



PYRAMID
SCHOOLS TRUST

Working in partnership, so future generations achieve, belong and contribute

Admissions Policy

2027 - 2028

Edition 5: 01/04/2026

Document Control		
Edition	Issued	Changes from previous
1	25/10/2020	None – new policy. Approved by the Board of Trustees
2	28/03/2022	- Amendment to age of admission for Westoning Lower School. - Amendment to oversubscription criteria. Amendment to definition of a Previously Looked After Child. Approved by the Board of Trustees.
3	21/02/2023	None – renewal. Approved by Board of Trustees
4	6/12/2023	None - renewal Approved by Board of Trustees
4	3/12/2024	- Addition of Parish of Hexton to Ramsey Manor Lower School catchment - Addition that Westoning Nursery children do not automatically get a place in the school - Addition of Harlington Lower and Sundon Lower schools Approved by the Board of Trustee
5	18/11/2025	- Harlington Upper PAN to reduce from 270 to 240 - aligns with CBC pupil place planning numbers. - Inclusion of new schools transferred into PST-Beecroft Academy and Brooklands Middle School - Oversubscription change at Beecroft to prioritise children of staff children and then all children with siblings in the school. Remove reference to living in the catchment area and replace it with nearest to school. - Removal of very exceptional medical grounds criterion - Removal of reference 3.48. National funding changes for EYS make this section redundant. - Children of Staff criterion (3.17) amended to be compliant with School Admissions code. - Removal of Criterion 5 - Brooklands

Review Cycle: Annually

Review Date: November 2026

Statement of intent

At The Pyramid Schools Trust (PST), we welcome all pupils, and places at the schools in the Trust are offered in an open and fair way. Our admissions process is delivered in line with the Equality Act 2010, the School Admissions Code, the School Admission Appeals Code, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

The number of places available is called the 'agreed admissions number'. Our published admissions numbers (PAN) for each school are:

Harlington Upper School	240
Arnold Academy	180
Brooklands Middle School	150
Parkfields Middle School	113
Beecroft Academy	60
Harlington Lower School	30
Ramsey Manor Lower School	60
Sundon Lower School	15
Westoning Lower School	30

The Pyramid Schools Trust is the admission authority for each school, and the Local Authority coordinates the admission arrangements for each school.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- DfE 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE 'School Admission Appeals Code'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust policies:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- SEND Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. The admission authority is responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with the relevant legislation and guidance when carrying out the overall admission of pupils into the Trust schools.
- Outlining the schools' admissions arrangements and publishing them on the Trust and school websites.
- Clearly communicating any reasons for rejecting the admission of a pupil, as well as the parent's right to appeal and the appeal process.
- Implementing any advice or recommendations given by the Schools Adjudicator without undue delay.
- Determining the admission arrangements on an annual basis and publicly consulting stakeholders on any proposed changes to the admission arrangements.
- Setting clear, fair and effective oversubscription criteria which do not discriminate against any pupil.
- Communicating oversubscription criteria clearly to parents.
- Notifying the LA of any in-year admissions and their outcomes.

2.2. The Schools Adjudicator is responsible for:

- Acting in line with the relevant legislation and guidance pertaining to admissions.
- Receiving concerns and objections regarding the admission of pupils and making recommendations to the admission authority as a result of these concerns and objections.
- Approving variations to determined admissions arrangements where there has been a major change in circumstances or law.

3. Admissions

Determining a PAN

3.1. The PAN reflects the maximum number of pupils the school can reasonably accommodate in each year group based on a comprehensive review of the school's physical capacity (including classroom sizes and facilities) and the overall demand for places within the local area. This ensures that the determined PAN supports effective resource management and the delivery of high-quality education.

3.2. The PAN for new pupils at each school is as follows:

School	Initial Year Group	PAN
Harlington Upper	9	240
Harlington Upper	12	150
Arnold Academy	5	180
Brooklands Middle	5	150
Parkfields Middle	5	113
Beecroft Academy	Reception	60
Harlington Lower	Reception	30
Ramsey Manor Lower	Reception	60
Sundon Lower	Reception	15
Westoning Lower	Reception	30

3.3. The admission authority will notify the LA of their intention to increase any school's PAN and reference the changes on the Trust and school's website.

3.4. If the admission authority can accept more pupils than the PAN, it will notify the LA in good time so that the LA can deliver their coordination responsibilities effectively.

Oversubscription criteria

3.5. In the event of there being an oversubscription of applicants to the school, the following oversubscription criteria for each relevant age group will be applied:

Ramsey Manor Lower School

Children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan naming the school will be admitted before the following oversubscription criteria applies:

1. All looked after or previously looked after children, including those 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.
2. Children of staff at the school (see 3.17)
3. Children living in catchment area with siblings at the school
4. Children living in catchment area
5. Children living in the Parish of Hexton
6. Other siblings
7. Any other children

Harlington, Sundon and Westoning Lower Schools

Children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan naming the school will be admitted before the following oversubscription criteria applies:

1. All looked after or previously looked after children, including those 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.
2. Children living in catchment area with siblings at the school
3. Children living in catchment area
4. Children of staff at the school (see 3.17)
5. Other siblings
6. Any other children

Arnold Academy and Parkfields Middle School

Children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan naming the school will be admitted before the following oversubscription criteria applies:

1. All looked after or previously looked after children, including those 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.
2. Children of staff at the school (see 3.17)
3. Children living in catchment area with siblings at the school (priority given to those currently attending feeder PST schools, followed by those attending Harlington cluster feeder schools)
4. Children living in catchment area (priority given to those currently attending feeder PST schools, followed by those attending Harlington cluster feeder schools)
5. Other siblings (priority given to those currently attending feeder PST schools, followed by those attending Harlington cluster feeder schools)
6. Children attending PST lower schools
7. Children attending Harlington cluster feeder schools within the Arnold or Parkfields pyramid
8. Any other children

PST Feeder Schools:

Harlington, Ramsey, Sundon and Westoning Lower Schools

Harlington Cluster Feeder Schools:

Toddington St George Cof E School, Pulloxhill and Greenfield Academy, Eversholt Lower Academy, Silsoe VC Lower School, Harlington and Sundon Academy, Chalton Lower School.

PST Lower Schools:

Harlington, Ramsey, Sundon and Westoning Lower Schools

The Parkfields Pyramid:

Parkfields Middle, Chalton Lower, Toddington St Georges, Eversholt Lower and Harlington Lower

The Arnold Pyramid:

Arnold Academy, Ramsey Manor Lower, Westoning Lower, Silsoe Lower, Greenfield and Pulloxhill Lovers, Sundon Lower

Harlington Upper School

Children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan naming the school will be admitted before the following oversubscription criteria applies:

1. All looked after or previously looked after children, including those 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.
2. Children of staff at the school (see 3.17)
3. Children living in catchment area with siblings at the school (priority given to those currently attending feeder PST schools)
4. Children living in catchment area (priority given to those currently attending feeder PST schools)
5. Other siblings (priority given to those currently attending feeder PST schools)
6. Children attending PST feeder middle schools
7. Children attending Robert Bloomfield Middle School
8. Any other children

PST Feeder Schools: Arnold Academy and Parkfields Middle School. Being listed as a feeder school does not guarantee a place at Harlington Upper School. Where applications exceed PAN of 240, oversubscription criteria and distance measurements will be applied.

Beecroft Academy

Children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan naming the school will be admitted before the following oversubscription criteria applies:

1. All looked after or previously looked after children, including those 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.
2. Children of staff at the school (see 3.17)
3. Children with siblings at the school who will still be attending at the proposed date of admission
4. Children living closest to the school measured on straight line distance

Brooklands Middle School

Children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan naming the school will be admitted before the following oversubscription criteria applies:

1. All looked after or previously looked after children, including those 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.
2. Pupils with siblings at the school who will still be attending at the proposed date of admission
3. Other pupils living in catchment area
4. Children of staff at the school (see 3.17)

5. Any other children

3.6 Pupils who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are required to be admitted to the school which is named on their plan, even if the school is full. Pupils identified for admission through the Fair Access Protocol will also be admitted even if the school is full.

3.7. The admissions criteria will be applied separately and sequentially until all places are allocated. If places cannot be allocated to all applicants for the school, then the tiebreaker of straight-line distance will be used in each criterion where required to determine the allocation of places.

The distance the pupil lives from the school is measured in a straight line, using the Local Authority's measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving higher priority. The Local Authority will measure the distance from the address point of the pupil's home to a point on the school site agreed with the governing body of the school, which is known as the designated measuring point. In the event of (a) two or more children living at the same address point (e.g. children resident in a block of flats) or (b) two addresses measuring the same distance from the school, the ultimate tiebreaker will be random selection, using the Synergy Admissions database to allocate the place.

3.8. When formulating their admission arrangements, the admission authority will not carry out the following:

- Place any conditions on the consideration of any application other than those in the oversubscription criteria published in their admission arrangements
- Take into account any previous schools attended, unless it is a feeder school
- Give priority to children whose parents rank preferred schools in their application
- Give priority to children based on any practical or financial support their parents give to the school or associated parties (including any affiliated religious organisation)
- Give priority to children according to the occupational, marital, financial or educational status of parents applying – apart from where these factors determine a child's pupil premium eligibility, and for children whose parents work at school
- Take account of reports from previous schools about children's past behaviour, attendance, attitude or achievement, or that of any other children in the family
- Discriminate against any protected characteristic
- Give priority based on a child's or their parents' past or present hobbies or activities
- Name fee-paying independent schools as feeder schools
- Interview children or parents
- Request financial contributions as part of the admissions process

Catchment areas

3.9. Details of the catchment area schools for addresses in Central Bedfordshire can be found at [Central Bedfordshire School Admissions](#)

3.10. The point within the school grounds from which a school will measure any distance or radii is the entrance to the school reception.

3.11. The Trust schools will accept pupils from outside the catchment area, oversubscription criteria will apply where applicable.

Home address

3.12. A child's home address will be regarded as the address of the parent/carer with parental responsibility with whom the child normally lives. This will not usually include grandparents, aunts or uncles. Where a child spends time with parents/carers at more than one address, the address used to allocate a school place will be the one at which the child is ordinarily resident and where the child spends the majority of the school week (Monday to Friday) including nights. If there is any query on the home address, this will be checked against original official documentation, e.g. council tax bill, a recent utility bill, a rental agreement, child benefit annual statement or family tax credit information.

Looked after and previously looked after children

3.13. A 'looked after' child is a child who is a) in the care of the local authority, or b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

3.14. A 'previously looked after' child is one who immediately after being 'looked after' became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order, or regarded as having been in a state care in a place outside of England, if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

Siblings

3.15. For the purpose of this policy, "sibling" is defined as any brother or sister related by blood or marriage and any fostered or adopted siblings. In every case, the child should be living at the same address.

3.16. Where oversubscribed, the Trust will give priority to children whose siblings are currently at the relevant school.

Children of Staff (PST employees)

3.17. Priority will be given to children of staff employed at the specific school applied for, in either of the following circumstances:

- a) The member of staff has been employed at that school for two or more years at the time of application; or
- b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a post at that school for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage.

For the purpose of this criterion, "staff" means all permanent employees of the school or the Pyramid Schools Trust (PST) whose duties are based at the school applied for.

The staff member must be the child's biological or adoptive parent or have legal parental responsibility for the child and the child must have lived at the same address as the parent employed by the school for at least one year at the time of application.

Equal opportunities

3.19. The Trust will not establish admissions criteria that exclude individuals with a particular protected characteristic.

3.20. The admissions criteria will not exclude a greater proportion of pupils with particular protected characteristics, unless the Trust can justify how this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

3.21. The admissions criteria will not discriminate against disabled applicants, unless the Trust can justify how this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Open evenings

3.22. Each school will offer open events and school visits to all potential applicants, irrespective of any protected characteristics. Where necessary, the school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants or disabled parents.

Consultation and determination

3.23. The admission authority will consult on any proposed changes to the admissions arrangements.

3.24. Consultation will last for a minimum of six weeks and will take place between 1 October and 31 January in the determination year.

3.25. The admission authority will consult on admissions arrangements at least once every seven years, even if no changes have been made in that time.

3.26. The admission authority will consult with the following:

- Parents of all pupils
- Stakeholders
- Other admission authorities within the relevant area
- The local governors boards of the schools and the LA

3.27. The admission authority will publish a copy of the full proposed admission arrangements and the contact details of the individual responsible for admissions liaison on the Trust website.

3.28. A copy of the proposed admission arrangements will be made available upon request.

3.29. Admission arrangements will be determined by 28 February in the determination year on an annual basis, even when no changes to the arrangements have been made.

3.30. Finalised admission arrangements will be published on the Trust and individual schools' websites.

3.31. A copy of the finalised admission arrangements will be sent to the LA for entry by 15 March in the determination year.

3.32. Any objections to the admission arrangements will be directed to the Adjudicator by 15 May in the determination year.



Applications and offers

3.33. Parents will be provided with a common application form (CAF) where they will note their three preferred schools, along with a brief explanation, in rank order – the schools do not have to be located in the LA area where the parents live.

3.34. Parents will provide LAs with the following information within the CAF:

- Their name and their child's name and date of birth
- Theirs and their child's address and proof of residence

3.35. The CAF will be submitted to the parents' LA – this can be submitted online.

3.36. Parents are not guaranteed to have their preferences met.

3.37. The admission authority will request supplementary information for the purpose of processing applications where necessary.

3.38. The admission authority will not request any of the following:

- Any personal details, including information on criminal convictions or financial status
- The first language of the parent or child
- Any parental agreement to follow the ethos of the school in a practical way
- For the child to complete any part of the form or for both parents to provide signatures

3.39. Once a place has been offered, the admission authority may ask for the child's short birth certificate as proof of birth date.

3.40. For PLAC and LAC, the admission authority will request a copy of the adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order, and a letter from the LA confirming that the child was looked after immediately prior to the order being made.

Sixth Form

3.41. Applications to the sixth form at Harlington Upper School can be made using the CAF; however, pupils already on roll who are transferring into Year 12 are not obliged to use it.

3.42. The entry requirements for the sixth form are the same for all pupils, irrelevant of their previous school, without reference to ability or aptitude. However, acceptance on to individual courses of study will be dependant on students meeting specific course entry requirements, as outlined in the Sixth Form Prospectus, and on the viability of the course.

3.43. Where oversubscribed, priority will be given to LAC and PLAC who meet the academic criteria, followed by students in catchment and then students with siblings at the school. Where a tie break is necessary, this will follow the same criteria as for all other school admissions, as detailed in 3.7 above.

Westoning Lower School Nursery

3.44. Applications to Westoning Nursery can be made to the school at any time, and application forms will be held in the Nursery until the child is eligible to start (when the child

is around 2 years, 9 months of age). On acceptance of a place, parents are required to complete a set of admissions forms.

3.45. Criteria for admission to the Nursery are as follows:

- Looked after children, or children who were previously looked after
- 3 year olds receiving nursery education funding in catchment
- 2 year olds receiving nursery education funding in catchment
- 3 year olds in catchment
- 2 year olds in catchment
- 3 year olds out of catchment
- 2 year olds out of catchment

3.46. A successful application for admission to Westoning Nursery does not guarantee a place in the main school. Parents/carers must apply for a Reception place in accordance with the rest of this policy.

Sundon Lower School Nursery

3.46. A successful application for admission to Sundon Nursery does not guarantee a place in the main school. Parents/carers must apply for a Reception place in accordance with the rest of this policy.

3.47. Admission to Sundon Lower School Nursery Unit is operated by the Harlington and Sundon Lower Schools. An application form may be obtained from the school office and it should be completed and returned to the school no later than the last day of March prior to the year of admission. Admission may be at the beginning of any term subject to place availability.

3.49 Inclusion Statement

As an inclusive school, children who experience difficulties accessing the school and curriculum will be treated as fairly as other applications for admissions.

3.50. Allocation of Places

Where the number of requests for places exceeds the Admission Number, the places will be allocated (in the rank order shown) to determine how the places will be allocated:

- All "looked after" children or children who were previously 'looked after' (see definition)
- Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school (see definition)
- Other children living in the catchment area
- Other children with siblings at the school (see definition)
- Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address
- Within each of these criteria the oldest children will be given priority.

Overriding priority will be given by the Academy Trust to the admission of children who have an

- Education, Health Care Plan (EHC) that names the school.
- Offer of places

3.51. All offers for places at Harlington Lower School, Ramsey Manor Lower School, Sundon Lower school, Westoning Lower School and Beecroft Academy will be made on National Offer Day, i.e. 16 April or the next working day.

3.52. All offers for places at Harlington Upper School, Arnold Academy, Parkfields Middle School and Brooklands Middle School will be made on National Offer Day, i.e. 1 March or the next working day.

3.53. An offer will only be withdrawn if it has been made in error, a parent has not responded within 20 working days, or if the offer was made via a fraudulent or misleading application.

3.54. If any application is found to be fraudulent after a child has started at the school in the first term of the new academic year, the school may withdraw the place. If the fraudulent application is found after this time, the pupil will not be removed.

3.55. The Local Authority will maintain a waiting list for oversubscribed schools, with the exception of the Arnold Academy and Brooklands School which maintain their own lists. Pupils on the waiting list will be prioritised according to the Trust's admissions criteria and not on the basis of the date their application was received or their name was added to the list. If a place becomes available, the local authority or school will contact the parent/carer of the child at the top of the list. Waiting lists for the normal year of entry will be maintained for the academic year.

Out of year group admissions

3.56. The admission authority will make clear in the admissions arrangements the process for requesting admission outside of the normal age group for the admissions round.

Admissions into the Reception year

All admission authorities must provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. This means that where the school has offered a child a place, the following entitlements apply to the child:

- The child can take up a full-time place in the September.
- 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 they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year in which the offer was made (see below for more information on deferred entry).
- The child can attend part time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

Children are not required to attend school until they reach compulsory school age. Children born from 1 April to 31 August known as summer born children do not need to start school until the September after their fifth birthday, a year after they could first have started school. Please see below for further information on this regarding the admission of summer born children:

- Deferred Entry -Places offered in the Starting School admissions round are for children to start in the Reception class (Year R) prior to their child's fifth birthday. Parents/carers can choose to defer their child's entry to school or take up the place part time until they are of compulsory school age, providing this place is taken up within the same academic year. To defer your child's place please put this in writing to the Headteacher once a place has been offered.
- Admission of children outside of their chronological year group including summer born children- In line with 2.18 of the School Admissions Code, parents may seek a place for their child outside of their chronological year group. For example, if their child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

In addition to this, parents of a summer born child may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request they are admitted out of their chronological year group, to Reception rather than Year 1.

Therefore parents/carers may request for their summer born child to be admitted out of their normal age group at this point, i.e., to Reception rather than Year 1.

If a child is admitted to infant/lower/primary school out of their normal age group, the parent may make further requests, for example, when they transfer from primary to secondary school.

3.57. The headteacher will assist the admission authority with deciding on which year group a child will enter. Once a decision has been reached, the child's parents will be informed in writing along with an explanation of how the decision was reached and any reasons why.

3.58. Pupils not of usual school age will not be given less of a priority where the school is over subscribed.

3.59. Applications for children coming from overseas will be treated in accordance with EU law or Home Office rules.

3.60. For children of UK service professionals, the following procedure will be adhered to:

- A place will be allocated to the child in advance of the family arriving in the area named in the application form.
- The application must be accompanied with an official letter confirming the relocation date and the service unit's postal address or quartering area address when considering the application against the oversubscription criteria.
- The application will not be refused on the grounds of the child not currently living in the area, nor will places be uniquely reserved.

3.61. The arrangements for service children will be in line with the government's commitment to removing disadvantages for service children.

4. Admissions appeals

4.1. When informing a parent of their unsuccessful admissions application, a letter will be sent which includes the reason why admission was refused; information about the right to appeal; the deadline for lodging an appeal and the contact details for making an appeal.

4.2. Parents will be informed in the letter that, if they wish to appeal, they must make the appeal in writing. Appeals are made to an appeals panel which is independent of the Trust and the local authority Admissions team, and further information on the appeals process can be obtained from the local authority.

Complaints

4.3. Appellants do not have the right to more than one appeal in respect of the school for the same academic year unless, in exceptional circumstances, the admission authority has accepted a second application from the appellant due to a material change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school but still refused admission.

4.4. Appellants can apply for a place at the school for a different academic year.

4.5. If appellants have an issue with the appeal process, they can complain to the Secretary of State.

5. Monitoring and review

5.1. This policy will be reviewed by the Trust Board on an annual basis.

5.2. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all staff and other interested parties.