Admissions Policy

Date of Determination: 3rd October 2024

THEDWASTRE
Education Trust

Rattlesden Church of England Primary Academy admission arrangements for the 2026/2027 school year

Introductory statement

Rattlesden Church of England Primary Academy is an Academy within the Thedwastre Multi Academy Trust. The Multi Academy Trust is the Admissions Authority for the school. We are committed to considering all applications fairly and equally. This Admissions Policy is subject to a statutory public consultation and conforms to the 2021 Schools Admissions Code and the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, as revised by the Education Act of 2002. The policy should be read in conjunction with the *Admissions to Schools in Suffolk* booklet – published by Suffolk County Council

Published Admission Number

The school has a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 20 for entry in to the Reception Year.

The school will accordingly admit this number of pupils if there are sufficient applications. Where fewer applicants than the published admission number for the relevant year group are received, the Academy Trust will offer places at the school to all those who have applied.

Application process

Suffolk County Council will process applications as part of the normal local authority process for co-ordinating school offers.

Applications for this school can be made online at www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions or by filling in a paper application form (CAF1) available from the Local Authority Admissions Team on 0345 600 0981 (local rate) or from www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions. Paper applications should be sent to the Admissions Team, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, IP1 2BX.

The closing date for applications is 15 January.

Offers will be made on 16 April or the next working day.

Oversubscription criteria

When the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care plan naming the school, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in priority order:

1. Looked after children (LAC) and all previously looked after children - 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, immediately following having been looked after (PLAC), 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 - internationally adopted previously looked after children (IAPLAC).

2. Sibling: where the child has a sibling in the school or a sibling has already been offered a place at the school, and where the sibling will still be attending the school at the time of admission. Priority will be given, where necessary, to applications where there is the smallest age gap.
3. Children who are **ordinarily resident** in the catchment area and who live nearest to the school. We will measure the distance by a straight line ('as the crow flies'). All straight line distances are calculated electronically by Suffolk County Council using data provided jointly by the Post Office and Ordnance Survey. The data plots the co-ordinates of each property and provides the address-point between which the straight line distance is measured and reported to three decimal places. Where there is more than one home within a single building (for example apartments) we will measure to a single point within that building irrespective of where those homes are located.
4. Children who live outside the school's catchment area in the same priority order as set out in criterion 3 above.

Tie-break

It is possible that the PAN of the school will be reached in any one of the categories set out above. For this reason, all applications will be prioritised according to the criteria described. Decisions will be made about the offer of places in accordance with those priorities. If it is necessary to use a tie-breaker to distinguish between two or more applications, a distance criterion will be used. We will give priority to the applicants who live nearest to the school as measured by a straight line.

In the unlikely event that two applicants competing for a single place at a school live the same distance from the school, the place will be offered to one applicant on the basis of lots drawn by someone independent of the school.

If the final place available is offered to a twin, triplet or other multiple birth and the remaining sibling(s) would ordinarily be refused, we will offer places to the remaining sibling(s). Where a sibling of a twin, triplet or other multiple birth has a school named on their EHC plan, Suffolk County Council will from the date of issue of the EHC plan treat their twin, triplets or other multiple births under the sibling oversubscription criterion for the named school. This does not apply to siblings of children in a specialist unit or a specialist resource base for Hearing Impaired provision or a nursery, because they do not meet the sibling definition in the oversubscription criteria.

Late applications

All applications received by the Local Authority after the deadline will be considered to be late applications. Late applications will be considered after those received on time. If you were unable to apply by the closing date, and the Local Authority agree that there are very exceptional reasons for an application being late, it will be considered as on time if it is received by the exceptional late date in the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme and evidence is provided with your application. This only applies in circumstances outside your control which made it impossible for the application to have been made on time. Further information is available from the Local Authority on 0345 600 0981 or at www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions.

Deferred entry for infants

Parents offered a place in reception for their child have a right to defer the date their child is admitted, or to take the place up part-time, until the child reaches compulsory school age. Places cannot be deferred beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made.

Children reach compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their 5th birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 August, 31 December and 31 March.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

It is expected that children will normally be educated within their chronological year group. However, we will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned in line with the School Admissions Code.

You can make a request to the school in writing. This will need to include, where relevant, any supporting evidence. We will make a decision on the request, taking into account the views of the headteacher. We will write to you with the outcome including the reasons for the decision. If the request is refused, you we be given the details of how to complain to the school.

A CAF1 application form must be sent to Suffolk County Council along with the decision letter from the school and other relevant evidence by the national closing date. Even if the request is agreed there is no guarantee there will be a place available.

Waiting lists

The school will operate a waiting list for the Reception Year where the school receives more applications for places than there are places available, the waiting list will operate until 31 December.

Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. The waiting list will be reordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever anyone is added to or leaves the waiting list.

Appeals

All applicants refused a place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code.

Information on how to make an appeal will be provided in the letter refusing your child a school place.

Notes:

Sibling

The term ‘sibling’ includes: natural, half, step, and adopted brothers and sisters; a child of the partner of the parent/carer; and children who are fostered into the family. In all these cases, the child and their sibling will both be living at the same address (that is where the child is ordinarily resident) in a single family unit. This means that children from different family units, where those separate families are living together at the same address, are not considered siblings under this criterion.

Ordinarily resident

By ordinarily resident we mean the place where your child usually lives. We consider this to be where they sleep overnight. We may need proof of this address. If you use another address to give the impression that your child lives at a different address to where they are ordinarily resident, such as a second home or a grandparent’s address, so that you have a higher priority for a place at that school; we consider this to be a fraudulent application. Where a child lives at two or more addresses, each for part of the week, the address at which the child is ordinarily resident will be considered to be the address that the child lives at for most of the week (excluding weekends and school holidays). Separate evidence in writing from each parent must be provided to confirm the child’s living arrangements at the time of application.

In cases where the child spends an equal proportion of the school week at two or more different addresses, evidence of which is to be considered the main contact address will be required to support the application. Agreement in writing by the parents will be required to state which address is to be used as the ordinarily resident address. This address will then be used when processing all school preferences expressed. It is not acceptable to use one address for one school preference and another address for another school preference.

If we are aware of a parental dispute affecting the application, we may not be able to deal with the application and you may need to seek independent legal advice in order to resolve the matter.

Looked after children

A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England (IAPLAC), 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).

Previously looked after children

Previously looked after children includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Childrens Act 2002 (section 46 adoption orders) and includes those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England (IAPLAC). Child arrangements orders are defined in section 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.

Catchment areas

Catchment area maps are available online at www.suffolk.gov.uk/catchmentmaps. If you live near to a boundary line on the map please check your address against the catchment area and/or street lists at www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions. You can also obtain a copy of the map or list from the Local Authority Admissions Team on 0345 600 0981 (local rate).

In-Year Admissions

Please read this guidance in conjunction with the Admissions to Suffolk School document.

Applications are not normally considered more than one term ahead of the date the place is required.

Parents who wish to make an in-year application for a place at Rattlesden Church of England Primary Academy should contact the school office for an application form.

We will, on receipt of an in-year application, notify the Local Authority (LA) of both the application and its outcome, to allow the LA to keep up-to-date figures on the availability of places in the area.

When a place becomes available in a year group that has been full at this school, any applicant refused a place for that school year in the last 15 school days and any applicant for whom an appeal has been lodged and is still to be heard, will be considered alongside any new applications. The place will be offered to the pupil ranked highest in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

If the number of applications exceeds the number of places available the Governors will use their published oversubscription criteria to determine the offer of places. Any unsuccessful applicant has the right to appeal the decision to an independent panel and details of how to do this will be included in the decision letter. No waiting lists are maintained for year groups other than the Reception year.

Where an applicant is offered a school place following an in-year application, and the offer is accepted, arrangements should be made for the child to start school as soon as possible, particularly where the child is out of school.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Local Governing Body and the MAT Directors annually but, in accordance with the 2021 School Admissions Code, will only be subject to public consultation every seven years unless changes are proposed (other than the correction of closing dates and definitions of academic years). This consultation allows for Parents, other Schools and Academies, the Diocese, Local Authority and the local community to raise any concerns about the proposed admission arrangements.

Applicants seeking clarification on any aspect of this policy are invited to consult the School Secretary.