



School Admissions Policy

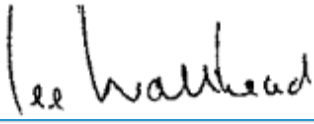
Admissions for Castle Wood, Mercer's Wood and White's Wood Academies.
For Intakes to Academic Year 2025– 2026

Tall Oaks Academy Trust

October 2023

(Review October 2024)

Written by: Sue Wilson (CEO)

Approved by: Lee Wallhead  (Chair of Trustees)

Date: 20th December 2023

This admissions policy is compliant with the School Admissions Code 2021

Contents

Admissions for Castle Wood, Mercer's Wood and White's Wood Academies	1
Process of Application	4
Castle Wood Academy	4
Mercer's Wood Academy	4
White's Wood Academy	5
Consideration of Applications	5
Procedures where Tall Oaks Academy Trust schools are oversubscribed	5
Oversubscription criteria for White's Wood Academy only	5
Oversubscription criteria for Castle Wood and Mercer's Wood Academy only	5
Definitions and notes	5
1. <i>A Child in Public Care is a child who is a looked after child</i>	5
2. <i>Children with a sibling attending the same Tall Oaks Academy Trust school at the time of application.</i>	6
3. <i>Home Address</i>	6
4. <i>Distance measurement</i>	6
Tie break	6
Final Tie Breaker	7
Reserve list	7
Twins and Multiple Births	7
Appeals	7
In year admissions	7
Applications for in year admission	7
Children of UK Service Personnel (UK Armed Forces)	8
Fair Access Protocols	8
Admission of children outside their normal age group (out of cohort)	8
Fraudulent or misleading applications	9

REVISION OF POLICY

Date	Version	Description/Change	Author	Approved by
6/10/23	2025 – 2026 version	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Slight changes in wording in line with Lincs CC Admissions guidance. - Page 4 added ‘In year admissions are dealt with in accordance with the in-year section below.’ - Page 6 added in clarity over when we would use a tie-break. ‘The over-subscription criteria are listed in the order we apply them. If it is necessary to distinguish between more than one applicant in any criteria, the next criteria will be applied until the tie-breaker is used.’ - Page 7 – added in when the reserve list is abolished. ‘This list is abolished at the end of the academic year 31st August of the intake year.’ - Page 8 – Added another example of when parents might apply for their child to be admitted to a cohort outside of their normal age group. ‘In addition, the parents of Summer born children may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group, to reception rather than Year 1.’ 	Sue Wilson	20/12/23 Trustees

The admission authority for all three schools is Tall Oaks Academy Trust.

This policy refers to all schools within Tall Oaks Academy Trust, that is Castle Wood Academy, Mercer's Wood Academy and White's Wood Academy. Where the admissions policy differs for each school it will be stated within this policy.

In accordance with legislation, the allocation of places for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan EHCP (Children and Families Act 2014) naming one of the schools in the plan, will take place first.

Remaining places will be allocated in accordance with this policy.

Process of Application

Arrangements for applications for places in Castle Wood Academy – (Year Reception), Mercer's Wood Academy (Year Reception) and White's Wood Academy (Year 3) (Tall Oaks Academy Trust) will be made in accordance with Lincolnshire County Council's co-ordinated admission arrangements; parents resident in Lincolnshire can apply online at www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/schooladmissions, they can also apply by telephone, or ask for a hard copy application form, by telephoning 01522 782030. Parents resident in other areas must apply through their home local authority. Tall Oaks Academy Trust will use the Lincolnshire County Council's timetable published online for these applications and the relevant Local Authority will make the offers of places on their behalf as required by the School Admissions Code. In year admissions are dealt with in accordance with the in-year section below.

Castle Wood Academy

Castle Wood Academy provides for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday.

Where we have offered a child a place at our school:

- a) that child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday;
- b) 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 at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made, whichever is the sooner;
- c) where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

Parents interested in deferring admission or arranging part-time attendance must contact the school to discuss this. The school's admissions number is 60 for Year Reception

Mercer's Wood Academy

Mercer's Wood Academy provides for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday.

Where we have offered a child a place at our school:

- a) that child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday;
- b) 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 at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made, whichever is the sooner;
- c) where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

Parents interested in deferring admission or arranging part-time attendance must contact the school to discuss this.

The school's admissions number is 30 for Year Reception

White's Wood Academy

The school's admissions number is 60 for Year 3

Consideration of Applications

Tall Oaks Academy Trust will consider all applications for places. Where fewer applications than the schools' admission number are received, the school will offer places to all those who have applied.

Procedures where Tall Oaks Academy Trust schools are oversubscribed

If a school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which names the school, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the oversubscription criteria.

The oversubscription criteria below are listed in the order we apply them. If it is necessary to distinguish between more than one applicant in any criteria, the next criteria will be applied until the tie breaker is used.

Oversubscription criteria for White's Wood Academy only

- A. A Child in Public Care and those previously in public care as defined by the school admissions code, including those 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. (1)
- B. The child has a sibling on roll at the school at the time of application (2)
- C. The distance from the home (3) to the school, priority will be given to the child living closest to the school (4).

Oversubscription criteria for Castle Wood and Mercer's Wood Academy only

- A. A Child in Public Care and those previously in public care as defined by the school admissions code, including those 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 (1)
- B. The child has a sibling on roll at the school at the time of application (2)
- C. The distance from the home (3) to the school, priority will be given to the child living closest to the school (4).

Definitions and notes

1. A Child in Public Care is a child who is a looked after child

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) at the time of making an application to a school. 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. Previously looked after children are 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). This includes children

who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).

Child arrangements orders are defined in s.8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by s.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. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

2. Children with a sibling attending the same Tall Oaks Academy Trust school at the time of application.

"Sibling" is defined in these arrangements as half, full, step, adoptive or foster brother or sister living predominantly in the same home as the child. In the event of there being more siblings than there are remaining places in a year group, it is possible that a sibling under these circumstances would not be offered a place. Where siblings exceed the remaining places in a year group, places will be ranked on distance to the school.

Where a child lives with both separated parents, the home that the child lives in for the most time per week will be counted. Where the child lives in both homes for equal amounts of time, the parents can choose which home to use as the address.

3. Home Address

The home address is considered as the address where the child lives for the majority of term time with a parent (as defined in section 576 of the Education Act 1996) who has parental responsibility for the child (as defined in the Children Act 1989).

Where a child lives normally during the school week with more than one parent at different addresses, the home address accepted for the purposes of school admissions will be the one where the child spends the majority of term time. If a parent can show that their child spends an equal amount of time at two addresses during school term time with a parent, they can choose which address to use on the application.

If a parent has more than one home, we will accept the address where the parent and child normally live for the majority of the school term time as the home address.

4. Distance measurement

Straight line distance as calculated electronically to three figures after the decimal point (e.g. 1.543 miles) by Lincolnshire County Council School Admissions Team from the Post Office Address Point of the home to the Post Office Address Point of the school.

Tie break

The over-subscription criteria are listed in the order we apply them. If it is necessary to distinguish between more than one applicant in any criteria, the next criteria will be applied until the tie-breaker is used.

In the case of a tie-break being necessary the following will apply with regards to multiple births and children who are siblings, born within the same academic year but not one of a multiple birth:

- Multiple birth children may be admitted under exceptional circumstances – they will remain as an 'excepted pupil' whilst they are in an infant class, or until a place becomes available through another child leaving thereby returning the class to a maximum of 30 children
- Siblings born within the same academic year may NOT be counted as an 'exceptional pupil' and could only be admitted if it did not take the class size over 30 or an additional teacher was employed.

A lottery may need to be held to decide which sibling may be admitted should there be no place for the sibling born within the same academic year, but with identical criteria.

Final Tie Breaker

If two or more children are tied for the last place a lottery will be drawn by an independent person, not employed by the school or working in Children's Services Directorate at the Local Authority.

Reserve list

For admission into the intake year, the admission authority for all Tall Oaks Academy Trust schools will keep a waiting list which we call a reserve list. If we refuse a place at our schools your child is automatically placed on the reserve list, unless you have been offered a higher preference school. This list is kept in the order of the oversubscription criteria, as required by the School Admissions Code. Children can move up and down the list depending on where other children are ranked against the oversubscription criteria. The admission authority must not take account of the time you have been on the list when allocating places. For the intake year the list is held by the Local Authority School Admissions Team until the end of August. After this the school admissions code requires that schools keep the reserve list until the end of the autumn term. (31st December). This list is abolished at the end of the academic year 31st August of the intake year.

Twins and Multiple Births

Twins and other siblings from a multiple birth - If twins or multiple birth children are split by operation of the oversubscription criteria, the school will accommodate all children unless this would make the class too large and prejudice the education of the other children. Multiple birth children are 'excepted pupils' to infant class limits if allocated in this way.

Brothers and sisters in the same year group - If brothers and sisters in the same year group are split by operation of the oversubscription criteria, the school will accommodate all children unless this would make the class too large and prejudice the education of the other children or when this would breach infant class size limits.

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. Appeals are independent and entirely separate from the admission system.

In all cases where a place is refused at a school, the applicant will be informed of their right of appeal to an independent panel. The decision of the independent panel is binding on all parties. Details of how to appeal a decision to refuse admission will be communicated to the applicant at the time of the refusal and will also be available on the Lincolnshire County Council website.

[School Admission Appeals Code – 2011 Revised Code \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/publishing/service/gov-uk)

In year admissions

The Trustees will accept admissions into other year groups if there are places. If there are more applications than places, then the oversubscription criteria will be used to decide who should be offered the place. If there are no places, then you will be told of the independent appeal system.

Applications for in year admission

Applications should be made via Lincolnshire County Council or directly to the school. All Tall Oaks Academy Trust schools will accept admissions to the respective year group at the point of entry. In the event that this would cause

an infant class to be unlawfully large at Castle Wood and Mercer's Wood or cause prejudice to the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources, it may be necessary to refuse a place. If there are more applications than places, then the oversubscription criteria will be used to decide who should be offered the place. If it is necessary to refuse a place, then you will be informed of your right of appeal. Parents can apply online at www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/schooladmissions or call 01522 782030 for a paper form.

Children of UK Service Personnel (UK Armed Forces)

For families of UK service personnel. Forces children with a confirmed posting to the area, or crown servants returning to live in the area from overseas, the Trustees will:

- Process an application in advance of a move of a family arriving in the area provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a Unit postal address, intended address or quartering area address to use when considering the application against the school's oversubscription criteria.
- Accept a Unit postal address or quartering area address for admissions purposes for a service child, where a parent requests this.

The Trustees will not refuse a service child a place because the family does not have an intended address or does not yet currently live in the area.

Evidence of an intended address will be required such as tenancy agreement, or mortgage statement. Please contact the school for more details.

For late coordinated applications and in year applications supported by the appropriate military documentation, we will aim to remove any disadvantage to UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces). The governors will consider whether:

- An application from that address would normally succeed in an oversubscribed year
- There is any child on the reserve list with higher priority under the oversubscription criteria
- The prejudice from admitting an extra child would be excessive.

The trustees have discretion to admit above the admission number in these circumstances if they wish, but are not obliged to do so. If a place is refused, you will be informed of your right of appeal.

Fair Access Protocols

Local Authorities are required to have Fair Access Protocols in order to make sure that unplaced children who live in the home local authority, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. This includes admitting children above the published admissions number to schools that are already full. Students allocated under fair access protocols will take precedence over those on a waiting list. Schools within Tall Oaks Academy Trust will participate in Lincolnshire County Council's Fair Access Protocol.

Admission of children outside their normal age group (out of cohort)

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group (date of birth cohort), for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of Summer born children may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group, to reception rather than Year 1. Parents wishing to make these requests must contact their home local authority for guidance on the procedure to follow.

Tall Oaks Academy Trust will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

This will include taking account of:

- the parent's views;
- any available information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
- where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional;
- whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group;
- any evidence that the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- the views of the Head of School /Headteacher

Parents resident in Lincolnshire should call 01522 782030 or email outofcohortadmissions@lincolnshire.gov.uk for advice on the procedure to follow. It is important for parents to note that they will have the opportunity and responsibility to provide whatever evidence they wish to support their request.

Fraudulent or misleading applications

We reserve the right to check any address and other information provided so we can apply the oversubscription criteria accurately and fairly. As an admission authority we have the right to investigate any concerns we may have about your application and to withdraw the offer of a place if we consider there is evidence that you have made a fraudulent claim or have provided misleading information, for example if a false address was given which denied a place to a child with a stronger claim.