Applecroft School



Determined Admission Arrangements for 2028-2029

Person Responsible:	Headteacher
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This policy has been written using guidance from Hertfordshire County Council and their model Attendance Arrangements guidance.

School Vision:
'To create a positive and inspiring community that nurtures each individual and empowers leaders for life'.

School Mission Statement:
'Nurturing Potential, Inspiring Minds, Changing Lives'.

School Values:

- Ambition and Leadership
- Kindness and Supportiveness
- Respect and Honesty
- Determination and Resilience.

The school's published admission number will be 60.
Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the governing boards of all maintained schools to admit a child with an EHC (Education, Health and Care) Plan that names the school.

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) process all applications and appeals on behalf of the Board of Trustees at Applecroft School.

Rule 1:
Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, including those 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 or became subject to a child arrangements order[1] or a special guardianship order[2].

Places are allocated to children in public care according to Chapter 7, Section 2 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

These children will be prioritised under rule 1.

Highest priority will also be given to children who were previously looked after, including those looked after outside England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangement order or a special guardianship order.

A "child looked after" 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 (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989)

All children adopted from care who are of compulsory school age are eligible for admission under rule 1.

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order, and the application would be prioritised under Rule 1.

Children who were not "looked after" **immediately** before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order, **will not** be prioritised under rule 1. Applications made for these children, with suitable supporting professional evidence, can be considered under rule 2.

[1]Child arrangements order
Under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders which settle the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

[2]Special guardianship order
Under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians.

Children previously looked after abroad and subsequently adopted will be prioritised under Rule 1 if the child's previously looked after status and adoption is confirmed by Hertfordshire's "Virtual School".

The child's previously looked after status will be decided in accordance with the definition outlined in The Children & Social Work Act 2017:

i. to have been in state care in a place outside England and Wales because he or she would not otherwise have been cared for adequately, and
ii. to have ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted.

A child is in "state care" if he or she is in the care of, or accommodated by:

1. (a) a public authority,
2. (b) a religious organisation, or
3. (c) any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

Rule 2:
Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school

Rule 2 applications will only be considered at the time of the initial application unless there has been a significant and exceptional change of circumstances within the family since the initial application was submitted.

All schools in Hertfordshire have experience in dealing with children with diverse social and medical needs. However, in a few very exceptional cases, there are reasons why a child has to go to one specific school.

Few applications under Rule 2 are agreed.

All applications are considered individually but a successful application should include the following:

a) Specific recent professional evidence that justifies why only one school can meet a child's individual needs, and/or

b) Professional evidence that outlines exceptional family circumstances making clear why only one school can meet the child's needs.

c) If the requested school is not the nearest school to the child's home address clear reasons why the nearest school is not appropriate.

d) For medical cases – a clear explanation of why the child's severity of illness or disability makes attendance at only a specific school essential.

Evidence should make clear why only one school is appropriate. A Rule 2 application will generally not be upheld in cases where more than one school could meet the child's need.

In exceptional cases relating to a disability, where more than one school in the county can meet the child's specific needs, a clear and compelling case can be made for the "nearest" school with the relevant facilities, environment or location. You must clearly explain why attendance at the "nearest" school with these facilities is essential.

Applications under Rule 2 can only be considered when supported by a recent letter from a professional involved with the child or family, for example a doctor, psychologist or police officer. The supporting evidence needs to demonstrate why only one named school can meet the social/medical needs of the child.

Applications for children who were not "looked after" immediately before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order may be made under this rule.

Further details on the Rule 2 process can be found in the Rule 2 protocol.

A panel of HCC officers will determine whether the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet the requirements for this rule.

Rule 3:
Children who have a sibling on the roll of the school at the time of application.

Definition of sibling
For applications to schools using Hertfordshire County Council's admission criteria, a sibling is defined as: the sister, brother, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent/carer or partner or a child looked after or previously looked after[1] and in every case living permanently[2] in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of this application.
A sibling must be on the roll of the named school at the time the younger child starts or have been offered and accepted a place.

If a place is obtained for an older child using fraudulent information, there will be no sibling connection available to subsequent children from that family.

[1] Children previously looked after are those children adopted or with a special guardianship order or child arrangements order. This definition was amended following a determination by the OSA in August 2014.

[2] A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.

In Year admissions: the sibling may be in the school's final year as long as they will still be in attendance at the time of admission.

Applecroft School will remain part of the County Council's coordinated 'In Year Admissions' scheme. The online application process and relevant forms can be accessed via *www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions* or parents can contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 for a paper application form. Parents/carers should return the application form direct to the County Council.

The county council will write to you with the outcome of your application and, if you have been unsuccessful, will include registration details to enable you to login and appeal online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals'.

Rule 4:
A member of staff is defined as a person who is directly employed by the Board of Trustees of Applecroft School and has a full time or part time permanent contract at the time of application. Priority will be given in the school's oversubscription criteria to children of staff 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 admissions to the school is made, and/or
b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage.

Please note: The staff member must be the child's legal parent (by blood, adoption or step-parent) and/or have been living at the same address (for a minimum of 4 nights a week) as the child for a minimum of two years.

Rule 5:
Children for whom it is their nearest school or academy. This includes all schools except those which allocate places on the basis of faith (membership or practice) before allocating on the basis of distance/location.

Rule 6:
Distance: Children who live nearest to the school.

If your child does not qualify under Rule 5, they will be considered under Rule 6.
Where the application of the above criteria results in a situation where there are more children with an equal right to admission to the school than the number of available places, the tie-break will be **distance from the school measured using the computerised 'straight line' mapping system operated by the LA.**

Hertfordshire County Council's 'straight line' distance measurement system is used for all home to school distance measurements. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

Where this distance measurement results in more than one child having an identical claim to the last available place as a result of living in flats, priority will be given to the lowest house number.

Applecroft School will use the same definitions and measuring system as outlined in Hertfordshire County Council's admissions literature, "Applying for a school place".

In Year Admissions:

The school will remain part of the County Council's coordinated 'In Year Admissions' scheme. The online application process and relevant forms can be accessed via:
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions

The county council will write to you with the outcome of your application and, if you have been unsuccessful, will include registration details to enable you to login and appeal online at:
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals

Continuing Interest (CI):

Continuing Interest (Waiting lists):
After places have been offered, Hertfordshire County Council will maintain a continuing interest (waiting) list for all community and voluntary controlled schools. A child's position on a CI list will be determined by the admission criteria outlined above and a child's place on the list can change as other children join or leave it. The county council will contact parents/carers if a vacancy becomes available and it can be offered to a child. Continuing interest lists will be maintained for every year group until the summer term (date to be specified and confirmed to parents at the time of allocation). To remain on the CI (waiting) list after this time, parents must confirm they are still interested in a place by completing an In Year application form.

Fair Access:

The school participates in the County Council's Fair Access protocol and will admit children under this protocol before children on continuing interest. Applecroft School will admit children over PAN if necessary.

Multiple Births:

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), as the admission authority will admit over the school's published admission number when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated a place at a school.

Home Address:

The address provided must be the child's current permanent address at the time of application.

- "At the time of application, means the closing date for applications.
- "Permanent" means that the child has lived at that address for at least a year.

A signed tenancy agreement showing that your tenancy began on or before 1 December 2027. Where the tenancy arrangement does not include a fixed term, or where additional evidence is required to confirm that the address is the child's normal place of residence, we may request further proof of address and verify this through the Shared Anti-Fraud Service where necessary.

The application can only be processed using one address. If a child lives at more than one address (for example due to a separation) the address used will be the one where the child lives for the majority of the school week. If a child lives at two addresses equally, parents/carers should make a single joint application naming one address.

If the child's living arrangements change after you apply and they now spend the majority of the school week living at a different address, you must provide evidence of the new permanent address.

We may ask for proof of your address at any time. If, following an initial investigation and/or any investigation by the Shared Anti-Fraud Service, the county council concludes that a fraudulent address has been used, correspondence confirming this decision will be sent to the applicant. We will explain the decision-making process and the action that will be taken with the application. We will also confirm which address will be used as the child's permanent home address for admission allocation purposes.

If we receive more than one application with different address details and parents don't agree, parents/carers should provide court documentation to evidence the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes. If two applications are received, with different addresses, neither will be processed until the address issue is reconciled.

If two different applications are received for the same child from the same address but contain different preferences, parents/carers will be invited to submit a joint application or provide court documentation to evidence the preferences that should be used for the admission process. Until the preference issue is reconciled neither application will be processed. If duplicate applications are made to different LAs for the same child, those LAs will liaise and share information. The child's home LA will determine if the application will be processed.

For the transfer application rounds, if the initial differing applications (one or both) were received "on-time", an amended joint application will also be considered "on-time" if received before the "late deadline". If the amended joint application is received after the late date, it will be treated as "late". The late deadline for the 2027/28 transfer application process is 1 December 2027 for secondary and upper applications and 1 February 2028 for primary, junior and middle applications. If these dates change, amendments will be published on the HCC admissions web pages at the start of the 2028/29 application process in September 2027.

Home to school distance measurement for purposes of admissions:

A 'straight line' distance measurement is used in all home to school distance measurements for schools in Hertfordshire. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

Definition of "nearest school" for primary/junior/middle admissions:

The definition of "nearest school" includes all schools and academies (regardless of status) unless that school or academy prioritises applications and allocates places on the basis of faith.

Applications from children* from overseas:

All children of compulsory school age (5 to 16 years) in England have a right of access to education. However, where a child is in England for a short period only, for example less than half a term, it may be reasonable to refuse admission to a school.

An application for a school place will only be accepted for such children currently overseas if, for In Year applications, proof is provided that the child will be resident in Hertfordshire within two weeks. In Year allocations are made on the assumption that the child will accept the school place and be on roll within that timescale.

For the Primary and Secondary transfer processes, applications will not normally be accepted from, nor places allocated to, an overseas address. The exception to this (for both In Year and transfer processes) is for children of UK service personnel and crown servants (and from military families who

are residents of countries with a Memorandum of Understanding with the UK). In these cases, HCC will allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a HCC Unit postal address or quartering area address, for consideration of the application against oversubscription criteria

Applications will also be considered, and places offered in advance for these families, if the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date but does not provide a quartering or unit address because the family will be residing in private accommodation. In these cases, if the family does not already have a permanent private address in Hertfordshire, the military base or alternative "work" address in Hertfordshire will be used for allocation purposes. If the family already has an established alternative private address, that address will be used for admission purposes.

HCC will also consider accepting applications from children* whose family can evidence intent to return to and/or permanently reside in Hertfordshire prior to the start of the new academic year. These applications, if accepted, will be processed from the overseas address until sufficient evidence is received to show the child is permanently resident in Hertfordshire. Evidence must be submitted at the time of application.

Evidence submitted after the date for late applications cannot be taken into account before National Allocation Day. Decisions on these applications will be made by a panel of senior officers and communicated with parents within 6 weeks of the closing date for applications.

If an applicant owns a property in Hertfordshire but is not living in it, perhaps because they are working abroad at the time of application, the Hertfordshire address will not be accepted for the purposes of admission until the child is resident at that address.

Other children, than those mentioned above, from overseas do not generally have automatic right of entry to the UK. An application for a school place will not therefore be accepted until they are permanently resident in Hertfordshire. Proof of residency such as an endorsed passport or entry visa will be required with the application, in addition to proof of Hertfordshire address, for example a council tax bill or 12-month rental agreement.

*Children who hold full British Citizen passports (not British Dependent Territories or British Overseas passports) or have a UK passport describing them as a British citizen or British subject with the right of abode normally have unrestricted entry to the UK.

Age of Admission and Deferral of Places:

Hertfordshire County Council's policy is that children born on and between 1 September 2023 and 31 August 2024* would normally commence primary school in Reception in the academic year beginning in September 2028. All Hertfordshire infant, first and primary schools provide for the full-time admission of all children offered a place in the Reception year group from the September following their fourth birthday. If a parent wants a full-time place for their child from September (at the school at which a place has been offered) then they are entitled to that full-time place.

Parents can defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the same academic year or until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age. Summer born children are only able to "defer" entry to Reception class until the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made.

Where parents wish, children can attend part-time until they reach compulsory school age. Any parents wishing to take up a part-time place or deferred entry should contact the trustees of Applecroft School.

***Summer born children (1st April – 31st August) – Entry to Reception**
Legally, a child does not have to start school until the start of the term following their fifth birthday. Children born between 1 April 2024 and 31 August 2024 are categorised as "summer born" and if parents/carers do not believe that their summer born child is ready to join Reception in 2028 they should contact the Headteacher, for guidance before making an application.

Summer born applications that are delayed for a year (for entry in September 2029) will be processed in exactly the same way as all other reception applications received at that time; there is no guarantee that a place will be offered at a child's preferred school.

If parents wish to delay their application for a Reception place they are advised to discuss their child's needs/development with their current early years or nursery provider. If parents wish their child to remain in their existing nursery school or class for a further year (rather than moving into the Reception year group) they must let their current school know before the end of the Spring term in 2028 (before the Easter break).

Children Out of Year Group (except applications for reception from summer born):
Hertfordshire County Council's policy is for children to be educated within their correct chronological year group, with the curriculum differentiated as necessary to meet the needs of individual children. This is in line with DfE guidance which states that "in general, children should be educated in their normal age group".

If parents/carers believe their child(ren) should be educated in a different year group they should, at the time of application, submit supporting evidence from relevant professionals working with the child and family stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age-appropriate cohort. DfE guidance makes clear that "it is reasonable for admission authorities to expect parents to provide them with information in support of their request – since without it they are unlikely to be able to make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case".

Hertfordshire County Council will decide whether the application will be accepted on the basis of the information submitted. Decisions are made based upon the circumstances of each case including the view of parents/carers, the relevant Headteacher(s), the child's social, academic and emotional development and whether the child has been previously educated out of year group. There is no guarantee that an application will be accepted on this basis. If the application is not accepted this does not constitute a refusal of a place and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal. Similarly, there is no right of appeal for a place in a specific year group at a school. The internal management and organisation of a school, including the placement of pupils in classes, is a matter for the Headteacher and senior leadership of individual schools.

Appeals:
Parents wishing to appeal who applied through Hertfordshire's online system should log in to their online application and click on the link "register an appeal". Out of county residents and paper applicants should call the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request their registration details and log into www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals and click on the link 'log into the appeals system'.

Nursery Provision:
Applecroft School has a Nursery school too.

The admission arrangements detailed in this document do not apply for those being admitted into any

nursery or pre-school provision. The responsibility for admission into nursery provision lies with the Board of Trustees of the school which offers such provision and a separate 'Admission arrangements for Applecroft Nursery' document is available on the school website.

Parents/carers of children who are admitted to a nursery provision at a school must apply in the normal way for a place at the school if they want their child to transfer to the reception class. **Attendance at the Applecroft Nursery DOES NOT guarantee admission to the school.**