

Proposed Admission Arrangements for Summercroft Primary School– a Single Academy Trust - for the school year 2023/24

How to make an application

Parents/carers of children living in Hertfordshire can make an online application for a Reception place via the Hertfordshire County Council website www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions or contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 for a paper application form. Parents/carers should return the application form direct to the County Council. Parents/carers of children not living in Hertfordshire must make an application to their local education authority. The closing date for receipt of applications is 15th January 2023.

The school will admit up to its published admission number of 60.

The school will admit a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that names the school. Such child will be admitted within the school's published admission number but before any child prioritised under the following oversubscription rules.

If there are fewer applications than places available at the school all applicants will be offered a place. If there are more applications than places available at the school the following oversubscription rules will be used to prioritise applications.

Rule 1 **Children looked after and children who were previously looked after**, including those who appear to the school to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order.
(Please see explanatory notes and definitions below.)

Rule 2 **Medical or Social:** Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school.

The evidence for applications made under this Rule must be submitted to the school office and a panel of governors will determine whether the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet the requirements of this Rule. The evidence must relate specifically to the school and must clearly demonstrate why it is the only school that can meet the child's needs

(Please see explanatory notes and definitions below.)

Rule 3 **Sibling:** Children who have a sibling on the roll of the school at the time of application. This applies to a sibling in Reception through to Year 5.

(Please see explanatory notes and definitions below.)

Rule 4 **Children of staff:** Children of staff directly employed by and at the school in either of the following circumstances (provided that notice of termination of that employment has not been given):

- where the member of staff has been employed for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, or
- the member of staff has been permanently employed to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage and has held that post for less than two years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made.

(Please see explanatory notes and definitions below.)

Rule 5 **Nearest School:** Children for whom it is their nearest school or academy. This includes all schools or academies except those which allocate places on the basis of faith (membership or practice) before allocating on the basis of distance/location.

Rule 6 **Distance:** Children who live nearest to the school.

These rules are applied in the order they are printed above. If more children qualify under any of Rules 1 to 5 than there are places available under that Rule then the available places will be allocated to those children that qualify under that Rule who live nearest to the school.

Tie Break

Where there is a need for a tie-break where two different addresses measure the same distance from the school, in the case of a block of flats for example, the lower door number will be deemed nearest. If there are two identical addresses of separate applicants, the tie break will be random and undertaken independently of the school by Hertfordshire County Council. Every child entered onto the county council's admissions database has an individual random number assigned between 1 and 1 million against each preference school and this number will be used to allocate the place with the lowest number given priority.

In Year Admissions

The school has opted into Hertfordshire County Council's In Year coordination service. Parents/carers can make an online In Year application via the Hertfordshire County Council's website www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions or contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 for a paper application form. Parents/carers should return the application form direct to the County Council.

The County Council will write to you with the outcome of your application and if you have been unsuccessful will include registration details to enable you to log in and appeal online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals.

Continuing interest (waiting) list

After places have been offered Hertfordshire County Council will maintain a continuing interest (waiting) list. A child's position on this list will be determined by the oversubscription rules stated above and can change as other children join or leave it. The County Council will contact parents/carers if a vacancy becomes available in the school and it can be offered to the child. The list will be maintained until the summer term. In order to remain on the list after this time, Parents/carers must make an In Year application before the end of the school year.

Fair Access

The school has to participate in Hertfordshire County Council's Fair Access Protocol in order to ensure that unplaced children are allocated a school place quickly. The school will admit children under the Fair Access Protocol before children on the school's continuing interest list and over the school's published admission number if required.

Appeals

Parents wishing to appeal who applied through Hertfordshire County Council's online system should log in to their online application and click on the link "register an appeal". Out of county residents and paper applicants should call the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request their registration details and log into www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals and click on the link "log into the appeals system".

Explanatory Notes and Definitions

Rule 1. Children looked after and children who were previously looked after

Places are allocated to children in public care according to Chapter 7, Section 2 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

These children will be prioritised under Rule 1.

Highest priority will also be given to children who were looked after, including those looked after outside England but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order.

A "child looked after" is a child who is:

- a) in the care of a local authority, or
- b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989)

All children adopted from care who are of compulsory school age are eligible for admission under Rule 1.

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after provided there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under Rule 1.

Children who were not “looked after” immediately before being adopted, or made the subject of a child arrangements order or special guardianship order, will not be prioritised under Rule 1. Applications made for these children with suitable supporting professional evidence can be considered under Rule 2.

Child arrangements order

Under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders which settle the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

Special guardianship order

Under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian or guardians.

Children previously looked after abroad and subsequently adopted will be prioritised under Rule 1 if the child’s previously looked after status and adoption is confirmed. Hertfordshire’s “Virtual School” will be asked to verify this.

The child’s previously looked after status will be decided in accordance with the definition outlined in the Children and Social Work Act 2017:

- i. to have been in state care in a place outside England and Wales because he or she would not otherwise have been cared for adequately and
- ii. to have ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted.

A child is in “state care” if he or she is in the care of, or accommodated by:-

- a. a public authority,
- b. a religious organisation, or
- c. any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

Rule 2. Medical or Social

Applications under this Rule will only be considered at the time of the initial application unless there has been a significant and exceptional change of circumstances within the child’s family since the initial application was submitted. If the application is upheld but the year group is full the child will only be admitted if a place becomes available and the child has sufficient priority on the continuing interest list.

All schools in Hertfordshire have experience in dealing with children with diverse social and medical needs. However, in a few very exceptional cases there are reasons why a child has to go to one specific school. Few applications under this Rule are agreed.

All applications are considered individually but must include the following: _

- a) Specific recent professional evidence that justifies why only the school can meet the child's individual needs and/or
- b) Professional evidence that outlines exceptional family circumstances making clear why only the school can meet the child's needs.
- c) If the school is not the nearest school to the child's home address clear reasons why the nearest school is not appropriate.
- d) In medical cases a clear explanation of why the child's severity of illness or disability makes attendance at only the school essential.

Evidence should make clear why only the school is appropriate. Applications will generally not be upheld in cases where more than one school could meet the child's needs. In exceptional cases relating to a disability where more than one school can meet the child's specific needs with the relevant facilities, environment or location and the school is the nearest of these a clear explanation is required why attendance at the school is essential.

Applications can only be considered when supported by a recent letter from a professional involved with the child or the child's family, for example a doctor, psychologist, social worker or police officer, and the supporting evidence needs to demonstrate why only the school can meet the medical or social needs of the child.

Applications for children who were not "looked after" immediately before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangements order or special guardianship order may be made under this Rule.

Applications without independent objective professional evidence will not be considered under this Rule and the application will be processed in accordance with the next highest appropriate Rule.

Rule3. Sibling

Sibling is defined as the "brother, sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent/carer or partner or a child looked after or previously looked after and in every case living permanently in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of the application".

A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily at the same house for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.

A sibling must be on the roll of the school at the time the younger child starts or has been offered and accepted a place.

If a place is obtained for an older child using fraudulent information then there will be no sibling connection available to subsequent children from that family.

In Year admissions: the sibling may be in the school's final year as long as they will still be in attendance at the time of admission

Rule 4. Children of Staff

Children of staff are those where the staff member is the child's parent by blood or adoption, or the member of staff has legal parental responsibility for the child. The child must have lived at the same address as the parent employed by and at the school for at least one year at the time of application.

Multiple Births

The school will admit over its published admission number when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated a place at the school.

Home address

The address given in the application must be the child's current permanent address at the closing date for applications, permanent meaning that the child has lived at that address for at least a year. Where a family has not lived at the address for a year, the parent(s)/carer(s) must be able to demonstrate that they own the property or have a tenancy agreement for a minimum of twelve months and the child must be living in the property at the closing date for applications.

The application can only be processed using one address. If the child lives at more than one address, for example due to a separation, the address used will be the one where the child lives for the majority of the time. If the child lives at two addresses for an equal amount of time each, the parents/carers should make a joint application giving one address.

If a child's current permanent address is disputed then parents/carers should provide court documentation showing the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes. If two applications are received with different addresses, neither will be processed until the address issue is resolved.

It is for the child's home local education authority to determine address. If two applications giving different addresses are received from the same local education authority, it is for that local education authority to determine the child's current permanent address. If two applications are received from two different local education authorities then the above process will be used.

If two different applications are received for the child from the same address, for example containing different preferences, the parents/carers will be invited to submit a joint application or to provide court documentation showing the preferences that should be used for the admission process. Until the issue is resolved, neither application will be processed.

For the application round, if one or both of the different applications was/were received “on time” then a joint application will be considered to be “on time” if it is received before the late deadline. If the joint application is received after the late deadline then it will be treated as “late”. The late deadline is 1st February 2023 for primary applications. If this date changes then an amendment will be published on the County Council’s admissions web pages at the start of the 2023/24 application process in September 2022.

Home to school distance measurement

Hertfordshire County Council’s ‘straight line’ distance measurement system is used for all home to school distance measurements. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of the child’s house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

Summer born children (1st April – 31st August) – Entry to Reception

Legally, a child does not have to start school until the start of the term following their fifth birthday. Children born on and between 1 April 2019 and 31 August 2019 are categorised as “summer born” and if parents/carers do not believe that their summer born child is ready to join Reception in September 2023 they should contact the school for guidance before making an application.

Summer born applications that are delayed for a year (for entry in September 2024) will be processed in exactly the same way as all other Reception applications received at that time; there is no guarantee that a place will be offered at the school.

If parents wish to delay their application for a Reception place they are advised to discuss their child’s needs/development with their current early years or nursery provider. If parents wish their child to remain in their existing nursery school or class for a further year (rather than moving into the Reception year group) they must let their current school know before the end of the Spring term in 2023 (before the Easter break).

Children Out of Year Group (except delayed applications for Reception from summer born)

The school’s policy is for children to be educated within their correct chronological year group, with the curriculum differentiated as necessary to meet the needs of individual children. This is in line with DfE guidance which states that “in general, children should be educated in their normal age group”.

If parents/carers believe their child(ren) should be educated in a different year group they should, at the time of application, submit supporting evidence from relevant professionals working with the child and

family stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age appropriate cohort. DfE guidance makes clear that “it is reasonable for admission authorities to expect parents to provide them with information in support of their request – since without it they are unlikely to be able to make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case”.

The school’s Governing Body as the relevant admission authority will decide, through a panel process, whether the application will be accepted on the basis of the information submitted. The decision will be based upon the circumstances of the case including the views of the parents/carers and the headteacher, the child's social, academic and emotional development and whether the child has been previously educated out of year group. There is no guarantee that an application will be accepted on this basis. If the application is not accepted this does not constitute a refusal of a place and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal. Similarly there is no right of appeal for a place in a specific year group at the school. The internal management and organisation of the school, including the placement of pupils in classes, is a matter for the Headteacher and senior leadership of the school.

The school’s Governing Body is ultimately responsible for making this decision for applications made to the school.

Age of Admission and Deferral of Places

The school’s policy is that children born on and between 1 September 2018 and 31 August 2019 would normally commence school in Reception in the academic year beginning in September 2023. The school provides for the full- time admission of all children offered a place in the Reception year group from the September following their fourth birthday. If a parent/carer wants a full time place for their child at the school from September and a place has been offered then they are entitled to that full time place.

When a Reception place has been offered parents/carers can defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the same school year or until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age. Summer born children are only able to “defer” entry to Reception class until the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made.

Where parents/carers wish, children can attend part-time until they reach compulsory school age.

Any parents/carers wishing to take up a part-time place or deferred entry should contact the school to discuss their child’s requirements.

Applications from children* from overseas

All children of compulsory school age (5 to 16 years) in England have a right of access to education. However, where a child is in England for a short period only, for example less than half a term, it may be reasonable to refuse admission to the school.

An application for a school place will only be accepted for such children currently overseas if, for In Year applications, proof is provided that the child will be resident in Hertfordshire within two weeks. In Year allocations are made on the assumption that the child will accept the school place and be on roll within that timescale.

Applications will not normally be accepted from, nor places allocated to, an overseas address. The exception to this is for children of UK service personnel and crown servants (and from military families who are residents of countries with a Memorandum of Understanding with the UK). In these cases Hertfordshire County Council will allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a HCC Unit postal address or quartering area address, for consideration of the application against the oversubscription rules.

Applications will also be considered, and places offered in advance for these families, if the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date but does not provide a quartering or unit address because the family will be residing in private accommodation. In these cases, if the family does not already have a permanent private address in Hertfordshire, the military base or alternative “work” address in Hertfordshire will be used for allocation purposes. If the family already has an established alternative private address, that address will be used for admission purposes.

Hertfordshire County Council will also consider accepting applications from children* whose family can evidence intent to return to and/or permanently reside in Hertfordshire prior to the start of the new academic year. These applications, if accepted, will be processed from the overseas address until sufficient evidence is received to show the child is permanently resident in Hertfordshire. Evidence must be submitted at the time of application.

Evidence submitted after the date for late applications (1st February 2023) cannot be taken into account before National Allocation Day. Decisions on these applications will be made by a panel of senior officers and communicated to parents within 6 weeks of the closing date for applications.

If an applicant owns a property in Hertfordshire but is not living in it, perhaps because they are working abroad at the time of application, the Hertfordshire address will not be accepted for the purposes of admission until the child is resident at that address.

Children from overseas, other than those mentioned above, do not generally have automatic right of entry to the UK. An application for a school place will not therefore be accepted until they are permanently resident in Hertfordshire. Proof of residency such as an endorsed passport or entry visa will be required with the application in addition to proof of Hertfordshire address, for example a council tax bill or 12 month rental agreement.

* Children who hold full British Citizen passports (not British Dependent Territories or British Overseas passports) or have a UK passport describing them as a British citizen or British subject with the right of abode normally have unrestricted entry to the UK. Freedom of movement into the UK for European Economic Area and Swiss citizens ended at the end of 2020. EEA (Irish citizens aside) and Swiss national children entering the UK after the end of 2020 are now treated the same as other foreign nationals. This means they will no longer have the right to enter the country to access a state-funded school unless they fall within certain immigration categories.

Fraudulent applications

The school works in liaison with Hertfordshire County Council to do as much as possible to prevent applications being made from fraudulent addresses, including referring cases to the Shared Anti-Fraud service for further investigation as necessary.

Address evidence is frequently requested, monitored and checked and school places will be withdrawn when false information is deliberately provided. Action will be taken in the following circumstances:

- When a child's application address does not match the address of that child at their current school;
- When a child lives at a different address to the applicant;
- When the applicant does not have parental responsibility;
- When a family move shortly after the closing date for applications when one or more of the following applies:
 - The family has moved to a property from which their application was less likely to be successful;
 - The family has returned to an existing property;
 - The family lived in rented accommodation for a short period of time (anything less than a year) over the application period;
 - Official/public records show an alternative address at the time of the application
- When a child starts at the school and their address is different from the address used at the time of application.

Parents/carers will need to show that they have relinquished residency ties with their previous property and they and their child(ren) are permanently residing at the address given on the application form.