

PROPOSED ROEBUCK ACADEMY ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2024/25

The Roebuck Academy is a primary school with nursery provision. The school is operated by the Hart Schools Trust, a multi-academy trust (MAT) sponsored by North Hertfordshire College, with a mission to create social and economic value through learning.

The Roebuck Academy Published Admissions Number (PAN) is 60.

Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the governing bodies of all maintained schools to admit children with an EHC (Education, Health and Care) Plan that names the school. Academy schools have a similar obligation.

If there are fewer applications than places available at a school, all applicants will be admitted. If there are more applications than places available, the criteria outlined below will be used to prioritise applications.

Parents wishing to apply for a Reception place should refer to the Hertfordshire published information which includes an Application form at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions. The closing date for Reception applications is 15 January 2024.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

- **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 order¹ or a special guardianship order².
- **Rule 2:** Medical or Social: Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school.

A Panel of Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) Officers acting on behalf of the Trust will determine whether the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet the requirements for this rule. The evidence must relate specifically to the school applied for under Rule 2 and must clearly demonstrate why it is the only school that can meet the child's needs.

- **Rule 3:** Sibling: Children who have a sibling on the roll of the school at the time of application¹. *This applies to reception through to Year 6.*
- **Rule 4:** Nearest School: 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.

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.

■ **Rule 5: Children of Staff**

The school will admit a child³ of a member of staff provided that:

a) The member of staff has been employed by Hart Schools Trust at the Roebuck Academy 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 within the Roebuck Academy for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage

This rule will be applied to both teaching and non-teaching members of staff on both full-time and part-time permanent contracts.

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

Children not considered under rule 4 will be considered under rule .6

These rules are applied in the order they are printed above. If more children qualify under a particular rule than there are places available, a tie break will be used by applying the next rule to those children.

TIE BREAK

When there is a need for a tie break where two different addresses are the same distance from a school, in the case of a block of flats for example, the lower door number will be deemed nearest as logically this will be on the ground floor and therefore closer. If there are two identical addresses of separate applicants, the tie break will be random. Every child entered onto the HCC admissions database has an individual random number assigned, between 1 and 1 million, against each preference school. When there is a need for a final tie break the random number is used to allocate the place, with the lowest number given priority.

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

This school will admit children under the Fair Access Protocol before those on CI lists, and over the Published Admission Number (PAN) if required.

³ This will include children of staff not living at the same address as the member of staff. It will also include the children of a partner living at the same address as a member of staff.

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".

IN YEAR APPLICATIONS

Hertfordshire County Council co-ordinate In Year Admissions on behalf of the Governors of Roebuck Academy. Information about how to apply and the online application form can be found at: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/inyear.

The oversubscription criteria outlined above are used to prioritise all In Year applications. Applications forms can also be requested by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043.

IN YEAR APPEALS

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

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND DEFINITIONS 2024/25

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to terms used in the admissions criteria:

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 order⁴ or a special guardianship order⁵.

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.

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 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.

⁴ **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.

⁵ **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.

A child is in “state care” if he or she is in the care of, or accommodated by –

- (a) a public authority,
- (b) a religious organisation, or
- (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](#).

Definition of sibling

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 after⁶ and in every case living permanently⁷ 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.

Multiple births

The school will admit over the school's published admission number when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated the last place at a school.

Rules 6, 7 and 8: 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.

Where a family has not lived at an address for a year, they must be able to demonstrate that they own the property or have a tenancy agreement for a minimum of 12 months⁸ and the child must be resident in the property at the time of application.

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 time. If a child lives at two addresses equally, parents/carers should make a single joint application naming one address.

If a child's permanent residence is disputed, 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, and/or different preferences, neither will be processed until the address issue is reconciled.

It is for a child's home LA to determine address. If two applications, with different addresses are received from the same LA, it will be for that LA to determine permanent address. If two applications are received from two different LAs, the above process will be used.

If two different applications are received for the same child from the same address, e.g., containing 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.

⁶ 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.

⁷ 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.

⁸ If, because of the nature of the agreement, it is not possible to provide a 12 month tenancy agreement, alternative proof of address will be requested and verified as necessary with the Shared Anti-Fraud Service.

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 2024/25 transfer application process is 1 February 2024 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 2024/25 application process in September 2023.

Home to school distance measurement for purposes of admissions

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”

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.

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 transfer process, 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.

Roebuck Academy 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 (1 February 2024 for the Under 11s process) 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 or are European Economic Area nationals normally have unrestricted entry to the UK.*

Age of Admission and Deferral of Places

Children born on and between 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2020* would normally commence primary school in Reception in the academic year beginning in September 2024. 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 individual school(s) to discuss their child’s requirements.

***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 2020 and 31 August 2020 are categorised as “summer born” and if parents/carers do not believe that their summer born child is ready to join Reception in 2024 they should contact the home LA, and any own admission authority schools, for guidance before making an application.

Summer born applications that are delayed for a year (for entry in September 2025) 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 2024 (before the Easter break).

Children Out of Year Group (including ‘Summer-born’ children)

Children should 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”.

The governing body of schools responsible for their own admissions (academies, voluntary aided and foundation schools) are ultimately responsible for making this decision for applications made to their school.

Proposed