

HEATHFIELD COMMUNITY SCHOOL



ADMISSIONS POLICY

(see link on school website for County Council Admissions Policy)

Version	Review Cycle	Published on Website	Author(s) of Current Policy	Start Date of Current Policy	Review Date
1	Annually	Yes	Pastoral	Sept 2022	Sept 2024

Ratification

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Chair of Governors			
Head Teacher			

Document Version Control		
Date	Version	Details of Policy Updates

School Admission Arrangements for 2020/21 Academic Year

Part 1 - General Information

1.1 About our School

Somerset Local Authority (LA) is the admission authority and is responsible for all admission decisions.

Heathfield Community School is an Ofsted-rated 'outstanding' school with a record of high attainment and achievement that has been sustained over a number of years. We foster a supportive family atmosphere and a strong sense of belonging for every student.

We have a Performing Arts Specialism. We have an outstanding reputation in all the Arts both locally and nationally. We are proud of our exceptionally talented teachers and support staff. Our aim is for every child to achieve, participate and belong.

We are currently full in every Year Group and as such will be unable to offer a place without consultation and agreement with the LA Admissions Team. If a refusal is made the LA will provide details of how to appeal against the decision (Part 5).

However, an in-year application should be sent into the school in the first instance and the application process will then be managed accordingly. These admission arrangements should be read in conjunction with the LA's published coordinated admissions scheme which is available at www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions

1.2 Contact Details

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School Road
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Telephone: 01823 412396

Fax: 01823 413119

E-Mail: office@heathfieldcommunityschool.co.uk

Website: www.heathfieldcommunityschool.com

Local Authority (Somerset County Council) website : www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions

1.3 The Published Admission Number (PAN) - Academic Year 2022/23

The school admissions figures will be held at the numbers below with the exception of those applying from rural catchment :

Year 7 - 270.

Year 8 - 270.

Year 9 - 270.

Year 10 - 270.

Year 11 - 260

1.4 Relevant documents (Please refer to this information before applying for a school place)

School Admission arrangements must comply with the School Admission Code and School Admission Appeals Code published by The Department for Education www.education.gov.uk

Important documents published by Local Authorities are also relevant to some areas of school admissions procedure. Applicants are strongly advised to contact their 'home' Local Authority (the Local Authority are in which your child lives) or access the Local Authority website and ensure that they read and understand this information before proceeding with an application for a school place.

Related of particular importance are :

- The Composite Prospectus 'Secondary Guide for Parents'.
- The Local Authority Fair Access Protocol.
- The Local Authority School Transport Policy.
- Free School Meal Entitlement.
- The Local Authority Appeals process.

Part 2

2.1 Starting at a secondary or upper school in 2023

Applications must be submitted to the home LA. If this is Somerset applications can be made online at www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions. Paper applications are available to download from the Somerset County Council website at www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions, or upon request by telephoning Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224.

Any supporting information must be received by the exemption period deadline using the appropriate Supplementary Information Form (SIF) where relevant.

Applications must be received by 31 October 2022, otherwise the application will be recorded as late. Late applications will be considered after those received on time. Please see the Somerset LA coordinated scheme for full details.

Outcomes for on time applications will be sent out by email (for online applicants) or second class post sent out on 1 March 2023 (or next working day).

2.2 Admissions during the academic year (in year admissions)

In year applications must be submitted directly to the school using the LA in-year application form (hard copy only).

Batches of applications will be processed with a 4pm daily working day deadline for receipt of applications. If more applications are received than there are places available, the over-subscription criteria will be applied. A decision will be notified in writing by second class post to the applicant within ten school days.

Proof of address may be required to be submitted with the application. This will be either for formal 'exchange of contracts' letter from the solicitor for a house purchase, a recent utility bill or the signing of a minimum of a six month tenancy agreement. The LA reserve the right to seek further documentary evidence to support a claim of residence.

Part 3 – Important Information

3.1 Waiting Lists

The LA will maintain a waiting list for every over-subscribed Community and Voluntary Controlled school. Children will automatically be placed on the waiting list if a place is refused. The waiting list for the year of entry will operate until the end of the first term after the beginning of the school year. If parent/carers wish for their child to remain on the waiting list after this time a request must be made in writing to the Local Authority by the start of the Spring Term.

The waiting list for all other year groups will operate until the end of the academic year for which the place has been requested.

A child's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. The waiting list will be reordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever anyone is added to or leaves the waiting list. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure the LA are informed of any changes that may affect their child's position on the waiting list.

3.2 Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may request that their child is admitted to a year group outside their normal age range, for instance where the child is gifted or talented or where a child has suffered from particular social or medical issues impacting his or her schooling.

When such a request is made, the Local Authority will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the views of the headteacher and any supporting evidence provided by the parent. If a request is refused, the child will still be considered for admission to their normal age group.

The parent is required to make an on-time application for the child's normal age group (if relevant) but can submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time. The LA will ensure the parent is aware of whether the request for admission out of age group has been agreed before National Offer Day and the reason for any refusal.

Requests for admission out of the normal year group will be considered alongside other applications made at the same time. An application from a child who would 'normally' be a Year 8 child for a Year 7 place will be considered alongside applications for Year 7.

If a request for delayed admission is agreed, the school place application may be withdrawn before a place is offered and a new school place application will need to be made as part of the normal admissions round the following year.

If a request for a child to transfer school a year early is agreed, the school place application will be processed and an outcome will be sent on the National Offer Day.

If a request for delayed admission is refused, the school place application will be processed and an outcome will be sent on the National Offer Day.

If a request for a child to transfer school a year early is refused, the school place application will not be processed and a new school place application will need to be made as part of the normal admissions round the following year.

There is no right of appeal against the decision not to allow your child to be admitted outside of their normal age group.

One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parents, therefore, should consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all their preference schools, rather than just their first preference schools.

For further information and important points to consider please visit:

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/education-learning-and-schools/choosing-a-school/starting-or-transferring-school-early-or-late/>

3.3 Children from Overseas

The Local Authority will treat applications for children coming from overseas in accordance with European Union law or Home Office rules for non-European Economic Area nationals.

The Local Authority will process applications for children who are citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA) and for UK citizens living abroad. If proof of the Somerset address is not available, the application will be considered on the current address. The only exceptions are children of UK service personnel and other crown servants (including Diplomats) returning to the UK with a confirmed posting to the area (see 6.13 Children of UK service personnel).

The Local Authority will not allocate a place to any non EEA citizen moving into Somerset from outside the UK prior to their arrival in the country. In such cases the Local Authority will require copies of the passports, appropriately endorsed visas and proof of residency – see home address definition. Applicants who are citizens of countries from outside the EEA should first check that their visas will not be invalidated by taking up a maintained school or academy place before applying. If in doubt, parents should contact the Home Office.

3.4 Over Subscription Criteria

When the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with the Education, Health and Care plan naming the school, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in priority order :

1. Children Looked After – Children who are in the care of a Local Authority or have previously been and are now formally adopted or subject to a residence/child arrangement order or special guardianship order (see important note 1).
2. Children identified with a sensory, physical or medical disability (High Needs Pupils) where a multi-agency professional team has identified the school as the nearest suitable school (see important note 2).
3. Children living in the catchment area with a sibling attending Heathfield School at the time of admission and who live at the same address.
- 4a. Children of staff employed by Heathfield School for at least two years prior to the application closing date.
- 4b. Children of staff employed by Heathfield School – staff recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage (see important note 3).
- 5a. Children living in the rural catchment area (see important note 4).
- 5b. Children living in the catchment area.
6. Children living outside the designated catchment area with a sibling attending Heathfield School at the time of admission and who live at the same address.
7. Children not satisfying a higher criterion.

Important notes

1. A “Looked After Child” means any child who is in the care of a local authority in accordance with Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989. A child who was “a previously Looked After Child” means a child who after being Looked After became a subject to an Adoption Order under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, a Residence Order under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 or Special Guardianship Order under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989.
2. Criterion 2 enables schools to plan with SEN Officers for the school entry of children with physical, medical and sensory impairments. This includes children that are in receipt of Early Years School Action Plus funding at level 3 and/or where significant capital works (e.g. accessible toilets, changing space, access to classrooms) are required.
3. Criterion 4 – The Head Teacher or Governing Body of the relevant school will be asked to verify point b.

4. 'Rural catchment' is defined as living in the catchment area of a school where there is no alternative school within the statutory walking distance of the home address.

Tie-break

If in categories 1-6 above a tie-break is necessary to determine which child is admitted, the child living closest to the school will be given priority for admission. Distance is measured in a straight line by a Geographical information system (GIS) method from the geocoded point of the school site to the geocoded point of the pupil's home.

Random allocation by drawing lots supervised by someone independent of the school, will be used as a tie-break in categories 1-10 above to decide who has highest priority for admission if in two or more cases the children's homes are equidistant from the school.

However, if children of multiple births (twins and triplets) are tied for the final place, those siblings will be admitted over PAN.

3.5 Siblings

For the purpose of school admissions, a sibling is defined as children living at the same permanent address.

Please see the information on shared residency arrangements which will apply if necessary in order to determine the sibling's permanent home address.

Siblings in Post 16 education are not included as siblings for the purposes of admissions.

3.6 Parent

A 'parent' in education law includes natural parents, whether they are married or not and a person other than the natural parent(s) who has parental responsibility or care of a child or young person. Having 'care' of a child or young person means that person who looks after the child and with whom the child lives, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child.

3.7 Home Address

The home address is very important as school places are allocated on the basis of the permanent home address of each child. A child's home address is considered to be where the child spends the majority of their time with parents or carers. (Please see shared care arrangements information below).

Documentary evidence of home ownership or suitable rental agreement may be required, together with proof of permanent residence at the property concerned. Places cannot be allocated on the basis of an intended future address, unless the house move can be confirmed through the formal 'exchange of contracts' or the signing of a minimum of a six month formal tenancy agreement from a letting agency. Please note private letting agreements may not be accepted as proof of residence. An address change due to a move to live with other family members or friends will not be considered until the move has taken place and suitable proof of residency has been obtained. Proof that a move from the previous address has taken place may also be required e.g. proof of exchange of contracts, a tenancy agreement showing the

end date of the tenancy or a notice to quit from the landlord or repossession notice. The LA reserve the right to seek further documentary evidence to support a claim of residence which could include contacting the estate agent, solicitor, landlord or relevant professional. A representative of the LA may carry out a home visit(s) without prior notice to verify a pupil's home address.

An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place. Fraudulent claims relating to the home address of a particular child may lead to the withdrawal of any offer of a school place. Proof of address will not be required for Traveller families where the address is confirmed by the Traveller Education Service. A foster carer will not be required to supply proof of address for a child placed with them by a Local Authority.

The Local Authority and/or Admissions Authority must be notified of any change of address during the admissions procedure.

3.8 Shared Care Arrangements

Where shared care arrangements are in place and parents/carers of the child submit two separate applications for different schools, the LA will only accept one application which will be the application made by the parent/carer that lives at the same permanent home address as the child. Where there are exceptional grounds such as on-going court proceedings for example, these applications will be considered on a case by case basis.

Where it is necessary to establish the permanent home address for the child parent/carers will be asked to write to the LA stating the number of days each week the child spends with them. The LA may also ask for evidence of which parent/carer was in receipt of child benefit at the point of application. If the parent/carer is not in receipt of child benefit, the LA will ask for proof of the child's home address as held by the doctor's surgery at the point of application. If the child's home address cannot be verified the LA reserve the right to request further documentary evidence to support any claim of permanent home address.

3.9 Withdrawing an Allocated Place

The LA will consider withdrawing the offer of a place at a Community or Voluntary Controlled School if :

- The place has been offered on the basis of an application which is subsequently found to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading.
- If a school is offered on the basis of an address that is subsequently found to be different from a child's permanent home address then that place is liable to be withdrawn.
- The parent/carer has not responded to the offer within a reasonable period of time and a further opportunity has been given for the parent to respond within 10 days having explained that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not.

3.10 Children of UK Service Personnel

The Admissions Authority endeavour to ensure that their admission arrangements support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children.

In-year applications are usually considered for admission up to a maximum of half a term in advance of the place being taken up. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area and Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area where a place can be made available up to a year in advance of being required providing the appropriate documentation is provided as proof of posting (an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting.)

Usually, an in-year place may be allocated prior to actual residency, only on receipt of exchange of contracts or a formal signed rental agreement. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area and Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area. This means that, providing the application is accompanied by an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting, the admissions authority will process the application on that address. If proof of a home address is not available at this stage the admissions authority will accept a unit postal address or quartering area address. An offer of service family accommodation from the housing department is not sufficient to be accepted as proof of address, the signed tenancy agreement would be required.

If the parent/carer is moving to the area as a result of leaving the armed forces then no special consideration will be given to the application under the grounds of the application being made by a service family.

For further information please refer to the DfE explanatory note on Admission of Children of Crown Servants;

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/461481/Admission_of_children_of_crown_servants.pdf

3.11 Catchment Map

Details of the catchment area can be found at <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/education-and-families/school-catchment/>.