



# **Elston Hall Learning Trust Admissions Policy 2025-26 For Walsall Schools**

**Updated: January 2024**

**Approved by Trustees: February 2024**

**Review Date: January 2025**

Elston Hall (EHLT) is a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) and the Trustees of the Trust are its own admission authority.

The schools in the MAT are:

Elston Hall Primary School  
Palmers Cross Primary School  
Edward the Elder Primary School  
Goldthorn Park Primary School  
Pheasey Park Farm Primary School and Early Years Centre  
Tipton Green Junior School

***This policy only applies to its schools which fall under Walsall MBC, currently Pheasey Park Farm Primary School and Early Years Centre.***

The Trust and its schools will comply with the provisions within the Schools Admissions Code and the School Appeals Code, which is available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academy-admissions>

Walsall MBC will co-ordinate admissions on behalf of our Walsall schools in the Trust. Details surrounding The Walsall's co-ordinated primary admissions scheme are available from [School Admissions \(walsall.gov.uk\)](http://School Admissions (walsall.gov.uk))

**Published Admission Number:**

90 pupils (in three classes of 30 each as a maximum) KS1 and 96 KS2 will be admitted in the school year in which they are five, without reference to ability or aptitude.

**KS1 Infant Class Sizes:**

Legislation requires all Infant classes (Reception, Year 1, Year 2) to be no more than 30 children. Legislation does not give children who are attending the Nursery an automatic right of admission to Reception.

**KS2 Class Sizes:**

For the sake of efficient education and the efficient use of resources, it is the policy of the Trust Board to limit KS2 classes (Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6) to a maximum of 32 pupils.

**Admission Arrangements:**

The application procedures and timetable for admissions will follow the Walsall Local Authority co-ordinated admission scheme. The Local Authority will co-ordinate the process.

**Over-subscription:**

If applications for admission exceed the number of places available, the Admissions Committee will apply the following criteria, in priority order as set out below, to decide which children to admit:-

**Oversubscription Criteria:**

Children and young people in care.

Children who have an older sibling already in attendance at the school when the application is made and who will still be attending the school at the proposed admission date.

Children for whom a place at the school is essential on medical or social grounds, as supported in writing by a medical practitioner or social worker (applications will be subject to verification by the Trust Board).

Children whose parent/carer is a member of staff\* employed at the school

Distance between the home address and the school as measured in a straight line, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.

If there is oversubscription in criteria 2 or 3, priority will be given to those living closest to the school as measured in a straight line.

**Explanatory notes for Oversubscription Criteria:****Note 1-The definition of children and young people in care is:**

Children and young people in care are children who are in (a) in the care of the local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of the social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time the application is made to school. Previously looked after children are children who

were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order) immediately following having been looked after and those 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.

**Note 2 - The definition of a sibling is a child who resides at the same address as the child for whom a place is being requested, and is one of the following:**

- a brother or sister sharing the same parents
- a half brother or sister sharing one common parent
- a step brother or sister (i.e. related by a parent's marriage)
- any other child for whom it can be demonstrated that he or she is residing
- permanently at the same address (e.g. under the terms of a residence order).

The Trust Board will try to ensure that as far as possible siblings (including twins, triplets or children from other multiple births) can attend the same school. However in the event that there is an insufficient number of places to allocate to twins, triplets etc. a decision will be made as to which child(ren) the place(s) are to be offered. In this situation a place or places will be offered to the first born (older child(ren)) and in cases where this is unknown, the offer will be decided by lot.

**Note 3 - Social or medical factors**

If parents believe there are specific medical or social reasons for claiming priority for a child to attend a particular school, the relevant part of the preference form must be completed and evidence to support the claim must be submitted with the form. This can relate to the parent or child.

Requests for such consideration will be subject to verification by the Trust Board. This is necessary because parents will be asking the Trustees to assess the child as having a stronger case than many other children, some of whom may live closer to the school.

### **Medical**

Medical evidence must be submitted in writing from a medical practitioner and should state why the preferred school is the only school that can meet the child's needs.

### **Social**

Social evidence must be submitted in writing from an appropriate professional and should state why the preferred school is the only school that can meet the child's needs.

**Please note that only in exceptional cases are places prioritised in respect of a child's medical or social grounds.**

**4.Children whose parent/carer is a member of staff\* employed at the school** for two or more years at the point at which the application for admission to the school is made or where the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

\* Priority can only be given to children of staff at the individual Academy that the application is for.

This criteria applies to all permanent staff members.

#### **Note 4 - Distance**

Distance will be measured in a straight line from the centre point of the home address to the centre point of the school address using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.

#### **Definition of a home address**

The home address of a child is considered to be the permanent residence of a child in a residential property when the place is offered. The address must be the child's only or main residence and is either:

- owned by the child's parent, parents or guardian; or
- leased to or rented by the child's parent, parents or guardian under lease or written rental agreement of not less than six months duration.

Documentary evidence of ownership or rental agreement may be required together with proof of actual permanent residence at the property concerned. In certain circumstances the child's current school will be asked to verify the address given.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child and the child lives with both parents for part of the week, the main residence will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the week. Parents may be requested to supply documentary evidence to support the address used for the application.

The offer of a place is based upon the address of the child when the offer is made. If a child is offered a place at an oversubscribed school the place may be withdrawn if it is found that the child moved (before the place was offered) to a new address which was further away from the school and the child would not have qualified for a place on the distance criterion.

In the event that a family moves between the application and the date of offer, the parent(s), carer(s) or guardian(s) must inform the Secondary/Primary Admissions Teams as soon as possible of these circumstances.

If the home address is a flat (or apartment) and there is more than one flat at the same

address, priority will be given to applicants living at the lowest numbered flat and/or the flat on the lower floor.

N.B. An offer of a place will be withdrawn if the application form contains fraudulent or intentionally misleading information which would deny a place being given to a child with higher priority.

### **Oversubscription criteria for Nursery**

Applications for nursery places should be made direct to the school.

If there are more applications than there are nursery places available then places will be allocated using the Oversubscription Criteria in the following order of priority:

A. Priority for nursery places will be given to children born between 1 September and 31 August. If places are oversubscribed the following Oversubscription Criteria will apply:

1. Children in Public Care (looked after children). (see note 1)
2. Children who have an older sibling already in attendance at the school, when the application is made and who will be still attending the school at the proposed admission date. (see note 2)
3. Children for whom a place at the school is essential on medical or social grounds and supported in writing by a medical practitioner or a social worker. (Applications will be subject to verification by the Trust Board). (see note 3)
4. Distance between the home address and the school as measured in a straight line with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. (see note 4)

B. Where places are still available the school may only offer places to children who have attained the age of 3 years. If the remaining places are oversubscribed the Oversubscription Criteria 1-4, shown above, will apply.

If there is oversubscription in criteria 2 and 3, priority will be given to those living closest to the school as measured in a straight line.

Please note that there is no right of appeal against the refusal of a Nursery place.

### **Application Procedures and timetables for admissions**

Walsall Children's Services operates an inter-LA co-ordinated admission scheme for primary school admissions. All applications must be made through the online portal on Walsall Council's website.

Parents can select up to 3 preferred schools, rank them in order of preference and give reasons for their preference. Applications for non-Walsall resident pupils will be available through the pupils home LA.

Attendance at the school's nursery provision or co-located Early Years centre does not guarantee a place at the primary school.

Preferences cannot be changed after the closing date without a significant change in circumstances, for example if the family has recently moved address. When notifying a significant change of circumstances the applicant must supply documentary evidence to confirm the change. An example of a significant change of circumstances is a house move that necessitates a change of preference(s). This would need to be validated by documentary evidence such as a solicitor's letter confirming exchange of contract or a copy of the tenancy agreement.

All applications for named schools will be considered in accordance with each school's published admission criteria.

Parents will be notified in writing by Walsall Children's Services of the offer of one place in the school.

Parents will be required to confirm their acceptance or refusal of the place offered for their child by the completion of an acceptance/refusal form included with the offer letter. The offer of a place may be withdrawn if parents fail to respond by this date.

### **LATE APPLICATION POLICY**

Applications that are received by Walsall Council after the closing date are classed as late applications. Any request to change the name or ranking of a school made after the Closing Date will be classed as a late application.

Late applications will normally be considered for places after all the applications that were received by the Closing Date. Therefore, late applicants may be less likely to be offered a place at one of their preferred schools.

If a Walsall Preference Form is received after the closing date the application will be passed to the appropriate admission authority for consideration under its Late Application Policy. Each admission authority is required to publish its own Late Application Policy which explains how late applications will be dealt with.

### **Late Applications received up to 4 weeks after the Closing Date**

Late applications received up to four weeks after the Closing Date may be considered as being on-time but only where there are exceptional circumstances:

- Where the family were unable to complete the Walsall Preference Form
- by the Closing Date because they moved into the Borough of Walsall after the issue of the Walsall Preference Form.
- The family were unable to comply with the admission timetable because of exceptional circumstances which prevented the Walsall Preference Form arriving on time



- When a single parent has been ill for some time

In these cases the circumstances must be given in writing at the time of application and attached firmly to the Walsall Preference Form: they will be subject to verification by the Managing Director, Walsall Children's Services.

#### **Late Applications received more than 4 weeks after the Closing Date**

Applications for schools received more than 4 weeks after the Closing Date but before the Notification Date will be considered only after all other applications.

#### **Applications Received after the Notification Date (once places have been offered)**

Applications received after the notification date: a place will be offered at the highest ranked school if places are available. For Walsall residents, if a place is not available at any of the ranked schools a place will be offered a place by Walsall Children's Services at the nearest alternative Walsall community or voluntary controlled school with vacant places and the child's name will be added to the Waiting List for schools listed as preferences in admission criteria order.

#### **WAITING LIST POLICY**

Waiting Lists for all Walsall schools will be maintained by Walsall Children's Services – until the last day of the autumn term. Parents may enquire about their child's position on any Waiting List by telephoning the Admissions Team on (01922) 686470.

Children who are the subject of a direction by a local authority to admit to a school or who are allocated to a school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol must take precedence over those children on the waiting list.

Waiting Lists are kept of all children who have been refused a place at any school which was ranked higher than the school at which they have been offered a place, for example

If a child is offered a place at the school that was ranked 2nd on the Walsall Preference Form then the child's name will only be placed on the Waiting List for the school that was ranked 1st.

If a child is offered a place at their first choice school the child's name will not be added to any Waiting List kept for their other ranked schools.

Parents may contact the Admissions Team to apply for a place at an oversubscribed Walsall school.

Their child's name will be placed on the school's Waiting List in admission criteria order. Any vacancies will be offered on the basis of the admission criteria for the school.

Parents should contact the school to be added to their Waiting List.

## **MID YEAR ADMISSION POLICY**

Mid-Year Admissions are coordinated by Walsall Children's Services.

## **APPEALS ARRANGEMENTS**

### **Appeals if a place is refused:**

A parent who intends to appeal, should write to the clerk of the Trust Board care of the school to declare their intention within 14 days (10 working days) from the date of notification that their application for a place has been unsuccessful.

Any parent (except the parent of a child who has been permanently excluded from two schools,) whose child is refused a school place for which they have applied, has the right to an independent appeal.

### **General:**

The school will agree any changes to its admission arrangements in accordance with the procedures given in the current Code of Practice School Admissions of the DFE.

### **How to make an appeal:**

Parents are obliged to put in writing the grounds of their appeal within 14 days (10 working days).

### **The Appeal Hearing:**

Parents will be notified in writing of the date of the hearing not less than 14 days (10 working days) beforehand.

Parents have a right to attend the hearing in person to present their case or can put their case through a representative. They may be accompanied by a friend. If they do not wish to attend they can ask for their case to be considered on the basis of their written statement of their grounds of appeal. Children should not be brought to the hearing.

At least seven days before the hearing, parents will be given the case for the Trust Board in writing.

**The Independent Appeal Panel:**

The panel will consist of three or five members appointed by the Trust Board, having at least one lay member and at least one person who has experience in education. These people are taken from a list of volunteers drawn up by the Walsall Local Education Authority.

**The order of the Hearing:**

The order of the hearing will be notified in advance. A probable order will be (panel members may ask questions at any time):-

- panel read paperwork and decide procedures
- parties called in
- the case for the Trustees
- questioning by the parents
- the case, for the parents
- questioning by the Trustees
- summing by the Trustees
- summing by the parents
- withdrawal of the parties
- decision by the panel
- recall and verbal notification of the decision

**Decision taken by the appeal panel:**

The decision of admission panels is binding on the Trust Board.

**Notification of the decision of the appeals panel:**

A written decision will be sent to the parent within ten days.

**Further Appeals:**

Unless there are significant and material changes in the circumstances of the parent or school relevant to a further application, the governors will not consider a further application in the same academic year so no fresh appeal could be relevant. (significant changes in circumstances could be medical reasons or a move of house since the original application).

If there have been significant changes then the parents will have the right to a fresh appeal which will be heard by different panel members.

**Complaints:**

The local government ombudsman can investigate written complaints about misadministration on the part of the admission appeals panel. The Secretary of State can consider complaints about failure to constitute the appeal panel correctly or whether the Trust Board has acted reasonably in exercising its function in respect of the appeals purposes. The Secretary of State is not empowered to consider complaints about the merits of a Panel's decision.