwise, if only one final place can be offered and two applicants live equidistant from the school, the council's system of random allocation will apply.

A Geographic Information System (GIS) is used to identify and measure the shortest walking route. In all cases the GIS identifies the route to be measured by connecting in a straight line the centre point of the child's house or in the case of a flat from the centre point of the building, to the closest point on the nearest route on the Ordnance Survey MasterMap® Highways Network - Roads and the Ordnance Survey MasterMap® Highways Network - Paths to the nearest school site entrance.

The council will not include any other routes or use other methods of measurement.

4. Withdrawing an offer of a school place

We will not withdraw an offer of a school place unless:

- the place has been offered in error; or
- it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading information on the application.

5. Reserving places

Places cannot be reserved in schools or academies in the expectation of further applications from families moving into the area.

6. Children Of UK Service Personnel

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting to the County Durham area, or crown servants returning from overseas to live in County Durham, we will allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area, provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a Unit Postal Address or Quartersing Area Address when considering the application against our oversubscription criteria. This will include accepting a Unit Postal Address or Quartersing Area Address for a service child. We will not refuse a service child a place because the family does not currently live in the area but cannot reserve blocks of places for these children.

In respect of applications received for children of UK service personnel for admission outside the normal admissions round (in-year applications), these children may be admitted under exceptional circumstances to a school that would otherwise breach Infant Class Size legislation, but only if the child would have been allocated a place at the school during the normal admissions round had the family been posted in the area at that time. We will need to consider the number of in-year applications made in respect of children of UK service personnel before making a final decision. Please note that this does not apply to these families who leave the UK service personnel and relocate to an address in County Durham.

