

Fair Field Junior School



Admission Policy 2021-22

Statement of Intent

Fair Field Junior School is committed to nurturing an individual's potential and thirst for learning by offering a safe, happy and stimulating environment. We build all we do on our shared values: Respect, Honesty, Perseverance, Kindness, Forgiveness and Inclusion.

Admission Policy	
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Date:	23.09.19
Approved by:	FGB
Date:	03.10.19
Review frequency:	Annual
Target Audience:	Governors, Parents

The governing body shall conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement. Fair Field Junior School is committed to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different groups. These factors were considered in the formation and review of this policy and will be adhered to in its implementation and application across the whole school community.

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1. Admission Criteria

The Governors of the school are responsible for admissions and will admit up to 60 pupils, each year into Year 3, without reference to ability or aptitude.

Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the governing bodies of schools to admit a child with a statement of special educational needs that names their school. The school will also admit children with an EHC (Education, Health & Care) Plan that names the school.

Where the number of applications for admission exceeds the number of places available, places will be allocated by the Governing Body in accordance with the following criteria, in the order set out below:

1. "Children Looked After and previously looked after". Children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order).
2. Children for whom it can be demonstrated that there is a compelling social or medical reason for attending the school (supported by recent independent evidence from a relevant professional). Governors will determine the outcome of social/medical applications.
3. Pupils attending St. John's Infant School in Year 2 subject to them completing the application form provided by their Local Authority by the admission application deadline.

Should the school be oversubscribed or if the number of pupils transferring from St John's is fewer than Fair Field School's specified admission number, the following criteria will be applied in the order listed below:

4. Children with a sibling (brother or sister) attending the school on the day of their future entry to Fair Field School (not at the closing date of applications).
5. Remaining places will be allocated on the basis of proximity to the school as determined by the Hertfordshire Local Authority measurement.

These rules are applied in the order they are printed above. If more children qualify under a particular rule than there are places available, a tie-break will be used by applying the next rule to those children. Where there is a need for a tie-break where two different addresses measure the same distance from a school, in the case of a block of flats for example, then the lower door number will be deemed nearest as logically this will be nearer the ground floor and therefore closer. If there are two identical addresses of separate applicants, the tie break will be random.

2. Appeals

Parents have the right to an independent appeal panel if their child is unsuccessful in obtaining a place at the school.

At transfer time, parents wishing to appeal who applied online should log onto their online application and click on the link “register an appeal”. For those who did not apply online please contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request an appeal pack. For In Year applications, parents wishing to appeal should contact the school directly in the first instance.

3. Explanatory Notes and Definitions for the Admission Arrangements

The following definitions apply to terms used in the admissions criteria:

Children looked after (children in public care)

Places are allocated to children looked after in accordance with Chapter 7, Section 2 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations. These children will be prioritised under rule 1.

Highest priority will also be given to children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order.

A “child looked after” 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 (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989)

Adopted children – this includes children adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 and children adopted under the Adoptions and Childrens Act 2002.

Child arrangements order – under the provisions of section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amend section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders.

Special guardianship order – under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian or guardians.

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under Rule 1.

Children who were not “looked after” immediately before being adopted, or made the subject of a residence order or special guardianship order, will not be prioritised under rule 1. Applications made for these children, with suitable supporting professional evidence, can be considered under rule 2.

Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school

Rule 2 applications will only be considered at the time of the initial application, unless there has been a significant and exceptional change of circumstances within the family since the initial application was submitted. All schools in Hertfordshire have experience in dealing with children with diverse social and medical needs. However in a few very exceptional cases, there are reasons why a child has to go to one specific school.

Few applications under **Rule 2** are agreed.

All applications are considered individually but a successful application should include the following:

- a. Specific recent professional evidence that justifies why only one school can meet a child's individual needs, and/or
- b. Professional evidence that outlines exceptional family circumstances making clear why only one school can meet the child's needs
- c. If the requested school is not the nearest school to the child's home address clear reasons why the nearest school is not appropriate
- d. For medical cases – a clear explanation of why the child's severity of illness or disability makes attendance at only a specific school essential.

Evidence should make clear why only one school is appropriate. Applications under Rule 2 can only be considered when supported by a recent letter from a professional involved with the child or family, for example a doctor, psychologist or police officer. The supporting evidence needs to demonstrate why only one named school can meet the social/medical needs of the child.

Applications for children previously "looked after" but not meeting the specific criteria outlined Rule 1, may be made under this rule.

Definition of sibling (brother or sister)

A sibling must be on the roll of the named school at the time the younger child starts. A sibling means the sister, brother, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, a child looked after or previously looked after*, or child of the parent/carer or partner, and in every case living permanently within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of the application**

Where a place is obtained and the child admitted to the school and it is subsequently identified that this place was gained fraudulently, there will be no sibling connection available to subsequent children from that family.

*Children previously looked after are those children adopted or with a special guardianship order or child arrangements order. This definition was amended following a determination by the OSA in August 2014.

**A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.

Multiple births

Fair Field Junior School will admit over the school's published admission number when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated the last place at a school.

Home address

The address provided must be the child's current permanent address at the time of application. 'At the time of application' means the closing date for applications. "Permanent" means that the child has lived at that address for at least a year and/or the family own the property or have a tenancy agreement for a minimum of 12 months

The application can only be processed using one address. If a child lives at more than one address (for example due to a separation) the address used will be the one which the child lives at for the majority of the time. If a child lives at two addresses equally, the address of the parent/carer that claims Child Benefit/Child Tax Credit will be considered as the child's main residence.

If a family is not in receipt of Child Benefit/Tax Credit alternative documentation will be requested.

If a child's residence is in dispute, parents/carers should provide court documentation to evidence the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes.

Home to school distance measurement for purposes of admissions

A 'straight line' distance measurement; from the AddressBase Premium address point of the child's home to the address point of the school is used in all home to school distance measurements. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places.

4. In Year Applications

The school is part of HCC's coordinated IY scheme and any In Year application should be made direct to HCC. In accordance with the School Admission Code the school will admit children under HCC's Fair Access Protocol over PAN and, if necessary, before any children on the school's continuing interest *list*. *Further information and an application form* is available at www.hertsdirect.org/admissions

5. Children Out of Year Group

The school's policy is for children to be educated within their correct chronological year group, with the curriculum differentiated as necessary to meet the needs of individual children.

If parents/carers believe their child(ren) should be educated in a different year group they must, at the time of application, submit supporting evidence from relevant professionals working with the child and family stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age appropriate cohort.

The school will decide whether the application will be accepted on the basis of the evidence submitted. The school make decisions based upon the circumstances of each case including the view of parents, the relevant Headteacher(s), the child's social, academic and emotional development and whether the child has been previously educated out of year group. There is no guarantee that an application will be accepted on this basis. If the application is not accepted this does not constitute a refusal of a place and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal. Similarly there is no right of appeal for a place in a specific year group at a school. The internal management and organisation of the school, including the placement of pupils in classes, is a matter for the Headteacher and senior leadership of the school.

The Governing Body of the school is responsible for our own admissions and as an academy are ultimately responsible for making this decision for applications made to the school.

6. Continuing Interest

The school holds a Continuing Interest list until the end of December in the year of transfer. Children not allocated a place will automatically be transferred onto the Continuing Interest list.