Admissions Policy

Senior Leader responsible	Headteacher
Date approved by LGB	14/10/2026
Next review date	Annual (Autumn Term)

1. Aims

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 2021
- 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. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry (i.e., for September of Year 7), using the common application form provided by the local authority.

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, 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 have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

4. How to apply

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the online application form provided by Norfolk County Council's School Admissions service. You can use this form to express your preference for up to 4 state-funded schools, in rank order.

For further information, please visit https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/38148/School-admissions

To check your catchment, you can use the website at https://maps.norfolk.gov.uk/schoolcatchments/schools.aspx Please note that the town of Dereham has a shared catchment for Dereham Neatherd High School and Northgate High School. The catchment and feeder schools shown on the Norfolk County Council website are notional.

The principal areas served by the school are Dereham, Garvestone, Shipdham, Mattishall, Toftwood, Hockering, Yaxham and Scarning. However, we regularly take pupils from elsewhere in the local area and from further afield.

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

5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- 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
- 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 in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed later in this policy document. 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.

6. Allocation of places

6.1 Admission number

The school has an agreed admission number of **175** pupils for entry in year 7 in September 2027.

6.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose education, health and care plan (EHCP) names the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

If the school receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in order, until all places are filled.

1. Looked-after children and all previously looked-after children who are due to transfer.

2. Children who have a sibling on roll at the school at the time of proposed admission.

3. Children of staff in the school. To qualify for this criterion, the member of staff concerned must have been in post at the school for 2 or more years at the date of application. The only exception to this rule will be where the school can demonstrate a recruitment issue for that post.

4. Children who are due to transfer and live within the school's designated catchment area as defined by Norfolk County Council.

5. Children who are due to transfer who live outside the area served by the school and attend a direct feeder school (see below) at the opening date of the admission round.

   Direct feeder schools:
   - Garvestone Primary School
   - Hockering CE Primary Academy
   - Matishall Primary School
   - Thomas Bullock Church of England Primary Academy
   - Toftwood Community Junior School
   - Yaxham CE Primary Academy

6. Children who are due to transfer and live outside the area served by the school.

If all children within any of the above rules cannot be offered a place, the highest priority will be given to children living nearest to the school within that rule. To determine who lives nearest, distance will be measured on a straight line 'as the crow flies' basis, using Ordnance Survey data.

If, following the application of admission rules and distance, two applicants cannot be separated for a final place at a school, the school will use random allocation to determine the priority for the remaining place. This process will be independently verified.

6.3 Notes:

- **Note 1:** Siblings: Children will be deemed to be siblings if they are half, full or adoptive brother or sister or if they are children of the same household with the same parents. They must be on the roll of the school at the time of application and expected to still be on roll at the point of entry.

- **Note 2:** Multiple Births: Where an application is being submitted for a child who has a sibling (or siblings) in the same year group it will be the policy of the Local Academy Committee not to offer a place to one child without the sibling(s) of the same age group. In these circumstances, governors may determine to exceed the number of places temporarily on the understanding that this will not create a new admission number and, as soon as children leave, they will revert to the published number.

- **Note 3:** Split residence: In determining the home residence, where children live part of the week with one parent and part with another, Governors will need to make a judgment about where the majority of time is spent. In making this judgment they will have specific regard to where children live during the week rather than at weekends, any legal agreement concerning care and residence and which parent is in receipt of the child benefit.

6.4 Operation of a waiting list

Within the coordinated admission arrangements of the local authority, where the school receives more applications for admissions than the agreed admission number a list will operate. This will be maintained by the local authority until 31st December and it will be open to any parent/carer to ask for their child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application. At the point where the local authority ceases to maintain its own list the school will adopt a list of its own.

Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out above. Where places become vacant, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

7. 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 EHCP names the school will be admitted.

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

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by one of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in the previous section of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Applications for in-year admissions are coordinated by Norfolk County Council's School Admissions service. Please visit https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/movingschools

Parents will be notified of the outcome of their in-year application in writing within 15 school days.

8. Challenging behaviour

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.

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.

9. Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Norfolk'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.

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 the process for hearing appeals.

If you wish to appeal, you must set out the grounds for your appeal in writing and send it to the following address:

Headteacher's PA
Dereham Neatherd High School
Norwich Road
Dereham
Norfolk
NR20 3AX

11. Arrangements for Appeal Panels

An Appeal Panel, which will be convened by the Local Academy Committee, will be independent of the school. The panel will not consider more than one application from a parent each year unless there is a material change of circumstances.

The arrangements for appeals will be in line with the School Admission Appeals Code published by the Department for Education (DfE) which means that parents will have 20 school days from national offer day in which to submit an appeal. Appeal hearings will be held within 40 school days of the deadline for the lodging of appeals. Parents will receive at least 10 school days' notice of their appeal hearing appointment. The determination of the appeal panel will be made in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code and is binding on all parties.

The school will provide guidance for parents about how the appeals process will work and will provide parents with a named contact who can answer any enquiries they may have about the process.

12. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Local Academy Committee every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the Local Academy Committee will publicly consult on these changes. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years. The next such consultation is scheduled to take place in autumn 2032/spring 2033 in readiness for the 2034/35 admissions round.