

Rothersthorpe CE Primary School



Everyone is valued as an individual
'Love your neighbour, as yourself (Mark 12:31)

Admissions Policy

2023

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1. Aims

Rothersthorpe CE Primary School is part of the Innovate Multi Academy Trust. This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at the school
- Set out the school's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

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

- School Admissions Code
- School Admission Appeals Code

As an academy, the school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. 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.

3. How to apply for a place in the Normal Admissions Round

The normal admissions round is the period during which parents/carers can apply for state-funded school places in Reception using the Common Application Form (online) provided by their home local authority.

Parents/carers should use the application form provided by their home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools are in). This form is used to express a preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order.

Parents/carers will receive an offer for a school place directly from their local authority on National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day).

To apply for a place through West Northamptonshire Council, please visit <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/school-admissions> and complete the online application form.

4. Allocation of places

4.1 Admission number

The school has an agreed Published Admission Number (PAN) of 15 children for entry in Reception.

Places will be allocated to children who have an Education, Health Care (EHC) Plan that names the school as offering the appropriate provision first.

4.2 Over-subscription admission criteria

When there are more applications for places than there are places available, priority will be given in the following order:

1. Looked after and all previously looked after children.
2. Children who live in the defined area – Rothersthorpe Village

3. Children with a brother or sister continuing at the school at the time of admission of the child.
4. Other children.

4.3 Allocation to PAN

If the admission number is exceeded within criterion (2) priority will be given to those who live furthest from the nearest alternative school. If the admission number is exceeded within any other criterion priority will be given to those who live closest to the school. Distances are measured on a straight line basis from the address point of the child's home address to the address point of the school using West Northamptonshire Council's Geographical Information System.

In the case of twins or other siblings from a multiple birth, if the last child to be admitted is from a multiple birth group, the other children in the group will also be offered places, even if it means exceeding the Published Admission number.

In the case of siblings (see definition above) in the same year group, where there is only one place remaining which is to be offered to one sibling, the other too will be offered a place.

4.4 Tie-breaker

If the admissions number is exceeded within criterion (2), priority will be given to those who live furthest from the nearest alternative school. If the admission number is exceeded within any other criterion, priority will be given to those who live closest to the school.

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5. Definitions

Looked after children

Looked after children are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, or were 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
- Became subject to a special guardianship order

This includes children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted

Siblings

A sibling is defined as a child's brother or sister. A sibling must be living at the same permanent address and as part of the same family unit (one or two parents plus children) to qualify under this criterion.

For School Admissions purposes, the term sibling includes:

- half-brothers and half-sisters

- step-brothers and step-sisters
- adopted children
- children in foster care
- children living in the same family unit, even if they are not biological brothers and sisters – for example when the parents are not married/in a civil relationship.

Cousins are not regarded as siblings.

Defined Area (also known as linked or designated area/village)

The defined area for the school is: Rothersthorpe Village

Home Address (Child's)

The child's home address is defined as the address at which the child normally resides with their parent/carer at the time of application. If a child lives with parents who are separated, the home address will be treated as the place where the child sleeps for most of the school week (i.e. Sunday night – Thursday night inclusive).

If the child spends equal amounts of time at two addresses, the parents must agree which address they wish to be the child's main address before we can process the application.

Documentary evidence of ownership or rental agreement may be required together with proof of actual permanent residence at the property concerned.

6. Fraudulent or Misleading Applications

The admissions authority (or the LA processing an application on behalf of the admission authority) has the right to investigate any concerns we may have about an application and to withdraw the offer of a place if it is considered that there is evidence that an applicant has made a fraudulent claim or provided misleading information.

7. Conflicting Applications

If we receive more than one application for the same child (made by separated parents), where the home address and/or the preferences do not match, neither application will be processed until such time that the parents can agree on both the address and the preferences. If no agreement can be made, parents are recommended to seek legal advice. If an agreement cannot be reached before the closing date, this may affect the chances of your child being allocated a place at the school.

8. Late Applications

Late applications are any common application forms (for the normal point of entry) received by the Local Authority after its statutory closing date of 15 January (5pm). Late applicants will not receive an offer of a school place by the local authority on National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day).

Late applications will be processed in the subsequent rounds of allocations between May and July (for more details, refer to the local authority's composite prospectus on the WNC website).

9. 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/carers may defer their child's entry to the allocated 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, when the place will cease to be available for the child.

Where parents/carers wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

10. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

10.1 Requests for admission outside the normal age group (Summer Born)

All children are entitled to a full time school place in the September following their 4th birthday and most parents are happy for their child to start school at this point. However, parents/carers of summer born children (those born between 1 April and 31 August) who do not reach compulsory school age until a full year after they would normally start school, may wish to delay their child's start to school until the September following the child's 5th birthday.

If parents wish to delay their summer born child's start at school until the September after their 5th birthday, there are 2 options:

1. Parents can make an in-year application for a place for the September following their child's 5th birthday. The child would normally start school in Year 1 (their correct chronological age group) as other children in the child's age group already attending school will be moving from Reception to Year 1 at this point. It is important to remember that some schools are likely to be full in Year 1 and unable to offer a place;

2. If parents do not want their child to miss their Reception year, they may request that children are admitted out of their normal age group i.e. into Reception instead of Year 1. Please note, this is a 'request' and parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group. The school's admission authority is responsible for making the decision about which year group a child should be admitted to.

Parents/carers of summer born children who could start school in September 2023, but wish to delay their child's school start and apply for a Reception place to start in September 2024, should still make their application for a Reception place for their child's normal year of entry before the primary application deadline of 5 p.m. on 15 January 2023. If a delay is agreed, this application can be withdrawn.

Parents/carers should also, if possible, make their request for admission out of the normal age group to their preferred schools by the same date - 15 January 2023 (5 p.m.). This is to enable sufficient time for requests to be processed prior to National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day). Requests will however still be considered after this date.

Parents/carers requests to apply for a Reception place at Rothersthorpe CE Primary School for the September following their child's 5th birthday, should be made in writing (email should be sufficient) to the school in the first instance. In their request, parents/carers should provide some information about their child to explain why they think that their child should be educated out of their normal age group. It is important for parents/carers to provide any additional evidence to support their request as this information will help the admission authority to make their decision e.g. parents/carers may be able to provide a report from the child's Early Years

setting or evidence from a health or social care professional.

The request will then be considered by our admission authority who have to decide if they will allow the request. The decision must be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. The School Admissions Code (2021) requires admission authorities to consider a number of factors:

- the parent's/carer's views;
- information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
- where relevant, the child's medical history and the views of a medical professional;
- whether the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely;
- the Headteacher/Head of School's views.

What happens next?

Parents/carers will be informed of the admission authority's decision on which year group the child should be admitted to when they start school (i.e. Reception or Year 1) and will set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

What happens if the request is approved?

If the request to be admitted outside the normal age group is approved by the admission authority of the school, parents/carers will need to forward this approval to their local authority's School Admissions team to ensure that an application will be accepted in the normal admission round for the September following the child's 5th birthday. Parent(s)/carer(s) will then need to make an application for a place in Reception for the normal round of admissions in the following academic year.

Please note – this does not mean that a child has been, or will be, offered a place in the Reception year at their chosen school. If, in the following normal admissions round, the school is oversubscribed, all applications (including delayed applications) for the school will be ranked in accordance with the school's oversubscription admission criteria and places offered up to the school's published admission number.

What happens if the request is refused?

If the request to be admitted outside normal age group is rejected by the admission authority of the school, parents/carers have to decide whether to accept a Reception place in the normal year of entry, delay their child's start until the September after their 5th birthday and apply for a Year 1 place or make an application to other schools to see if they will accept a delayed start in Reception.

Parents/carers who are unhappy with the admission authority's decision to refuse their child a place out of their normal age group, should complain directly to the admission authority. Parents/carers whose requests for delayed entry into Reception are refused, do not have the right to appeal this decision. They have the right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied but this right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group.

10.2 Requests for admission outside the normal age group (Not Summer Born)

Parents/carers may seek a place for their child out of their normal age group. They must put their request in writing to the school.

The Admission Authority of the school will consider the request and make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of:

- the parent's/carer's views;

- information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
- where relevant, the child's medical history and the views of a medical professional;
- whether the child has previously been educated out of their normal age group;
- whether the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely;
- the views of the Headteacher of the school concerned.

The Admission Authority of the school MUST set out clearly for parents the reasons for their decision about the year group a child should be admitted to.

Parents/carers 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.

11. In-year Admissions

An in-year admission refers to an application for a school place made during the school year or an application for admission to a school made at the start of the school year for any year group other than the normal year of entry.

If the school's published admission number has been reached in a child's year group, we will not be able to offer a place at the school. Parents/carers can ask for their child's name to be added to the waiting lists (see below for more information).

Applications for in-year admissions should be made online to the local authority on WNC's website.

12. Waiting Lists

Waiting lists are held for all year groups by the Local Authority. Following an unsuccessful application, parents/carers can request that their child's name be placed on the waiting list. Waiting lists will be cleared at the end of each school term. If you wish your child's name to remain on the waiting list for the remainder of the academic year, you will need to inform the School Admissions team, in writing, by the start of each subsequent term (ie: during the Christmas and Easter breaks) to renew your interest. When a place becomes available it will be filled by one of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 4.2 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest and children being allocated places under the Fair Access Protocol will be given priority. A new application will be required for a new academic year.

13. Appeals

If a parent/carer's application for a place at the school is unsuccessful, they will be informed why admission was refused and have the right of appeal against the decision not to offer their child a place at the school.

Parents/carers wishing to appeal should complete the online appeal form on the WNC website. Please visit <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/school-admissions/appeal-school-place> for more information and to complete the form.

If parents/carers wish to submit supporting evidence after lodging their appeal, it should be e-mailed to appealsteam.ncc@westnorthants.gov.uk within 10 working days of the submission

of the appeal. Appeals must be lodged in writing, giving the reasons for appeal, by 5pm on the date given in the offer letter. Appeals received after this date will still be heard, but there is no guarantee they will be heard before the end of the school year in which the application is made. NB: For appeals concerning places not offered during the normal admissions round there is no deadline.

15. Review

The Governing Body reviews this policy every year and determines the admission arrangements by 28th February. The governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the Governing Body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

When changes are proposed to the school's admission arrangements, the governing body/academy trust must consult on their admission arrangements (including any supplementary information form) that will apply for admission applications the following school year. Where the admission arrangements have not changed from the previous year there is no requirement to consult, subject to the requirement that admission authorities must consult on their admission arrangements at least once every 7 years, even if there have been no changes during that period.

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the governors.