Mulberry
Academy Hastings

Admission arrangements – 2026-27

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Version Control

Version	Reviewed	Changes since last version
No. 1	20.7.2026	NA

Contents

1. Purpose

1.1 The Mulberry Academy trust is the Admissions Authority for each of the academies in the Trust which includes The Mulberry Academy Hastings.

1.2 The purpose of this document is to set out the Trust's policy and procedure for the admission of students to The Mulberry Academy Hastings. Admissions policy and procedure is governed by the Funding Agreement between the Trust and the Secretary of State and is in accordance with admissions law, and the Department for Education Codes of Practice (specifically, the School Admissions Code and the School Admissions Appeals Code).

1.3 This policy applies to all applications for in-year admission and to applications for admission made in accordance with the coordinated admissions rounds.

2. General principles

2.1 The Mulberry Academy Hastings is inclusive and welcomes all applications for admission.

2.2 The Mulberry Academy Hastings has a Published Admissions Number (PAN), which relates only to the normal point of entry to the academy – i.e. Year 7 for secondary academies.

2.3 Admissions to year groups without a PAN will be based upon the prejudice to (a) the provision of education and (b) the efficient use of resources. An admissions number for Years 8-11 is identified to inform the decisions of each academy's Local Governing Body Admissions Sub-Committee when it receives applications for in-year admission to join one of these groups.

2.4 The Academy participates in the East Sussex Local Authority's coordinated scheme for admission to the normal point of entry to the Academy. Applications for places outside the normal admissions round are administered on behalf of the Trust by the East Sussex Local Authority.

2.5 Admission to the academy is not dependent on any ability test or voluntary financial contribution.

2.6 There are over-subscription criteria which are applied where the number of applications for admission is greater than the PAN or the admissions number for the year group.

2.7 Children with Education Health Care Plans naming the academy must be admitted and will count towards that PAN if the information is available before the offer date.

2.8 As required by legislation, Children in Care or who were in public care and have since been adopted or fostered by relatives will be admitted as priority (Looked After Children and Previously Looked after Children).

3. Admissions arrangements

3.1 Normal admissions round

3.1.1 Most pupils/students join an academy in the Trust at the normal point of entry to the academy (i.e. Year 7 for secondary academies). Applications should be made in accordance with East Sussex Local Authority's coordinated admissions arrangements and should, preferably, be made via the relevant website – please see Section 10 for contact details

3.1.2 Further information about the admissions process, a link to the application form and the deadline dates for entry are available on the academy's website.

3.1.3 The coordinated admissions arrangements are non-preferential: applicants can make up to three choices based on their preferences, and they are placed on the list of all the schools they name as a preference, but no reference is made to whether each school is their first, second or third choice.

3.1.4 Each application is validated, and oversubscription criteria are assigned, before ranking the applications as per the Academy's oversubscription criteria.

3.1.5 The rankings are considered and agreed by the academy's Local Governing Body Admissions Sub-Committee prior to being returned to the Local Authority in accordance with the published deadlines. The Admissions Team then sort the data for all schools and generate a list of children who have been allocated a place at each academy.

3.2 In year admissions

3.2.1 The administration of in year admissions is carried out on behalf of the Trust by East Sussex Local Authority. Students and families wishing to apply for a place outside the normal admissions round should apply directly to East Sussex Local Authority and further information about how to do this is available on the academy's website.

3.2.2 The Local Authority Admissions Team then validates and (in instances where the number of applications for in year admission is greater than the number of places) assigns the oversubscription criteria for each application. The application is then considered by the Academy's Local Governing Body Admissions Sub Committee.

3.2.3 The applicant will then receive either written confirmation of an offer or will be notified that the admission is declined due to the prejudice to the efficient education of the pupils in the year group and the efficient use of resources at the academy.

3.3 Challenging Behaviour

3.3.1 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. 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.

3.3.2 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 the school.

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3.4 Fair Access Protocol

3.4.1 We participate in the East Sussex local authority 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.

3.5 children of UK service personnel and crown servants

3.5.1 Places for children of service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from abroad, will be allocated in advance of a family arriving in the area (as long as one is available) provided the application is accompanied by suitable proof of relocation such as an official Government letter issued by a Government department e.g. FCDO, UKVi, DIT.

4. Definitions and details

4.1 Requests for education outside of normal age group – acceleration, back-classing and continuation of a previously agreed arrangement.

(i) Teachers in all the trust academies are skilled at differentiating the curriculum to meet a diverse range of needs and it is the expectation that most children will be educated in their chronological year group. However, arrangements exist for parents to make exceptional requests for children who have already been in receipt of education to be educated outside of their normal age group.

(ii) Before making this type of request parents should consider carefully the best interests of the child and the long-term impact on their education and discuss the proposal with the principal.

(iii) Request for a child to repeat an academic year ie "back-classing" will usually be in circumstances such as when a child's education has been severely disrupted by a long-term absence through illness.

(iv) "Acceleration" – making a request to advance a year - is likely to be appropriate for a very small number of the pupils of exceptional ability.

(v) When a formal request is received, the principal will use the information provided by the parent/carer and their professional judgement to determine **the year group in the best interests of the child.** The principal may request additional information from the parent/career to aid the decision making. A decision to change a year group must consider the effective and efficient use of resources at the academy. There is no right of appeal for this type of decision.

(vi) Children joining a Trust academy, either as part of the co-ordinated transfer to secondary education or as an in-year admission who are already educated outside of their chronological age-group, should also discuss the application with the principal who will then decide on whether to continue the arrangement **in the best interests of the child.**

4.2 Looked after children

4.2.1 **Looked after children** are children who, at the time of making an application to an academy, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or

• Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

4.2.2 **Previously looked after children** are children who were looked after, including children who appear (to the Trust as the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England, 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 4

• Became subject to a special guardianship order

4.2.3 **Special Guardianship Order (SGO) or kinship Care Arrangements Order (CRO) -** Priority will be given in this category to children who live with somebody other than their birth or adopted parent or another person with parental responsibility under a SGO or kinship CRO. A copy of the Order will need to be provided as evidence of eligibility for priority in this category. For the avoidance of doubt, children in informal kinship care arrangements (i.e. those living with persons other than a birth or adoptive parent or other person with parental responsibility where there is no Child Arrangements Order in force will not meet the criteria for inclusion in this category.

4.3 Sibling

4.3.1 Children are 'siblings' if they are full, half, adoptive or foster brother or sister living in the same household.

4.4 Home address

4.4.1 Proof of residence will be required for all applications. The offer of a place may be withdrawn if proof of residency is not met.

4.4.2 Where a child lives part of the week with one parent and part with another member of the family the 'home address' will be the residence where the child spends at least three nights of the school week each week.

4.5 Children of staff

4.5.1 Applications for the children of staff must be submitted by the qualifying staff member. Applicants must also complete a Supplementary Information Form (annex 1), available from the academy website, and submit this online or to the academy office

4.5.2 Members of staff recruited to fill a vacant post for which there was a demonstrable skill shortage will be from the following groups

• Secondary level teachers of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)

• Leadership roles ie Principal, Vice Principal and Assistant Principal

5. Oversubscription Criteria

(i) Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admission number, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below. After the admission of students with Education Health Care Plans where the Academy is named on the plan, the criteria will be applied in the order in which they are set out below:

1. Looked after Children (children in public care) and Previously Looked After Children

2. Children who are subject to a Special Guardianship Order or kinship Child Arrangements Order who have not previously been in Local Authority Care. Evidence must be provided

3. Children of staff employed at the academy in either or both of the following circumstances: (a) Where the member of staff has been employed at the academy for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the academy is made (b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage

4. Children who will have a brother or sister attending the Academy at the time of admission (The term sibling means a full, step, half, adopted or foster brother or sister)

5. Distance measurement – priority will be given to those children who live closest to the academy. The Local Authority measures distance on behalf of the Trust. East Sussex use Ordnance Survey Data to calculate straight line distance between the main entrance to the academy and the child's home.

(ii) Tie breaker: If there are more children who qualify for a place than places available, places will be allocated to students living closest to the Academy (using the shortest distance from home to school

measured using a straight line).If, after all of the relevant criteria have been applied, two applicants cannot be separated for a final place, the Trust will use random allocation to determine the property for the remaining place.

6. Closing date for applications

(i) The closing date for applications is 31 October for secondary academies. Late applications (submitted by 1 February) will only be considered as if on time if there is a good reason which can be demonstrated by independent supporting evidence. Late applications without a good reason are ranked using the same oversubscription criteria but follow all those submitted on time.

7. Published Admissions Number (PAN)

(i) The PAN is the number of school places in the relevant age group (or the year group associated with the normal point of entry to the academy) i.e. Year 7 for secondary academies.

(ii) The PAN for The Mulberry Academy Hastings from September 2026 is 210

8. Waiting Lists

8.1 As required by the current School Admissions Code, a waiting list for unsuccessful applicants will be maintained. The Trust commissions the relevant Local Authority, on behalf of each academy in the Trust, to maintain and administer these lists.

8.2 Details of how a parent/carer may ask for his or her child's name to be placed on a waiting list for the relevant year group following an unsuccessful application are available from the Local Authority Admissions Team or on the Local Authority website.

The contact details are: East Sussex County Council - Transport and Admissions Team: CS.HastingsSt.Leonards@eastsussex.gov.uk 0300 330 9472 eastsussex.gov.uk

Waiting list information

8.3 Parents who appeal following an unsuccessful application will automatically be added to the waiting list.

8.4 A child's position on the waiting list will be determined in accordance with the academy's admissions oversubscription criteria. When the academy is able to offer a place without prejudicing the effective education of pupils or the effective use of resources at the academy, or for year groups with a PAN when a place becomes vacant, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria and not based on the date on which the application has been made. When a child is added to the waiting list, the list will be ranked again in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria. Please note that Looked After Children, Previously Looked After Children and those allocated a place at the academy in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol take precedence over those on the waiting list.

8.5 Where it is brought to the academy's attention that a child of compulsory school age is being kept out of school until an admission place arises at their preferred academy, the local authority will be informed via its 'Children Missing Education' procedures.

9. Appeals

9.1 If the Academy has more applications than places, parents whose child has not been allocated a place may appeal against the decision to an independent appeal panel. The grounds for appeal must be set out in writing. Details of how to appeal, and the associated deadlines, can be found on each academy's website.

10. Local Authority contact details

10.1 Admission round applications and enquiries (including requests for paper application forms)/requests for education outside normal age group:

East Sussex Admissions Service
https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schools/admissions/ Admissions and Transport Team

County Hall

St Anne's Crescent

Lewes East Sussex

BN7 1UE

0300 330 9472

admissions@eastsussex.gov.uk

10.2

Waiting list information East Sussex County Council - Transport and Admissions Team:

CS.HastingsSt.Leonards@eastsussex.gov.uk

0300 330 9472

eastsussex.gov.uk Waiting list information

Annex 1

The University of Brighton Academies Trust is the admissions authority for all academies in the Trust and the oversubscription criteria for each academy are published on the academy website. So that the application can be considered by the Local Governing Body Admissions Sub-Committee in the correct category, completion of this form is required for all applications made in the following category only:

Children of staff employed at the academy in either or both of the following circumstances:

(c) Where the member of staff has been employed at the academy for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the academy is made

(d) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

Please note:

- If this application form is not received by the academy by the application deadline, then it will not be possible to consider the application in the staff category, and an alternative applicable oversubscription criterion will be applied.
- This is **not** an application form. Parent/carers MUST complete the relevant Common Application Form application form and submit to the Local Authority.
- Application for admission in the staff category must be submitted by the qualifying staff member with parental responsibility.

Academy applied to	

Childs details	
Forenames in full	
Surname	
Date of birth	
Home Address	

Parent/carer details	
Forenames in full	
Surname	
Name of academy you work at	

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Date employment commenced	

Were you recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage as defined in the admissions policy?	
Telephone number	
Email address	
Home address	

Declaration
• I confirm that I have completed and submitted the Common Application Form to the Local Authority • I confirm that I have read and understood the Trust Admissions policy and that all information on this information form is truthful and accurate.
Name:
Signature:
Date:

Please submit this form to the academy by post or email:

The Mulberry Academy

Rye Road

Hastings

TN35 5DN

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https://www.mulberryhastings.org

Admission arrangements – 2026-27

Summary of change

- Change from Trust-wide policy to policy for individual academy Summary of change
- • Change from catchment area to distance only criteria
- • New oversubscription criterion added for children subject to SGO or kinship CRO

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