STOUR VALE ACADEMY TRUST

DETERMINED ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS (NORMAL AGE OF ENTRY – SEPTEMBER 2026)

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Contents

1. Introduction 3
2. Aims 3
3. Legislation and statutory requirements 3
4. Definitions 3
5. How to apply 4
6. Allocation of places 4
7. Challenging behaviour 5
8. Fair Access Protocol 5
9. In-year admissions 5
10. Appeals 6
11. Monitoring arrangements 6
12. Detailed admission arrangements for member schools within Stour Vale Academy Trust 6
    Northfield Road Primary School 7

1. Introduction

This policy relates to applications for admission to member schools within Stour Vale Academy Trust (the admission authority).

Stour Vale Academy Trust is responsible for determining the member schools' admission arrangements (including this policy) and deciding who can be allocated a place in accordance with this policy.

We have an inclusive education policy which aims to maximise the opportunity to meet parental preference. We do not support the use of selective admission policies based on aptitude or academic achievement.

Our admission arrangements ensure that the process is fair and equitable for all.

2. Aims

Through our admission policy we aim to:

1. explain how to apply for a place at a member school within Stour Vale Academy Trust;
2. set out the arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply to member schools within Stour Vale Academy Trust; and
3. explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place.

3. Legislation and statutory requirements

Our admission policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- School Admissions Code 2021
- School Admission Appeals Code

As an academy trust, our member schools are required by our funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in:

- School Standards and Framework Act 1998

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

Children will not be discriminated against as laid down by the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976 as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Equality Act 2010.

4. Definitions

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

Looked after children: children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are looked after by a local authority in accordance with section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989 and who are:

- in the care of a local authority, or
- being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions.

Previously looked after children: 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 (an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under section 8 of the Children Act 1989 as amended by section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014), or
- became subject to a special guardianship order (an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians)).

This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

Compulsory school age: a child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

5. How to apply

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the 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 three state-funded schools, in rank order.

Supplementary application forms are not required for admission to member schools within Stour Vale Academy Trust.

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

Please note that pupils already attending a nursery at a member school will not transfer automatically into the main school. A separate application must be made for a place in Reception.

6. Allocation of places

Please refer to the detailed admission arrangements for each member school within Stour Vale for the following information:

- Admission number
- Oversubscription criteria
- Tie-break

- Children below compulsory school age
- Requests for admission outside the normal age group
- Late applications
- Waiting lists
- Repeat applications
- Changing or adding new preferences
- Twins and multiple births

7. Challenging behaviour

We will not refuse to admit to any member school within Stour Vale 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 is not 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 Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs) where the school is named in the EHCP as the most appropriate to meet the child's individual needs.

8. Fair Access Protocol

Member schools within Stour Vale participate in the relevant local authority's 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.

9. In-year admissions

Parents can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose EHCPs name the school as the most appropriate to meet their individual needs, will be admitted.

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

Applications for in-year admissions are coordinated by the local authority in whose area the member school is located; please see their websites for details of the relevant scheme:

Dudley Local Authority: https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/learning-and-school/school-information/school-admissions/changing-schools

Sandwell Local Authority: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/school-admissions/applying-transfer-child-mid-year

Worcestershire Local Authority: https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/worcestershire-education-and-early-years-services/support-services/improving-schools-and-settings/school-admissions

10. Appeals

If your child's application for a place at the school is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information about how to appeal against the decision and about the process for hearing appeals.

The appeals timetable for each member school within Stour Vale will be published on their website by 28 February 2026.

11. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Trust Board every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number or to comply with mandatory requirements), the Trust Board will publicly consult on these changes. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on admission arrangements for each member school within Stour Vale at least once every seven years.

12. Detailed admission arrangements for member schools within Stour Vale Academy Trust

The detailed admission arrangements for each member school within Stour Vale are shown below.

NORTHFIELD ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Northfield Road, Netherton, DY2 9ER

Local Authority: Dudley MBC

Admission number

The published admission number (PAN) for Reception at Northfield Road Primary School is **60**. The school will accordingly admit up to 60 pupils in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are received. All applicants will be admitted if 60 or fewer apply.

Application process

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the application form provided by your home local authority (even if this is not Dudley).

Dudley Local Authority coordinates applications for admission to Northfield Road Primary School. Please refer to their website for more information: https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/learning-and-school/school-information/school-admissions/

Oversubscription criteria

If the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) (previously known as Statement of Educational Needs) where the school is named in the Plan, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in order:

a) **First priority for admission** shall be given to relevant looked after children or children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangement order, or special guardianship order.

b) **Second priority for admission** shall be given to children with a 'serious and ongoing medical condition' where Northfield Road Primary School is the most appropriate school to meet the condition. *Parents must provide supportive information from their child's Medical Consultant at the time of application in order to be considered under this criteria. This supportive information should include information about the needs of the child and should detail the difficulties the child would experience if they attended another school. Parents should also indicate why Northfield Road Primary School is the most appropriate to meet their child's medical condition rather than any other school. We will not seek to obtain medical evidence on behalf of parents.*

c) **Third priority for admission** shall be given to children who have a brother/sister, half-brother/sister (where the children share one common parent), or stepbrother/stepsister, living at the same address and who will still be attending Northfield Road Primary School in the academic year 2026/2027.

d) Any places that remain available once the above applicants have been admitted will be filled according to those children who live closest to the school, determined by a straight-line measurement in metres, from the home address to the main entrance of Northfield Road Primary School.

NB. In accordance with legislation, a child with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) will be offered a place at the school named in the EHCP as the most appropriate to meet the child's individual needs. This may reduce the number of places available for children who do not have an EHCP.

Tie-break

Random allocation will be used as a tie-break in category (d) above to decide who has the highest priority for admission if the distance between two children's homes and the school is the same. Applicants' names will be drawn by lots. The process will be independently verified.

Children below compulsory school age

Where children below compulsory school age are offered a place at the school, 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 for which the offer was made.

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.

Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. Parents should make their application, including a supporting statement setting out the reasons why they believe their child should be taught outside their chronological age group. Dudley Local Authority will consult us regarding the decision.

In addition, the parents of summer born children (children born between 1 April and 31 August) may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to Reception rather than Year 1. These parents will need to make an application alongside children applying at the normal age with a supporting statement explaining why they believe it is in the child's best interest to be admitted outside their normal age. This should include information such as professional evidence and why an

exception should be made in the case of the child. Dudley Local Authority will consult us regarding the decision as to whether this is an appropriate course of action, taking into account the circumstances of the case and the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- the 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; and
- the headteacher's 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 here, including the oversubscription criteria. 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 at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

Late applications

Preferences that are received after the closing date for receipt of applications will only be considered after applications that were received within the deadline have been dealt with.

Only in exceptional circumstances will a late application be considered alongside those applications that were made within the deadline. Supportive documentary evidence must be provided by the parent/carer at the time of application.

Waiting lists

If Northfield Road Primary School is oversubscribed and children have been refused admission because other children have a higher priority for admission under the published oversubscription criteria, then those applicants who are unsuccessful will be asked if they wish to be placed on a waiting list.

Children on the waiting list will be ranked in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria and the list will operate from the point of allocation until 31 August 2027. After this point the waiting list will no longer be in operation and places that become available will be allocated on a first come first served basis. If more than one application is received at the same time, the oversubscription criteria, as detailed above, will be used to determine which applicant will have the place.

Inclusion on Northfield Road Primary School's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available there.

A child's position on a waiting list is not fixed and is subject to change during the year i.e. they can go up or down the list, depending on other children's applications.

Places that become available between the point of allocation and 31 August 2027 will be offered to children according to their ranking on this list i.e. those ranked highest will be offered first.

Repeat applications

It is not Northfield Road Primary School's policy to consider repeat applications in the same academic year unless there have been significant and material changes in the circumstances of the applicant.

Changing or adding new preferences

You can make changes to your application right up to the closing date. In order to do this, you will need to contact the School Admission Service at **admissions.cs@dudley.gov.uk**. The Admissions Service will only accept changes from the person who made the application.

Twins and multiple births

Special conditions will apply in the event that one child from a set of twins or triplets does not gain admission to the preferred school through the oversubscription criteria. Northfield Road Primary School will exceed the admission number for the school to prevent separation of twins/triplets.

Definitions used in admissions administration

1. Brother and Sister

The definition of brother or sister also relates to adopted or fostered children living at the same home address.

2. Home address

The home address is considered to be the child's (along with their parents') genuine principal place of residence at the time of the allocation of places i.e. where they are normally and regularly living. If a child is resident with friends or relatives (for reasons other than guardianship), the friend's or relative's address will not be considered for allocation purposes.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with both parents for part of the school week, the home address will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the school week. Parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes. At least one item of proof must demonstrate where the child lives. It is expected that parents will agree on school places before an application is made, and it may be necessary to request evidence from the parents to confirm that this is the case. Northfield Road Primary School is not in a position to

intervene in disputes between parents over school applications and will request that these are resolved privately.