

Admissions policy 2026-27



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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at a school in Kingfisher Schools Trust
- Set out the 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 statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE):

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

We are required by our 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](#).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

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

Looked-after children 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, or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order

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 reaches **compulsory school age** on the prescribed day following their 5th birthday (or on their 5th birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

4. How to apply

For applications in the normal admissions round, you should use the online process or application form provided by your home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools are in). You can use this form to express your preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order.

For further details of how to apply and deadlines for applications, visit:

[School places - Suffolk County Council](#)

[School admissions - Norfolk County Council](#)

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

Please note, pupils already attending one of our nurseries will not transfer automatically into reception in the attached school (or any of our other schools). A separate application must be made for a place in reception.

5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

It is expected that children will normally be educated within their chronological year group. However, parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

Requests should be made in writing, as part of the normal admissions round, and include any relevant supporting evidence.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parents' views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- Headteachers' views

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place but it is not in their preferred age group.

6. Allocation of places

6.1 Admission numbers

Our schools have the following published admission numbers (PAN) for entry:

School	Local Authority	Year of entry	Pupil Admission Number (PAN)
Snape Primary School	Suffolk	Reception	10
Roman Hill Primary School	Suffolk	Reception	60
Northgate Primary School	Norfolk	Reception	60
Southtown Primary School	Norfolk	Reception	30
Alde Valley Academy	Suffolk	Year 7	150
Sir John Leman High School	Suffolk	Year 7	270
Stowmarket High School	Suffolk	Year 7	210

The following schools have additional alternative arrangements, as follows:

- Snape Primary School has a pre-school facility with admissions being dealt with under separate arrangements
- Roman Hill and Northgate primary schools have on-site nursery provision, with admissions being dealt with under separate arrangements
- Southtown Primary School has a specialist resource base. Places at the SRB are allocated by a Norfolk County Council panel and pupils are registered as visiting pupils.

All of our schools are comprehensive: there is no admission by banding, streaming, or admissions tests.

6.2 Oversubscription criteria

The following criteria apply to all of the schools in Kingfisher Schools Trust.

All children whose **education, health and care (EHC) plans** name one of our schools will be admitted to the school before any other places are allocated.

If our schools are not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

In the event that our schools receive more applications than the number of places available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in order, until all places are filled.

1. Highest priority will be given to **looked-after children and all previously looked-after children** who apply for a place at the school.
2. Priority will next be given to **children of staff at the school**, in either of the following circumstances:
 - a. 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, or
 - b. The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage
3. Priority will next be given to children who are ordinarily resident* within the designated catchment area and have a **sibling** who will be on the school's roll at the time of admission (including Sixth Form but excluding a specialist unit, specialist resource base, or nursery) or has already been offered a place. Siblings include step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address. Priority will not be given to children with siblings who are former pupils of the school.

4. **Secondary schools only:** Priority will next be given to children on roll at **named feeder primary schools** within the designated catchment area, who are also ordinarily resident* within the designated catchment area.
5. Priority will next be given to children who are **ordinarily resident* within the designated catchment area.**
6. Priority will next be given to children who are ordinarily resident* outside the designated catchment area and have a sibling who will be on the school's roll at the time of admission (including Sixth Form but excluding a specialist unit, specialist resource base, or nursery) or has already been offered a place. Siblings include step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address. Priority will not be given to children with siblings who are former pupils of the school.
7. **Secondary schools only:** Priority will next be given to children on roll at named feeder primary schools within the designated catchment area, who are **not** ordinarily resident* within the designated catchment area.
8. Priority will next be given to children who are ordinarily resident* outside the designated catchment area

*By **ordinarily resident** we mean the place where the child usually lives. We consider this to be where they sleep overnight. We may need proof of this address. If you use another address to gain a higher priority for a place at a school within Kingfisher Schools Trust, we will consider this to be a fraudulent application and may refuse or withdraw a place. Where a child lives at more than one address, we will consider them to be ordinarily resident at the address where the child lives for the majority of the week (excluding weekends and school holidays). In such circumstances, separate evidence, in writing, from each parent must be provided to confirm the child's living arrangements at the time of application.

In cases where the child spends an equal proportion of the school week at more than one address, evidence of which is to be considered the main contact address will be required to support the application. Written agreement from the parents/carers will be required to state which address is to be used as the ordinarily resident address for all school preferences. It is not acceptable to use different addresses for applications to different schools. All applications are processed in good faith, however, if we are aware of a parental dispute affecting an application, we may not be in a position to process the application and the parents/carers may need to seek independent legal advice in order to resolve the matter.

6.3 Tie break

In the case of two or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, we will use the distance between the school and a child's home as a tie breaker to decide between applicants. Priority will be given to children who live closest to the school.

Distance will be measured in a straight line from the child's home address to the school's front gates. The distance will be measured "as the crow flies", using data jointly provided by the Post Office and Ordnance Survey. The data plots the co-ordinates of each property and provides a measured distance to three decimal places.

Where the distance between two or more children's homes and the school is the same, random allocation will be used to decide between them. This process will be independently verified.

6.5 Children below compulsory school age

Where children below compulsory school age are offered a place at one of our primary schools they will be entitled to attend the school full-time in the September following their fourth birthday.

Parents may defer their child's entry to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age, and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year the offer was made for.

Where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

6.6 Challenging behaviour

We will not ordinarily refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. 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, only in such a case that we have good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour that may adversely affect the provision we can offer. In this case, we will refer these pupils to the Fair Access Protocol. We will not refuse admission on these grounds to looked-after children, previously looked-after children and children with EHC plans listing our schools.

6.7 Fair Access Protocol

We participate in our local authorities' Fair Access Protocols. This helps make sure 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.

7. In-year admissions

You can apply for a place for your child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose EHC plans name one of our schools will be admitted to the school.

Likewise, if there are spaces available at the school in the year group you are applying for, your child will always be offered a place.

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group at the school. When a space becomes available it will be filled by 1 of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6.3 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Applications for in-year admissions are managed by our colleagues in schools. Please contact the school/visit the school website for more information as to how to apply.

Our schools have helpful information about admissions, including details of how to visit the school, on their websites.

In-year applications will not be processed more than one term in advance of the required start date.

Parents will be notified of the outcome of their in-year application in writing within 15 school days. Where an offer is made, the letter will detail the timeframe within which the offer must be accepted.

8. Appeals

If your child's application for a place at one of the schools in our trust is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals. If you wish to appeal, you can find details of how to do this at the following pages:

[Education admission appeals - Suffolk County Council](#)

[School admission appeals - Norfolk County Council](#)

9. Waiting lists

For children not offered a place, but who wish to remain on a waiting list for a place, these will operate until the end of the academic year in which the application has been received, unless a parent/carer informs the school in writing that they wish their child's name to be removed from the list. Names will be removed if the offer of a place that becomes available is not accepted.

If a parent/carer wishes to keep their child on a waiting list, they must apply in each subsequent year.

The order of children on a waiting list does not remain static: as circumstances change, a child's place on the waiting list can go up or down. For example, due to withdrawals or additional applications, where a new application is judged to have a higher priority. If there is a change of address whilst a child is on a waiting list, a parent/carer should let the school know; this may affect the child's position on the waiting list. Having a child's name on a waiting list will not affect the right to appeal for a school place in any of the schools applied for.

10. Applications to the Sixth Form

10.1 Applicants and how to apply

Sir John Lemman High School's Sixth Form welcomes applications for entry to Sixth Form from those of the school's students who have attended in Year 11. Students in Year 11 at Sir John Lemman High School will need to apply formally for a place in the Sixth Form. Information, advice and guidance meetings are set up for every prospective Sixth Form student to provide support at a critical time of decision making. Students will receive written confirmation of course offers. Relevant deadlines will be advertised to students and will also be announced on the school website.

The Sixth Form is also pleased to admit students who have not previously attended Sir John Lemman High School. The Published Admission Number for Year 12 is 25 - this figure refers only to Year 12 students being admitted to the school for the first time. Entry requirements for courses are the same as those for internal applications.

Students entering the Sixth Form will be expected to read, sign and adhere to a Learning Agreement which outlines the commitment required to be successful in Post 16 study together with the support that students can expect to receive from Sixth Form staff. In addition, Sixth Form students must recognise that they are part of a whole school community and have a responsibility to abide by our dress code and the Sixth Form Conduct Policy.

Whilst it is expected that all courses published in the prospectus will run, it is occasionally necessary to cancel courses, for example due to a lack of student interest. If this should happen, the applicants will be notified as soon as possible and a further guidance meeting offered. Likewise, once our curriculum option blocks are confirmed and any subject clashes identified, any applicants affected will be contacted and a further guidance meeting offered.

The school manages its own admissions to the Sixth Form. Details of how to apply can be found at: [Sir John Lemman High School - About The Sixth Form](#)

Applications to Stowmarket High School Sixth Form are temporarily paused.

10.2 Entry criteria

Level 3 Pathway - In order to enrol onto our Level 3 courses, students must have achieved a minimum of 5 GCSEs at grade 4 or above, across four different subject areas; this should include a Grade 4 for English Language and Mathematics.

It is important that students also pay attention to any individual subject entry requirements within our prospectus.

It may be that a small number of students are recommended to sit AS qualifications at the end of Year 12 in order to inform decisions about progression into Year 13 however, these AS examinations are standalone and do not contribute to the overall A Level qualification.

Please note that students who join SJLHS Sixth Form, to study Level 3 courses will follow a two year linear course (most likely in three subjects), with public examinations at the end of Year 13 determining a student's final grade (alongside coursework where applicable).

In some circumstances, a student may enrol onto four subjects for the two years; these decisions will be made on an individual basis. In addition, students may decide to study towards the Extended Project Qualification during their time in Sixth Form in order to enhance their academic curriculum. Students will sit rigorous internal summer examinations in Year 12, the results of which will help us to give predicted grades to universities and potential employers.

10.3 Late Applications

Students applying to join Sixth Form after the deadline for application but before the start of the academic year should note that admission will be subject to availability of places on chosen courses and them achieving the specific entry requirements for the courses.

Provided places remain available and entry requirements are met, applicants seeking a place after the start of the academic year will be invited to discuss suitability of joining the courses at their requested time of entry. It is only in exceptional circumstances that a student will be enrolled into Sixth Form during the course of an academic year.

10.4 Applications for 'out of year' places

It is our policy not to admit students 'out of year' into the Sixth Form.

10.5 GCSE re-takes and special consideration

Students who achieved GCSE grade 3 or below in mathematics and / or English Language will be expected to re-take these subjects alongside their Level 3 programme. As students who do not meet the full entry criteria, admission will be based on suitability for the Level 3 course, through discussion at an enrolment meeting following GCSE results. Staff will take into account a student's wider academic strengths and their commitment to studying and improving on the GCSEs in English and/or Maths.

A student may be able to claim special consideration if a medical condition exists (supported by a doctor's note) that has significantly influenced GCSE results in comparison to the predicted outcomes. Such cases will be considered on their individual merit and admission granted despite a student not meeting the entry criteria.

The Sixth Form reserves the right to take into account any individual and exceptional circumstances that may impact upon the normal college entry requirements being met. This will be done at the discretion of the Headteacher, whose judgement will be final in relation to whether a student can or cannot be offered a place at the Sixth Form.

10.6 Oversubscription Criteria

Should there be insufficient places for the Sixth Form, the oversubscription criteria for Sir John Leman High School Sixth form is the same as that for the main school. Should all places for Year 11 'home' applicants not be filled, these will be opened to external applicants.

11. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Education Committee every year.

Whenever changes to the admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the PAN), the board of trustees will publicly consult on these changes.

The board of trustees will consult on the admission arrangements at least once every 7 years, even if there have been no changes during that period.

Appendix 1

List of named feeder primary schools

Alde Valley Academy

- Aldeburgh Primary School
- Benhall St Mary's CEVC Primary School
- Coldfair Green Primary School
- Kelsale CEVC Primary School
- Leiston Primary School
- Middleton Primary School
- Saxmundham Primary School
- Snape Primary School
- Yoxford and Peasenhall Primary School

Stowmarket High School

- Abbot's Hall Community Primary School
- Bosmere Community Primary School
- Chilton Community Primary School
- Combs Ford Primary School
- Great Finborough CEVC Primary School
- Ringshall School
- Trinity CEVA Primary School
- Wood Ley Community Primary School

Sir John Leman High School

- The Albert Pye Community Primary School
- Barnby and North Cove Primary School
- Beccles Primary Academy
- Brampton Church of England Primary School
- Gillingham St Michael's Church of England Primary Academy
- Ravensmere Infant School
- Reydon Primary School
- Ringsfield Church of England Primary School
- Southwold Primary School
- St Benet's Catholic Primary School
- Worlingham CEVC Primary School