

# **WITHAM ST HUGHS ACADEMY**

## **POLICY DOCUMENT:     ADMISSIONS POLICY for 2023/24**

### **Introduction**

Arrangements for applications for places in Reception and Y3 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](http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/schooladmissions), they can also apply by telephone, or ask for a paper application form, by telephoning 01522 782030. 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 (2021). In year admissions are dealt with in accordance with the in year section below.

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.

Please find below a link to determine your nearest school from your home address.

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/find-nearest-school>

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.

### **SEND / Pupils with an EHCP**

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 to the academy, as defined in note (5).

### **Tiebreaker**

The oversubscription criteria are listed in the order we apply them. If it is necessary to distinguish between more than one applicant in any criteria, the next criteria will be applied until the tie-breaker is used. Tie breaker: If two or more children are tied for the last place a lottery will be drawn by an independent person, not employed by the school or working in Children's Service Directorate at the local authority.

### **Definitions and Notes**

#### **A. Looked After Child**

**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. 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. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order). 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's Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders). Child arrangements orders are defined in s.8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 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).

#### **B. Siblings**

**2.** Brother or sister attending the school at the time of application, or who will be attending the school at the expected time of admission. In all cases both children must live at the same address. We include in this criterion:

- a brother or sister who shares the same biological parents
- a half-brother, half-sister, step-brother or step-sister
- a legally adopted child, a child legally adopted by a biological or step-parent.

#### **Twins/Multiple Birth Children**

Twins and other siblings from a multiple birth - If twins or multiple birth children are split by operation of the oversubscription criteria, the school will go above its published admission number to accommodate all children unless this would make the class too large and prejudice the education of the other children. **Multiple birth children are 'excepted pupils' to infant class limits if allocated in this way.** Brothers and sisters in the same year group - If brothers and sisters in the same year group are split by operation of the oversubscription criteria, the school will go above its published admission number to accommodate all children unless this would make the class too large and prejudice the education of the other children **or when this would breach infant class size limits.**

#### 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.

#### Year 6 Pupils:

**3.** 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.

#### C. Children of Staff

Children of staff applies in either or both of the following circumstances:

- a) where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made; and/or
- b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

#### Nearest School

**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.

We use the distance calculated in this way to apply the final oversubscription criterion.

#### Home Address

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.

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.

### **Reserve List**

6. 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 keeps this list until (December 31<sup>st</sup> of the admitting year/another time). This list is abolished at Witham St Hughs Academy and parents wishing to remain on this list must contact the school for more information.

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.

### **Right of Appeal**

7. In all cases where a place is refused at a school the applicant will be informed of their right of appeal to an independent panel. The decision of the independent panel is binding on all parties. Details of how to appeal a decision to refuse admission will be communicated to the applicant at the time of the refusal and will also be available on the Lincolnshire County Council website.

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

### **Fair Access**

8. 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.

### **Children of UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces)**

9. 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, intended 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 where the parent requests this
- The Governors will not refuse a service child a place solely because the family does not have an intended address or does not yet live in the area.

Evidence of an intended address will be required such as tenancy agreement, or mortgage statement. Please contact the school for more details.

For late coordinated applications and midyear applications supported by the appropriate military documentation, we will aim to remove any disadvantage to UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces). The governors will consider whether:

- An application from that address would normally succeed in an oversubscribed year
- There is any child on the reserve list with higher priority under the oversubscription criteria
- The prejudice from admitting an extra child would be excessive.

The governors have discretion to admit above the admission number in these circumstances if they wish but are not obliged to do so. If a place is refused, you will be informed of your right of appeal.

### **Admission of children outside their normal age group:**

**10.** 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. In addition, the parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that 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. Parents wishing to make these requests must contact their home local authority for guidance on the procedure to follow. Parents resident in Lincolnshire should call 01522 782030 or email [schooladmissions@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@lincolnshire.gov.uk) for advice on the procedure to follow. It is important for parents to note that they will have the opportunity and responsibility to provide whatever evidence they wish to support their request.

Witham St Hughs Academy will make 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.

### **Fraudulent or Misleading Applications**

**11.** As an admission authority we reserve the right to check any address and other information provided so we can apply the oversubscription criteria accurately and fairly. As an admission authority we have the right to investigate any concerns we may have about your 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 if a false address was given which denied a place to a child with a stronger claim. If a place is withdrawn, the application will be considered afresh and you will be advised of your right of appeal if a place is refused.

### **Withdrawing an Offer**

An offer of a place may be withdrawn in the following circumstances:

- It was made in error;
- It was made on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application (e.g. a false claim to residence in the catchment areas);
- A place offered at the relevant academy is not accepted within 14 days originally specified or after a repetition of the offer allowing a further 7 days for acceptance and specifying that the offer may be withdrawn if it is not accepted within that period.

Policy Last Reviewed: March 2022