ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY SECONDARY SCHOOLS: ACADEMIC YEAR 2027-28

Policy

Children normally transfer from primary to secondary school in the September following their eleventh birthday.

Applications for secondary school places during the normal admissions round are processed in accordance with St Helens co-ordinated admissions scheme for maintained secondary schools and academies.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

As a general principle, the Local Authority believes that children should be educated within their chronological peer group. The National Curriculum enables schools to modify both the curriculum offered and the assessment procedures in order to meet individual needs. Inclusion, therefore, should be promoted through curriculum differentiation within the classroom, rather than by moving the child into another year group.

The School Admissions Code makes it clear that it is school admission authorities who are responsible for making the decision on which year group a child should be admitted to, but they should make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. Therefore, the Local Authority has drafted a separate protocol for the admission of children outside their normal age group. A copy of this protocol that explains how applications will be processed is available on the Council's website, at:

https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/admissions

Cowley International College

Admission Number 2027-28	250
Associated Primary Schools	Carr Mill Primary, Merton Bank Primary, Parish CE Primary, Queens Park CE/URC Primary, Rivington Primary, St Mary and St Thomas CE Primary

Oversubscription Criteria

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admission number, applications will be considered against the oversubscription criteria set out below. After the admission of pupils with EHC Plans, where the school is named on the Plan, the criteria will be applied in the following order:

1. looked after children and children who were previously looked after but then became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order[1]. This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted[2].

2. children from the associated primary schools;

3. children who have a brother or sister at the school at the time of likely admission. The brother or sister must be on the school roll in Years 7 – 11. This includes full, half or stepbrothers and sisters, adopted and foster brothers and sisters or a child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case, who is living at the same address and is part of the same family unit;

4. other children.

Tie Break

In the event of any over-subscription in the number of applications made under any of the categories above the Local Authority will offer places first to children whose family home is nearest the school. The measurement shall be done by the Local Authority in a straight line using a Geographical Information System (GIS) based on Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) data and the National Grid co-ordinates (integer values) for the family home and the school.

Where the tie break does not distinguish between applicants e.g., children living in the same block of flats random allocation will be used. This will be done by drawing lots and supervised by someone independent of the school.

Special Conditions for Twins (etc.)

Where the final place in a year group is offered to one of twins (or triplets etc) the Local Authority will not apply the tie break as it will admit the other twin etc too, even if that means going above the admission number.

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

[2] A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society

Definition of Home Address

This is the address where the child and parent, or person with parental responsibility, normally live. The address which receives child benefit will normally be used if the child's time is split between two homes, but the Authority reserves the right to request other proofs as fit the individual circumstances. It may be necessary for the Authority to carry out checks to confirm that addresses given are genuine. Parents may, therefore, be asked to produce documentary evidence of their child's home address e.g., Council tax or utility bills.

If parents are planning a permanent house move after applying but before places are allocated, they will be required to provide documentary evidence of this e.g., a copy of an exchange of contract or a tenancy agreement.

False Information

Where the Local Authority discovers that a child has been awarded a place as a result of any false information e.g., home address it will withdraw the offer.

Late Applications

Applications submitted after the closing date will only be considered alongside those who applied on time when they are received before the allocation procedures begin. However, as this date cannot be predicted, parents have no guarantee that any application received after the closing date will be included.

Waiting List

During the normal admissions round, if a place is refused because the school is oversubscribed the applicant will automatically be placed on the waiting list. The waiting list will be kept in priority order according to the oversubscription criteria and not on the date on which applications were received. If a place becomes available within the admission number, the child whose name is at the top of the list will be offered a place.

Children who are the subject of a direction by the local authority to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those on the waiting list.

The waiting list will close at the end of the autumn 2027 term, parents who wish their child to remain on the Year 7 waiting list after this date will be advised in their decision letter that they must re-apply on an in-year application form.

Appeal Procedure

Where parents are unsuccessful in applying for a place at a school, the decision letter will give reasons why the application was refused and notification of the right of appeal, including details of how, and to whom, to make an appeal and where to obtain further information.

Fair Access Protocol

All local authorities must have a Fair Access Protocol to ensure that schools in their area admit a fair share of children with challenging behaviour. As a result, secondary schools in St Helens may be required to admit up to +2 managed transfers per year group, even if the year group concerned is full.

All schools must participate in their local authority's protocol. For that reason, admission appeal panels will not view the fact that a school is obliged to admit over its admission number as an indication that it can do so for all in year transfers without causing prejudice to the efficient provision of education or efficient use of resources.

In-Year Transfers

Applications for children transferring school, other than at the normal point of entry, are processed in accordance with the agreed In-Year Transfer Scheme.

SIXTH FORM ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Students on roll at the school are required to apply for a place in the sixth form as are students from other schools.

The entry requirements for admission to the sixth form shall be the same for students on roll in Year 11 at the school and external applicants.

Applicants from outside the school will be accepted if a place is available and the applicant meets the same criteria as those applying internally. The school will be able to admit up to 50 external applicants in Year 12. However, it may exceed this number if demand for available courses can be met.

Pupils will be admitted into the sixth form at the start of the autumn term in each school year although there may be some occasions when students transfer during an academic year.

Entry Requirements

Qualifications at 16	Typical Course Programme
Modest GCSE results	Foundation Level 3 Course (BTEC) (including resits in Mathematics and English Language)
Minimum of 5 GCSEs or equivalent graded 9-4 (including Mathematics and English Language)	Level 3 courses (A Level)
Minimum of 4 GCSEs grades 7-9	Cowley Honours Programme
Minimum of 5 GCSEs grades 8-9	Cowley Honours Programme

Method of Application

A prospectus and application form will be published during the autumn term prior to admission and are available to all who request them by contacting the school.

The Sixth Form Open Evening will be held for 2027 entrance in the 2026 autumn term. Application forms must be received by the closing date publicised in the school's prospectus.

When the sixth form is undersubscribed, all applicants meeting the minimum academic entry requirements will be admitted.

Post 16 Oversubscription Criteria

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admission number, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below. After the admission of pupils with EHC Plans, where the school is named on the Plan, the criteria will be applied in the order in which they are set out below:

1. looked after children and children who were previously looked after but then became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order[3]. This includes children who appear

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

to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted[4].

2. children who have a brother or sister at the school at the time of likely admission. The brother or sister must be on the school roll in Years 7 – 11. This includes full, half or stepbrothers and sisters, adopted and foster brothers and sisters or a child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case, who is living at the same address and is part of the same family unit;

3. other children.

Tie-break

The measurement shall be done by the Local Authority, on behalf of the school, in a straight line using a Geographical Information System (GIS) based on Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) data and the National Grid co-ordinates for the family home and the school.

Where the tie break does not distinguish between applicants e.g. children living in the same block of flats random allocation will be used. This will be done by drawing lots and supervised by someone independent of the school.

Special Conditions for Twins (etc.)

Where the final place in a year group is offered to one of twins (or triplets etc) the tie break will not apply as the other twin etc will be admitted, even if that means going above the admission number.

Appeal Procedure

Any student refused admission to the sixth form has the right of appeal to an independent appeals panel. The school's decision letter will give reasons why the application was refused, including details of how, and to whom, to make an appeal and where to obtain further information.

[4] A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society