



## **Highfield South Farnham ADMISSION POLICY FOR 2027/2028**

South Farnham Educational Trust is the 'admission authority' for Highfield South Farnham (**School**).

This policy will be used during the 2027/2028 school year for allocating places in the normal (main) admissions round for entry to Year R in September 2027, and for in-year admission to any year groups throughout that year.

It has been developed in accordance with the principles set out in the School Admissions Code 2021 (**Admissions Code**).

### **Published Admission Number (PAN)**

The School has a published admission number (PAN) of 60 for entry to Year R.

The School will admit this number of children if there are sufficient applications. Where there are fewer applications than the published admission number, places will be offered to all applicants.

### **Admissions process**

Local Authorities coordinate applications for admission in the 'normal admissions round' for all schools, and all schools are required to participate in their Local Authority's coordinated scheme. Parents must apply to the Local Authority covering the area in which the child lives, not the Local Authority for the School where this is different.

The 'normal admissions round' covers applications for admission to a 'relevant age group' which are made in time for the local authority to offer a school place on National Offer Day, which is **16 April 2027** for the 2027/2028 school year. The deadline for submitting applications to be allocated on National Offer Day is **15 January 2027**.

A 'late application' is one which is submitted before the first day of the first term in the year of admission, but was not made in time to enable the Local Authority to offer a place on National Offer Day. These applications cannot be considered until those submitted in time have been

considered and places offered, which will inevitably reduce the chance of achieving the offer of a place.

An 'in-year application' is one for any year group on or after the first day of the first term of the admission year.

### **Pupils with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP)**

Any child with an EHCP where the School has been named in section I will be admitted regardless of pupil numbers. Where this happens in the normal admissions round, these children will normally be allocated their places before other applicants which will reduce the number of places available within the PAN.

### **Oversubscription criteria**

Where the School receives less applications than places available, all children will be offered a place.

Where the School receives more applications than places available, places will be allocated to children in the following order of priority:

1. Looked and previously looked after children (see definition i).
2. Children of staff who have (a) been employed at the School for two or more years at the closing date for applications/date the application is made (whichever is the later), or (b) have been recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage (see definition ii).
3. Children who, at the time of application, have a sibling (see definition iii) on the roll of the School who will still be on roll at the time of their admission.
4. All other children.

### **Definitions**

- (i) A 'looked after child' is one who is (a) in the care of a Local Authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of its social services functions, in England. A 'previously looked after child' is one who (a) was looked after in England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship order, or (b) appears to have been in state care outside of England (i.e. in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation or any other provider, whose sole/main purpose is to benefit society) but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted.

Applications in this category may need to be supported by documentary evidence such as a signed letter from the child's current or former Social Worker confirming their status, and/or an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order. In the case of children

adopted from state care outside of England, evidence of having been in state care outside of England and of being adopted may be required, ideally accompanying the application.

When considering the evidence provided, the DfE's current guidance will be followed. Where the Virtual School Head (VSH) at the Local Authority has already verified the child's status and the Academy is able to confirm this with them, there will be no need for evidence to be provided with the application

- (ii) 'Staff' includes part-time or full time/teaching or non-teaching staff on the payroll of South Farnham Educational Trust whose employment contract states that their employment address/place of work is the School, who meet one or both of the two eligibility criteria set out above. Staff wishing to confirm whether their role qualifies under either criteria should speak to their HR Manager.

'Children of staff' means the staff member's natural or adoptive child, or the child of their spouse or cohabiting partner, and in all cases where the child's home address (as defined by this policy) is the same as the home address of the staff member which is recorded in their HR file.

A Supplementary Information Form must be submitted at the same time as the application for inclusion within this category. This can be downloaded from the School's website and must be completed and sent directly to the Admissions Officer at the School by the closing date for applications, or the date the application is submitted.

- (iii) A sibling is a full brother or sister (sharing both parents), a half-brother or sister (sharing one parent), a step-brother or sister (where one child's parent is married to the other's parent), a natural or adoptive child of the parent's cohabiting partner, or a foster brother or sister, and in all cases the sibling must live and sleep from Sunday to Thursday night during term time at the child's home address (as defined by this policy).

### **Tiebreaker**

In the event of any of the above oversubscription categories being oversubscribed, straight line distance between the School and the child's home address (as defined in this policy) will be used to prioritise applications, with those living nearer the School having higher priority.

The distances will be measured from the Ordnance Survey address point for the child's home address (as defined in this policy) to the nearest official school gate for pupils at the School, using Surrey County Council's Geographic Information System (GIS) which is dedicated software designed for this purpose.

Where two or more children's addresses are equidistant, random allocation will be used to determine the order in which places are allocated to those children, which will be carried out in front of someone who is independent of the School.

In the case of twins, triplets and siblings from a higher multiple birth, where at least one of these achieve an offer of a place in the year group in the normal way, but there are insufficient places left for all of them to be offered a place, they will nevertheless be allocated a place even where this means exceeding the PAN/maximum pupil numbers in that year group. In Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2, the additional children will be “excepted pupils” for the purpose of the statutory maximum infant class size rules (see below).

### **Infant class size rules**

Infant classes must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single schoolteacher.

Additional children may be admitted where they meet the criteria for being an “excepted pupil” which means that they will not count towards the class size unless or until pupil numbers fall back to 30. The categories of “excepted pupils” are set out in the Admissions Code.

### **Child’s home address**

For the purpose of this policy, the child’s home address is the permanent residential (not business) address at which they live and sleep for the majority of their time (i.e. over 50%) from Sunday to Thursday night during term time.

In the event of a dispute, the pattern of where the child has slept from Sunday to Thursday night during term time over the 5 calendar weeks preceding the application will be used to determine which address meets the definition.

Documentary evidence may be required to support the address given in the application form, for example evidence of the address registered with the child’s GP, optician and dentist, and/or evidence that the address is intended to be the permanent residence of the child when they start school.

### **Waiting lists**

Waiting lists are maintained for every year group at the School throughout the whole school year.

The waiting list is ranked by reference to the oversubscription criteria set out above, and not by reference to the date the child’s name was added to the list. That means that a child’s name can go down, as well as up, the list as more children’s names are added.

The School participates in the Fair Access Protocol and will take its fair share of children allocated under that protocol who are vulnerable and without a place. These admissions will take priority over those on the waiting lists.

The waiting list will be re-ranked (including applying the tie breaker, where necessary) every time a child’s is added or removed, and whenever a vacancy arises before it is offered.

Waiting lists will be cancelled on the last day of the Summer term every year which means that parents who still want their child to be considered for a place will need to submit an in-year application to be considered for a place.

### **In year applications**

Parents can apply for a place in any year group at any time, and the application will be processed and a written response either offering or refusing a place will be sent.

Applications must be made directly to the School using its In-Year Admission Application Form which is published alongside this policy on the School's website.

Where an in-year application is received, a place will be offered or refused within ideally 10, but in any event 15, school days of receipt of the application. Where the place is refused, information about the legal right of appeal against the refusal will be provided.

The way in which in-year applications are processed is as follows:

- are there any places available in the PAN?
- would the admission of an additional child prejudice the provision of efficient education to others at the School, and/or the efficient use of the School's resources.

The arrangements for processing in year applications are in accordance with the provisions set out in the Schools Admissions Code.

### **Starting school**

Children are entitled to a full-time place in Year R from the September following their fourth birthday. However, they do not reach compulsory school age (**CSA**) until the first of three prescribed dates following their fifth birthday – 31 December, 31 March and 31 August. This means that the majority of children starting school in Year R are not yet CSA.

Parents can choose to defer their child's admission until later in the school year, but not beyond the start of the term after they reach CSA, and not beyond the first day of the last term of the year of the school year (i.e. after the Easter break) where they do not reach CSA until 31 August.

Parents can also choose to send their children to school part-time until they reach CSA, and this can be exercised during the entire school year in the case of those who do not reach CSA until 31 August. It can also be combined with the right to defer.

For the 2027/2028 school year, the following applies:

- Children born 1 September to 31 December 2022 inclusive reach CSA on 31 December 2027 and must be in full-time education at the start of the spring term in January 2028. Their parents can defer and/or decide on part-time attendance until that date.

- Children born 1 January to 31 March 2023 inclusive reach CSA on 31 March 2028 and must be in full-time education at the start of the summer term in April 2028. Their parents can defer and/or decide on part-time attendance until that date.
- Children born 1 April to 31 August 2023 inclusive reach CSA on 31 August 2028 and must be in full-time education at the start of the autumn term in September 2028. Their parents can defer until the start of the summer term in April 2028, and/or decide on part-time attendance until the end of the school year, but they cannot defer entry for the whole school year until September 2028.

Parents of children known informally as 'summer born children' (i.e. those born between 1 April and 31 August) can choose to delay their child's entry to school for an entire school year until September 2028 when they reach CSA. However, they cannot retain the place they achieved in Year R. In doing so, they would need to re-apply for admission the following year.

Furthermore, at that time, the child's normal age group will be Year 1, which means that, if the parents would prefer their child to be considered for a place in Year R, they will need to submit a separate Request for Admission Outside Normal Age Group and obtain the School's Admission Committee's agreement to accept an application for that year group before the application can be processed along with all others received at that time. The process for doing so is set out below.

### **Admission of children outside their normal age group**

Parents are able to ask for permission for their child to be admitted to a year group other than their normal age group, either above or below.

To do so, parents should send a Request for Admission Outside Normal Age Group to the School's Admission Committee, setting out their reasons for their request and which year group they wish their child to be admitted. Supporting evidence is likely to be helpful, but is not a mandatory requirement.

A decision will be made by the Admission Committee based on the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the parent's views, the Headteacher's views, and all other factors set out in Paras. 2.18 to 2.20 of the Admissions Code. Parents should consider these before preparing their request.

There is no legal right of appeal against the refusal of a Request for Admission Outside Normal Age Group as there is with refusal of a place *per se*, however parents may submit a complaint to the School under its published Complaints Policy if it did not believe the request was dealt with in accordance with the Admissions Code.

Parents considering a request are encouraged to visit the School to speak to staff who will be able to explain the provision offered in Year R and how children's individual needs are supported, so that informed decisions can be made.

### **Withdrawal of an offer**

The School reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place where the parent has not responded to the offer within a reasonable period, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application, which will have denied another child the place.

Where an offer is withdrawn on these grounds, the application will be considered afresh, and a right of appeal offered.

### **Appeals**

Where a place is refused, parents have a legal right of appeal to an independent admission appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code 2022.

Full details about the right of appeal, including where to send the appeal and grounds, and the deadline for doing so, will be included in the letter confirming the refusal.

*This policy was determined by the Trust Board on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2026 following public consultation of the draft policy approved by the Trust Admissions Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2025 and the Local Governing Body on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025 and will be reviewed annually.*