



SMITHILLS SCHOOL
SUCCESS FOR ALL

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1		The Key



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Smithills School is proud to be part of Bolton Impact Trust, a small, values driven multi academy trust. Although each school within the Trust serves a different community, we are united by a shared vision and a strong set of core values. Bolton Impact Trust is committed to pupil centred, inclusive education and has consistently fostered a culture of collaboration and mutual support that reflects our own ethos at Smithills.

At Smithills School, we are committed to building a high performing, socially cohesive learning community founded on the principle of Success for All. Excellent attendance is central to this vision. We expect all members of our community, pupils, parents and staff, to work together to ensure that attendance is prioritised and that every pupil can fully access the opportunities available to them.

We ask all parents and carers to respect and support this ethos, recognising the vital role that regular school attendance plays in securing the best possible outcomes for every child.

The school works in partnership with the Local Authority and meets all statutory duties relating to attendance, including participation in local procedures and frameworks.

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at Smithills School
- Set out the school's 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 advice from the Department for Education (DfE):



SMITHILLS SCHOOL

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- [School Admissions Code 2021](#)
- [School Admissions Appeals Code](#)

As an academy, the school is required by its 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](#).

3. Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parent(s) or carer(s) can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority.

Looked-after children, as defined in section 22 of the Children Act 1989, 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 (defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014), or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order (defined in section 14A of the Children Act 1989)

This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

A child is regarded as having 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.

A child reaches **compulsory school age** on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

A **parent** is any individual who holds parental responsibility, as defined under the Children Act 1989, or any person who has care of a child, where the child lives with them either full or part time and they look after that child.

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 will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority.

5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group



As a general rule, the school expects children to be educated in their normal age group. However, parents may request that their child is admitted to a year group outside their chronological age.

Requests must be made in writing to the Headteacher at the time of application (or as soon as possible thereafter). The request should clearly state the year group being requested and the reasons for the request.

The Headteacher will be responsible for considering the request and making the final decision on behalf of the school.

Parents should include supporting evidence to assist the school in making a decision. This may include:

- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Relevant medical evidence or advice from a medical professional (where applicable)
- Evidence of any previous education outside the normal age group
- Any reports or views from professionals involved with the child, where relevant

The school will consider each request individually, taking into account the circumstances of the case and the best interests of the child, in line with the School Admissions Code. This will include consideration of:

- Parents' views
- The child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, medical evidence and professional advice
- Whether the child has previously been educated outside their normal age group
- Whether the child may have been expected to be in a lower age group if not for premature birth
- The Headteacher's views

Wherever possible, requests will be considered as part of the main admissions round. They will be assessed in line with the school's admission arrangements, including the oversubscription criteria set out in this policy.

Parents will be informed in writing of the decision, including the reasons for it, within a reasonable timeframe and, where possible, before the national offer day for the relevant admissions round.

There is no statutory right of appeal against a decision relating to the year group in which a child is offered a place. However, parents retain the right to appeal against the refusal of a place at the school if an application for admission is unsuccessful.

6. Allocation of places

6.1 Published admission number (PAN)

The school has a published admission number of 250 pupils for entry in year 7.



6.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, places will be allocated in accordance with the following criteria, in order of priority:

1. Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children

A Looked After Child is a child who is (1) in the care of a local authority, or (2) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions (Section 22(1) Children Act 1989).

A Previously Looked After Child is a child who was looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption order (under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 or Adoption Act 1976), child arrangements order or a special guardianship order (under the Children Act 1989). This includes children who were previously looked after and those adopted from care from outside England.

2. Other children considered vulnerable

This includes children whose application is supported by the Assistant Director for Social Care at the local authority, including:

- Children subject to a child protection plan or who have been subject to one within the last 12 months
- Children who have been in care within the last 2 years and remain in receipt of social care services
- Children considered at significant risk of becoming looked after
- Children living in temporary accommodation due to fleeing violence where a rehousing area has been identified

3. Children with an exceptional medical or social need

Places will only be offered under this criterion where the child has a certified medical condition or exceptional social need, supported by strong professional evidence confirming that attendance at the school is essential and that alternative provision would seriously exacerbate existing difficulties. Evidence must be provided at the time of application and must be from a GP, consultant or relevant professional setting out why this school is the most appropriate provision.

4. Siblings

Children who will have a sibling in Years 7–11 at the time of admission. Siblings include full, step, half, foster and adopted brothers and sisters living permanently at the same address.

5. Proximity



Priority will be given to children who live closest to the school. Distance is measured in a straight line from the address point of the child's home address (including flats) to the main entrance of the school. Measurements will be calculated using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system.

6.3 Tie break

Where two or more applications cannot be separated using the oversubscription criteria, priority will be given to the child who lives closest to the school.

Distance will be measured in a straight line from the address point of the child's home address to the main entrance of the school. For the purposes of this policy, a child's home address is defined as the place where they live and sleep for the majority of the school week with their parent(s) or carer(s).

Where a child lives between two addresses, the address used will be the one where the child lives for the majority of the school week. In cases of equal shared care where this cannot be determined, parents must agree which address will be used for the application. Where no agreement can be reached, the local authority will determine which address will be used.

If two or more children live an identical distance from the school, or if distance cannot otherwise be used to separate applicants, places will be allocated by random allocation. This will be carried out through a drawing of lots and will be independently verified by a person not involved in the admissions process.

Where a final place is available and the application relates to multiple birth siblings (for example twins or triplets), the school will admit all siblings, even if this results in the published admission number being exceeded.

6.4 Late Applications

Unless there are exceptional reasons for the late submission of the application form, late applications will not be considered at the same time as applications that were received by the closing date. These may include the following circumstances: parents moving into the borough after the closing date, parents were abroad for the whole period between the publication of the Local Authority's composite prospectus and the closing date of the application form; and parental/child illness which required hospitalisation for a significant period between the publication of the Local Authority's composite prospectus and the closing date for the submission of the application form.

The late applications will be considered after all the others that were received on time and placed on the waiting list in order, according to the oversubscriptions criteria.

6.5 Waiting list

Where the school is oversubscribed, a waiting list will be maintained for Year 7 until 31 December of the admission year. After this date, parents may request in writing for their child to remain on the waiting list for consideration for any vacancies that arise.



All children refused admission will automatically be placed on the waiting list for the school, where it is a higher preference than the school at which they have been allocated a place.

Places on the waiting list will be ranked in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria. Priority is not given based on the date an application is received or the length of time a child has been on the waiting list. The position on the waiting list may therefore change as applications are added, withdrawn, or where circumstances change and a child's priority under the oversubscription criteria is affected.

Where a place becomes available, it will be offered to the child who is highest on the waiting list at that time.

In accordance with the School Admissions Code, looked after children, previously looked after children, and children allocated a place through the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those on the waiting list.

For the initial Year 7 intake, the waiting list will be maintained by Bolton Council on behalf of the school until 31 December. After this point, and for in-year admissions, the school will maintain the waiting list in accordance with its oversubscription criteria.

6.6 Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Bolton Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible and before anyone is considered from the waiting list. Eligibility for the Fair Access Protocol does not limit a parent's right to make an in-year application to the school for their child. Any application will be processed in accordance with the usual in-year admission procedures (see section 7).

6.7 Challenging behaviour

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. The exception to this is where we may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, i.e. where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that isn't the normal point of entry, in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraphs 3.10 to 3.13) apply.

6.8 Children of UK service personnel and crown servants

Families of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, will be allocated a place in advance of the family arriving in the area, provided a place is available and the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date.

We will use the address at which the child will live when applying our oversubscription criteria, provided the parents provide some evidence of their intended address. Alternatively, the unit or quartering address will be used as the child's home address when considering the application against the oversubscription criteria, where this is requested by a parent.



6.9 Withdrawing an offer of a place

We will not withdraw an offer unless it has been offered in error, a parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

Where a parent has not responded to the offer, we will give them a further opportunity to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not respond.

If an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, we will consider the application afresh and a right of appeal will be offered if an offer is refused.

We will not withdraw an offer of a place once a child has started at our school except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In these circumstances, we will consider the length of time that the child has been at the school before deciding whether to withdraw the place.

7. In-year admissions

In year admission is the process for applying for admission into an existing year group within a school. The in-year admission process is managed by Bolton Council.

Applications for in-year admissions are made via Bolton Council's admissions process, as published on their website.

[Moving school during the year – Bolton Council](#)

Once you have completed the online application you will receive a notification via email that an offer of a school place has been made.

8. Appeals

Parents have a legal right of appeal against the decision not to offer admission at the School. The appeals process will be administered by Bolton Council, on behalf of the School. The procedure for requesting an appeal and it being heard by the independent appeals panel will be as set out in the School Admissions Appeals Code as published by the Department for Education.

Parents will be given a minimum of 20 school days from the date of notification to submit an appeal.

Further information, including the appeal form, is available at:

www.bolton.gov.uk/admissions/school-admission-appeals

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the governing board every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the published admission number), the governing board will publicly consult on these changes. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements at least



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once every 7 years. Consultation will be for a minimum of 6 weeks and will take place between 1 October and 31 January of the school year before the arrangements are to apply.