



# **ADMISSIONS POLICY 2025-26**

Policy reviewed, updated and ratified by the GB:	25 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
Date of next review:	September 2024 (For 26-27 Policy)

**Within this policy all references to 'parents' shall be interpreted as referring to parents/carers or legal guardians.**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This Admissions Policy will take effect from 1 September 2024 for in-year admissions Years 7-11 and for the intake of children starting secondary school for the first time, transferring from Year 6 into Year 7 on 1 September 2025.
- 1.2 Northwood School is an Academy and the admission of students is controlled by the Governing Body and the school and administered by the Local Authority for students in Year 6 entry. All other admissions are administered by Northwood School.
- 1.3 The procedure to be followed in applying for a place at Northwood School is as set out in this policy. The Governors will not accept applications that are not made in accordance with this policy.
- 1.4 Parents who wish to apply for a place for their child at Northwood School will fall into one of the following three categories:
- i Parents who are applying for a place for a child who is starting secondary school for the first time (i.e. a child who is transferring from primary to secondary school), all applications are processed centrally through the London Borough of Hillingdon (see the Starting Secondary School brochure which is issued by the London Borough of Hillingdon). Both the brochure and application form are available online.
  - ii Parents who are submitting an application for a child who is starting secondary school for the first time but whose application is made after the date on which the normal admissions procedure for a child who is transferring from primary to secondary school has ended should also see the Starting Secondary School brochure. Late applications (after 31 October) are processed through the London Borough of Hillingdon and not by Northwood School.
  - iii All other applications for a place at this school (i.e. in-year applications for a place in Years 7 -11 are processed by Northwood School).
- 1.5 Where parents are separated or divorced (or have shared responsibility) the Governors will address their communications regarding admission to the parent with whom the child normally lives, and is receiving the child benefit, or the address registered with the child's doctor.

**2. Information for parents of prospective students**

- 2.1 Full information about Northwood School can be found on the school website.
- 2.2 An Open Evening will be held for parents of prospective students to visit the school in September or October of each year.
- 2.3 Should a place not be offered, details of how to appeal will be available from the school.
- 2.4 Should a place be offered, further information about the school will be provided.

### **3. The admissions number**

- 3.1 The admissions number for each year group in Years 7-11 is 180 students per year. Governors of Academies may decide to increase the admissions number. If the number for admissions is changed, it will be published on the school website and the Local Authority will be notified.

### **4. Admissions criteria: Years 7-11**

- 4.1 The main year for admissions is Year 7 at the age of 11. In addition, students may be admitted into other year groups when vacancies arise through existing students leaving the school.
- 4.2 The Governing Body will comply with national regulations governing the admission of children with an Educational Health Care Plan and such admission which for these reasons is additional to the standard number is without prejudice to the Governors' intention to admit no more than the standard number under the admissions criteria.
- 4.3 The Governing Body will admit students (eg: a 'looked after' child in care) in compliance with local agreements to assist the Local Authority to comply with its statutory obligations. Such admission which is additional to the standard number is without prejudice to the Governors' intention to admit no more than the standard number under the admissions criteria.
- 4.4 Governors will admit students in Year 7- 11 without reference to their ability or aptitude.
- 4.5 If the number of applications for places is greater than the admissions number, Governors will use the following criteria, in the order shown, to decide which children to admit.
- i. A looked after child (as defined in the Children Act 1989) or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order including those 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.

For the purpose of admissions, we define Looked after and Previously Looked After Children to be:

- Children who are registered as being in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989(a), eg fostered or living in a children's home, at the time an application for a school is made; and
- Children who have previously been in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989(a) and who have left that care through adoption, a child arrangements order (in accordance with Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 and as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014) or special guardianship order (in accordance with Section 14A of the Children Act 1989).
- Children who have been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society. This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (in accordance with Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (in accordance with Section 46 adoption orders).

- ii. Children who have a sibling at this school at the time of the application of the child for whom a place is sought (see section 5.3).
- iii. Children of staff in either or both of the following circumstances:
  - a) where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or
  - b) the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

For this purpose of satisfying these criteria, a member of staff is defined as a member of the full-time teaching staff, or of the part-time teaching staff with a 50% and above timetable, or a member of the full-time support staff (on a 38 week and above contract), or of the part-time support staff who work more than 50% and above as determined by their role (on a 38 week and above contract) whose role and activities can be demonstrated to provide a significant impact on student achievement at the school. A panel from the Governing Body will determine whether the member of staff meets the requirements for this rule.

- iv. Children living nearest to the school, measured in a straight line from the school to their parents' permanent home (see section 5.4.3).

## **5. Further information relating to the admissions criteria; verification of information provided**

5.1.1 The Governors reserve the right to make such enquiries as they consider necessary to verify the information provided in support of an application for admission under any of the admission criteria. By applying for admission the applicant is deemed to have given consent to such enquiries being made.

5.1.2 The Governors will rely upon the information contained in the application form for admission and if it transpires that any information is false or misleading in a material way, the Governors reserve the right to:

- i. Withdraw the offer of admission, effective even after the child has commenced attendance at the school (See section 9. Withdrawal of places).
- ii. Pursue their legal rights against parents making such false claims and this will include seeking compensation for loss or expense incurred by the school in rejecting an application due to false or misleading information having been given.

## **5.2 Age of children applying for admission**

5.2.1 Parents of Year 6 children who have reached the age when they are due to transfer to secondary school in September of any given year are entitled to apply for a place at the school on behalf of their children.

## **5.3 Sibling criterion 4.5.ii above**

5.3.1 If parents are applying for a place for their child because they have a brother or sister at school priority must be claimed by the time of the published closing date for applications, by giving the details required on the application form. If the existence of such a relationship is not brought to the attention of the Governors at that time the child will not be given priority in the allocation of places.

5.3.2 For the purpose of admissions we define a sibling as:

- A brother or sister sharing the same parents
- A half brother or sister, where two share one common parent
- A step brother or sister, where two children are related by parents' marriage or partnership. The partners must have co-habited in a permanent relationship (as if they were husband and wife or civil partners) for a minimum of two years
- An adopted or fostered child
- A sibling must be living at the same address as the applicant when the application is made.

5.3.3 Parents are required to provide sufficient details of the brother or sister who forms the basis of the application under this criterion on the application form. This enables the Governors to satisfy themselves that a valid qualifying relationship exists.

#### 5.4 **Children living nearest to the school - criterion 4.5.iv above**

5.4.1 The Governors will offer places to children under this criterion only after they have offered places to children who qualify on LAC, sibling or staff grounds. Northwood School does not have a predetermined catchment area for the admission of students under this criterion. Each year, after places have been allocated to children on sibling grounds, the distance from the school to the homes of the other applicants is measured. Places are then offered to children living closest to the school up to the published number.

5.4.2 The home address for this criterion will be deemed to be the child's permanent address as shown on their parents' Council Tax bill or, if the parent does not pay Council Tax, on a recent utility bill.

Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of the week, the home address will be deemed to be the address of the parent who is in receipt of child benefit; in cases where parents are not eligible for child benefit the address will be that of the parent where the child is registered with the doctor.

5.4.3 Distance from the school is measured in a straight line (i.e. as the crow flies). The points taken will be from the address point as set by the Ordnance Survey of the residence to the centre of the school (as determined by the Governing Body); the distances are calculated by the Local Authority.

5.4.4 Where applications are measured equidistant from home to school there will be a tie-breaker. The oldest child will have priority in this instance.

5.4.5 For twins, triplets and other multiple births there will be no tie-breaker and all the children will be allocated a place at the school, if a place is available for at least one of the students.

5.4.6 Temporary addresses. A temporary address may not be accepted if you still own a property that was previously used as a home address, or a temporary address which the Admissions Authority consider to be solely or mainly used to obtain a school place. If you own more than one property the Admissions Authority may only consider the given address if you have lived there for a year prior to the closing date of application (including rented, bought or living with a family member or friend). You will be asked to provide additional information to explain why you are not using your permanent address, or another address identified as a result of our

screening, or as a result of information obtained from the public. This may include utility bills, benefit claims and copies of mortgage or rent agreements. We will also check Hillingdon council records as well as other Local Authorities records to clarify whether or not you receive services or benefits at another address.

#### **5.5 Children of UK Service Personnel**

Children of service personnel will not be disadvantaged in the admissions process as stated in the School Admissions Code 2021. For those families with a confirmed posting to this area, places will be allocated in advance of the family arriving in the area. The application must be accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a Unit postal address.

#### **5.6 Children of Crown Servants**

The School Admissions Code requires that for families of Crown servants returning from overseas to live in that area, admission authorities must allocate a school place in advance of the family arriving in the area, provided their application is accompanied by an official letter declaring a relocation date.

##### **Confirmation of relocation address**

It is important that parents are able to provide admission authorities with some certainty as to their relocation address, in order to ensure that places are allocated fairly and in accordance with each school's admissions criteria. Where a parent is unable to provide any confirmation of a relocation address, they are advised to provide an indication of area, narrowed down as far as possible, to which the family intend to return. Parents should keep admission authorities informed of any changes to their planned address during the application process and should note that without being able to provide any confirmation of a relocation address, an admission authority may not be able to process their application.

#### **5.7 Applications from abroad**

If your child holds a full British Citizen passport that is endorsed to show a right of abode in the UK, an application could be accepted, even though they are not resident here yet. For the purpose of allocation, the abroad address must be used to process the application. This does not apply to Crown Servants and UK Service Personnel. Evidence will be required to provide a link to an address in the London Borough of Hillingdon when the application is submitted.

Evidence might include:

- Booked flights
  - End of lease /notice to tenants in property
  - Start of employment contract in area
  - End of employment contract abroad
- If this evidence cannot be provided the application may not be processed.

#### **5.8 Applications for families arriving from abroad. Including from the EU, from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021**

In most cases, children arriving from overseas have the right to attend schools in England. It is the responsibility of parents to check that their children have a right, under their visa entry conditions, to study at a school before submitting an application.

Read more on the government website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-admissions-applications-from-overseas-children>



## 5.9 Requests for admission to school outside a child's age group

Children are educated in school with others of their age group. However, parents may request that their child is exceptionally admitted outside their age group. The Admission Authority of a school must decide whether or not the individual child's circumstances make this appropriate on educational grounds. Such requests will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances.

For further information, please contact your local Admission Authority.

## 6. How to apply for a place - children starting secondary school for the first time

- 6.1 This section of the Admissions Policy describes how to apply for a place for a child who is starting secondary school for the first time (i.e. a child who is transferring from primary to secondary school and is seeking admission to the school for the start of Year 7).
- 6.2 The procedure to admit a child who is starting secondary school for the first time is administered centrally by the Local Authority in line with the school's criteria.
- 6.3 If your child attends a primary school in London Borough of Hillingdon a 'Starting Secondary School' leaflet, detailing the application process will be provided by your child's current primary school in September. You will be able to access the Starting Secondary School application and brochure online on the London Borough of Hillingdon website. If you do require paper copies you can request them from the School Placement Admissions Team (01895 556644).
- 6.4 All Hillingdon applicants **must** complete the Secondary School Application Form provided by the London Borough of Hillingdon to apply for a place, providing the information required by the school. Any applicants who do not live in the London Borough of Hillingdon must apply through their own Local Authority.
- 6.5 The completed application form must be submitted online by the published closing date. Paper applications should be returned (by October half-term) to your child's primary school (if in Hillingdon) or to the School Placement and Admissions Team, Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW. Children for whom applications are received after this date will not be offered a place in the first instance (if the school is oversubscribed) but will be placed on the waiting list and be subject to its procedures.
- 6.6 The Secondary School Application Form gives parents the right to apply for a place for their child in up to 6 schools of their choice and parents are asked to list these schools in order of preference. Each school stated as a preference is treated equally (i.e.: individual schools are not informed of the order of preference; each secondary school will consider the application as a first preference).

## 7. Offer of places – children starting secondary school for the first time

- 7.1 Notification of the outcome of the application will be available online to all those who applied on line on the published national offer date. If applicants submitted a paper application a letter informing applicants of the result of the application will be posted from the School Placement and Admissions Team at the London Borough of Hillingdon on the published national offer date.
- 7.2 The Governors reserve the right to withdraw an offer of admission made in error, however caused.



## **8. Acceptance of places - children starting secondary school for the first time**

- 8.1 The Local Authority will request that a place is accepted or declined by 15 March 2025, or within two weeks of the date of any subsequent offer.

**The acceptance form must be returned to the Local Authority and must not be returned to the school.**

- 8.2 If a place is not offered and if Northwood School was a higher preference than the school offered by the Local Authority the child's name will be placed on a waiting list for the year group. The child will be placed on the waiting list according to the admissions criteria. In the event that a place becomes available the Local Authority will offer admission to the next child on the waiting list.
- 8.3 The child's name will remain on the waiting list until the parents ask the school in writing to remove it, or a place is offered whichever comes first. Applicants are written to asking if they wish to remain on the waiting list and given a deadline to reply. If no such reply is received their name will be removed.
- 8.4 If a place is not offered the applicant has the right to lodge an appeal with the Governing Body.
- 8.5 Appeals against a decision by the Admissions Authority or Governing Body not to offer a place to a child will be dealt with under the school's appeals procedure.
- 8.6 Information about the appeals procedure, including the date by which an appeal must be lodged, will be included with the letter notifying the result of the application.

## **9. Withdrawal of places**

- 9.1 Failure to accept your offer will result in the offer of admission being withdrawn and the place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list. The applicant will receive written confirmation of such a withdrawal of a place from the Local Authority and Northwood School will be informed.

Places will be withdrawn if:

- The offer was made in error
- An incorrect address or other false information is supplied
- The applicant has not responded to an offer within the two week deadline. A further letter will be sent to advise the applicant that failure to respond will result in the place being withdrawn.

A place will not be withdrawn once a child has started at the school, except where that place was fraudulently obtained. However, the length of time the child has been at the school will be taken into account.

## **10. How to apply for a place - in-year application for Years 7-11**

- 10.1 This section of the Admissions Policy describes:

How to apply for a place at any time **other than** for a child who is starting secondary school for the first time (in-year Year 7 – 11). All other applications for a place at Northwood School (i.e. in-year applications for a place in Years 7- 11) are required to complete an application form provided by the school or your Local Authority.

- 10.2 The procedure for deciding which children to admit and notifying parents of the outcome of an application will be carried out by the Governing Body in accordance with the schools published admissions criteria. Offer letters will be administered by Northwood School for in-year applications **only**.
- 10.3 The Governors reserve the right to withdraw an offer of admission made in error, however caused.
- 10.4 If a place is not offered, the child's name will be placed on a waiting list for the year group, according to the admissions criteria. In the event that a place becomes available the Governors Admissions Committee will make an offer of admission to the next child on the waiting list, a meeting at the school will be arranged and an offer made informing the Local Authority on a weekly return.

If the application is for a place in Year 7-11 the child's name will remain on the waiting list until the end of the current academic year. If parents wish their child to remain on the waiting list for the next academic year they should contact the school in writing to request this.

- 10.5 If a place is not offered the applicant has the right to lodge an appeal with the Independent Appeal Panel.
- 10.6 Appeals against a decision not to offer a place to a child will initially be dealt with by the Governing Body and an Independent Appeal Panel will be formed.
- 10.7 Parents can appeal at any time, regardless of deadlines. Deadlines are only referred to so that parents can have their appeal heard by the end of term.

## **11. Review of the Admissions Policy**

- 11.1 The Governing Body is required to review the Admissions Policy annually.
- 11.2 This consultation must be for all admissions from September 2025. All other admissions prior to this date will be administered using previously determined arrangements.
- 11.3 Person responsible: The Governing Body.