

WITHAM ST HUGHS ACADEMY

ADMISSIONS POLICY for 2024/2025

Introduction

Arrangements for applications for places in Reception at Witham St Hughs Academy will be made in accordance with Lincolnshire County Council's co-ordinated admission arrangements; parents resident in Lincolnshire can apply online at www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/schooladmissions, parents resident in other areas must apply through their home local authority. Witham St Hughs Academy will use the Lincolnshire County Council's timetable published online for these applications and the relevant Local Authority will make the offers of places on their behalf as required by the School Admissions Code.

For an in-year place, an application can be made on the midyear application form. Applications are usually made through the child's home local authority. Lincolnshire residents should contact Lincolnshire County Council for an application. Applications can be made directly through Lincolnshire by out of county residents if their home local authorities do not co-ordinate this process. The governors will accept an in-year admission if there are places.

The published admission number for Reception is 60.

Witham St Hughs Academy provides for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Where we have offered a child a place at our school:

- a) that child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday;
- b) the child's parents can defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made, whichever is the sooner;
- c) 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.

In accordance with legislation the allocation of places for children with the following will take place first; Education, Health and Care Plan (Children and Families Act 2014) where the school is named. Remaining places will be allocated in accordance with this policy.

For entry into Reception in September we will allocate places to parents who return an application before we consider any parent who has not returned one.

If there are more applications than places then the oversubscription criteria will be used to decide who should be offered the place. The oversubscription criteria are listed in order. Words marked with a number, for example 1, 2 and 3 are explained separately in the definition and notes section.

Oversubscription Criteria

- A. The child is in the care of the local authority (LAC) or had previously been in care (PLAC). (1)
- B. There is a brother or sister (2) on roll at the academy at the time of application (3)
- C. A child whose parent is a current member of staff and 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 **or** a member of staff who has been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage.
- D. The academy is the nearest state-funded school to the home address, as defined in note (4)
- E. The distance from the home to the academy, priority will be given to the child living closest the academy, as defined in note (5).

If the distance criterion is not sufficient to distinguish between two or more applicants for the last remaining place, then a lottery will be conducted. This will be drawn by an independent person not employed by the academy or working in the Children's Services Directorate of the Local Authority.

Definitions and Notes

1. A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school. This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders). Child arrangements orders are defined in s.8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by s.12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

2. Brother or Sister:

A full brother or sister, whether or not resident in the same household. Another child normally living for the majority of term time in the same household, where an adult in the household has parental responsibility as defined by the Children Act 1989. Or any child in the household where an adult in the household is defined as a parent for the purposes of Section 576 of the Education Act 1996.

Twins and other siblings from a multiple birth:

In these cases, all the children will be considered together as one application. If one or more can be admitted within the published admission number the school will go above its admission number as necessary to admit all the children, unless this would make the class too large. The government's school admissions code makes an exception to the infant class limit in this situation.

Brothers and sisters in the same year group:

Where there is only one place available in the school the children will be considered together as one application. The school will go above its admission number as necessary to admit all the children, except in cases where infant class regulations prevent this from happening. If this happens we can only legally offer one place because the government's school admissions code makes no exception to the infant class size limit for siblings in the same year group. We will only be able to offer the parent a place for one child.

3. Year 6 Pupils:

For the purposes of applying the oversubscription criteria, pupils in year 6 at the time of application will be considered as siblings in school. The reason for this is to acknowledge the relationship which has already been established between the academy and families.

4. The nearest state-funded school is found by measuring the distance from the home address to all schools admitting children in the relevant year group.

5. The nearest address to the academy is found by measuring the distance from the home address to the academy in a straight line. Straight-line distance as calculated electronically to three figures after the decimal point (eg 1.543 miles) by Lincolnshire County Council school admissions team from the Post Office Address Point of the home to the Post Office Address Point of the school.

By home we mean the address where the child lives for the majority of the school term time with a parent as defined in section 576 of the Education Act 1996 who has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act 1989.

Where a child lives during the school week with more than one parent at different addresses, the home address for the purposes of school admissions will be the one where the child spends the majority of term time. If a parent can show that their child spends an equal amount of time at both addresses during school term time, they can choose which address to use on the application.

If a parent has more than one home, we will take as the home address the address where the parent and child normally live for the majority of the school term time.

6. Reserve List

For admission into the intake year the admission authority for Witham St Hughs Academy will keep a waiting list which we call a reserve list. If we refuse a place at our school your child is automatically placed on the reserve list, unless you have been offered a higher preference school. This list is kept in the order of the oversubscription criteria, as required by the school admissions code. Children can move up and down the list depending on where the other children are ranked against the oversubscription criteria. The admission authority must not take account of the time you have been on the list when allocating places. For the intake year the list is held by the Local Authority School Admissions Team until the end of August. After this the school admissions code requires that schools keep the reserve list until the end of the autumn term.

If you wish your child to join the academy in another year group and it is full, you can contact the academy and request to be added to the reserve list. This will be kept in the order of the oversubscription criteria. The time you have been on the list is not taken into account.

The reserve lists are cleared at the end of each academic year. If you would like your child to be placed on the reserve list for the following academic year please contact the academy.

7. Appeals

If the academy is unable to offer a child a place, there is a right to appeal. The procedures for appeals relating to admissions will be in accordance with all relevant legislation. They are independent and organised by the County Council Legal Services Section and entirely separate from the admission system. The decision of the independent appeal panel is binding on all parties.

Appeals can be made to: <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/school-admissions/appeal-school-place/2>

8. Fair Access

Local Authorities are required to have Fair Access Protocols in order to make sure that unplaced children who live in the home local authority, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. This includes admitting children above the published admissions number to schools that are already full. Students allocated under fair access protocols will take precedence over those on a waiting list. Witham St Hughs Academy will participate in Lincolnshire County Councils the fair access protocol.

9. Children of UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces)

In order to meet the government's military covenant aimed at helping families of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area, or crown servants returning to live in the area from overseas, the Governors have adopted the following arrangements.

- Process an application in advance of the family arriving in the area provided it is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address to use when considering the application against the school's oversubscription criteria.
- Accept a Unit postal address or quartering area address for admissions purposes for a service child.
- The Governors will not refuse a service child a place because the family does not currently live in the area.

This will be irrespective of the fact that the school has had appeals or appeals are scheduled.

It may be that the governors still cannot admit because of organisational or curriculum difficulties within the school.

The Governors will need the notice of posting or official government letter and posting address before considering an application under these arrangements.

10. Admission of children outside their 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 wishing to make these requests must contact their home local authority for guidance on the procedure to follow.

We are committed to making decisions 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 views;
- any available 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;
- any evidence that the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- the views of the head teacher

Parents interested in deferring admission or arranging part-time attendance must contact the school to discuss this.

11. Fraudulent or Misleading Applications

As an admission authority we have the right to investigate any concerns we may have about an application and to withdraw the offer of a place if we consider there is evidence that you have made a fraudulent claim or provided misleading information. For example, a false address was given which denied a place to a child with a stronger claim. We reserve the right to check any address and other information provided so we can apply the oversubscription criteria accurately and fairly.

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