



Admissions Policy

Determined Admissions Arrangements for Hillcrest School for 2023/24

Date Policy due to be reviewed: September 2024

Committee Responsible for Policy: Full Governing Body Committee

Admissions Policy

Hillcrest School is an 11-18 all girls' comprehensive school. The main principle of admission is to provide for the educational needs of young people in the surrounding area and across the city. We are an inclusive school and welcome all applications. We have a non-selective admissions policy. We are happy to take all children into our nurturing environment to allow them to develop their unique skills and abilities

Students are admitted to Hillcrest each year with regard to Birmingham Education Authority's policy. Hillcrest follows the procedures laid down by Birmingham City Council in respect of Admissions and Appeals.

Our Published Admission Number (PAN) for each year group is outlined below:

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
120	120	120	120	120	60	60

In line with DFE guidance, the school will notify the Local Authority and undertake an appropriate consultation process if we propose to increase or decrease the PAN. Information will be shared with relevant stakeholders via the school website. Any admissions above the PAN will not constitute an increase to the PAN.

We aim to provide all prospective parents and pupils with the information necessary to enable them to gain a clear indication of what the school has to offer.

This is achieved in a number of ways:

- By welcoming all prospective parents and pupils to an open evening and open days at the school each year. Parents and pupils are taken around the school by current pupils in the course of the open evening or by a member of staff and pupils during a working school day.
- A detailed prospectus and other information sheets are always available on request.
- Interviews and a tour of the school are arranged for prospective parents and pupils who cannot attend the open evening or open days.
- Open evenings and open days are advertised in the local press and in the publication 'Secondary Education Opportunities for your child in Birmingham'

Criteria for Admissions

For all community schools in Birmingham, Birmingham City Council is the admission authority and has set its **oversubscription criteria**. When a community school receives more applications than it has places available, the places at that school will be offered based on the following order of priority:

- Looked After Children (in public care) or previously Looked After Children.
A Looked After Child is a child who is in the care of a local authority or is being provided with accommodation by a local authority as set out in s22(1) of the Children Act, 1989. A previously looked after child is a child immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.
- Siblings
A sister who will be in attendance in September of the year of admission including in the sixth form where a sister is defined as: having the same two natural parents; having one common parent; having a 'step' sibling relationship; legally adopted or fostered by the same parent(s)

Siblings refers to full, half, adopted, step, fosters sisters or the daughter of the parent's partner, and, in every case, the girl must be living in the same family unit at the same address.

Unrelated children living at the same address, whose parents are living as partners, are also considered to be siblings. Children not adopted or fostered or related by a parents' marriage or with one natural parent in common, who are brought together as a family by a same sex civil partnership and who are living at the same address, are also considered to be siblings.

If children of multiple births (twins/triplets) require admission in the same year group and there is only one place left within the published PAN, the school will offer places above the PAN.

- Distance** (children who live nearest the school)

Within each of these categories priority is given to those who live nearest the school, calculated on the basis of a straight line measurement between the child's home address and the school. The Local authority uses a computerised system, which measures all distances in metres. Ordnance Survey supply the co-ordinates that are used to plot an applicant's home address within this system. Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with both parents for part of the week, then the main residence will be determined as the address where the child lives the majority of the week. Parents may be requested to supply documentary evidence to support the address used.

Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan

Applications made on behalf of children with an Education Health and Care Plan will be considered by the Special Educational Needs Assessment and Review Service (SENAR), in accordance with parental preference and each child's individual needs, taking account of Birmingham City Council's inclusion policy and relevant consultation with the school's governing body on the extent to which the school can meet the child's individual needs. This is not an oversubscription criterion.

Shared Responsibility

Where parents have a shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with both parents for part of the week, then the main residence will be determined as the address where the child lives the majority of the week. Parents may be required to supply documentary evidence to support the address used.

Final Qualifier

In a very small number of cases, it may not be possible to decide between the applications of those pupils who are the final qualifiers for a place, when applying the published admission criteria.

For example, this may occur when children in the same year group live at the same address, or if the distance between home and school is exactly the same. If there is no way of separating the applications according to admissions criteria and to admit both or all of the children would cause the PAN to be exceeded in that year group, the Local Authority will use a computerised system to randomly select the child to be offered the final place.

In the event of this occurring with twins or multiple birth applicants, we will be asked by the Local Authority to admit over the PAN to accommodate the pupils.

Admissions outside the normal age group

On very rare occasions, parents may feel it is in their child's best interests for them to be admitted to school outside their normal age group. For example, parents may feel it is better for their child to start in Year 7 when other children their age are starting in Year 8. This is perhaps due to their child's ill-health or premature birth.

Parents have the right to request, but not insist that their child be considered for admission to a year group outside of their normal age. This could be the case, for example, if their child is gifted and talented or is already being educated outside their normal age group at their current school.

Parents who wish for their child to be considered for admission outside their normal age group must make an application for the normal year group in the first instance. Parents must then submit a formal request to the Board of Governors for the child to be considered for a different age group instead. This written request should outline the reasons why they wish for their child to be considered to be admitted into a year group outside their normal age group. In addition, parents should provide any supportive evidence or documentation that they wish to be taken into account as part of their request.

The Board of Governors will consider such requests and advise parents of the outcome of that request. If the request is refused, the original application for the normal age group will progress.

Children of UK service personnel and crown servants

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, the school will allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area (as long as a place is available at the time of the application), provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date. The school will not refuse to process the application or refuse a place because the family have not yet arrived at an intended address, or do not yet live in the area.

Waiting list

The school holds waiting lists for over-subscribed year groups. Waiting lists are not maintained on a 'first come-first served' basis. Waiting lists will not be fixed following the offer of places. They are subject to change. This means that a child's waiting list position during the year could go up or down. A child's position on the waiting list does not depend upon the time they have been on the list but will be determined by how they meet the oversubscription criteria.

Applications for inclusion on a waiting list must be made on the school's appropriate form. Waiting lists will be reviewed regularly to see if the place is still required. Pupils will remain on the waiting list until parents/carers decide the place is no longer required. Waiting List applications will be ranked according to the school's oversubscription criteria, as described above. Thereafter the list will be re-ordered in line with the published over subscription criteria.

The waiting list will be maintained until the end of each academic year. A new application will have to be made for a new academic year.

The school will aim to notify parents the outcome of their application in writing within 10 school days.

Appeals

All students not offered a place at the school have a right to appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel. Hillcrest abides by the procedures regarding pupils who are granted places at the school following an appeal. Further details of the appeal procedure will be provided with the letter explaining why the application has been refused. Parents who wish to appeal against a decision

to refuse their child admission should contact School Admissions and Pupil Placement Service on 0121 3031888 or visit www.birmingham.gov.uk/schooladmissions to submit their online appeal.

Re-appeals

Parents do not have the right to a second appeal in respect of the same year group, unless in exceptional circumstances, the school has accepted a second application from the parents because of a significant or material change in the circumstances of the parents, child or school but were still refused admission.

Fair Access

The Governing Body is committed to taking its fair share of children who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as set out in locally agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal admission round, the governing body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The Governing Body has this power, even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

A child can be placed at Hillcrest School through the Fair Access Protocol and this will occur in two different ways:

- Through the Fair Access Team at Birmingham LA approaching the school to accommodate a child who is without a school place
- A child could be sent through the Fair Access Team to the local sharing panel and the chair of the panel will place the child at the nearest school based on a rotational basis between the schools on the panel.

Withdrawing an offer of a place

The school reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a place if:

- It was made in error;
- Parents fail to respond to the offer of a place within a reasonable period of time;
- It is established that the offer of a place was obtained through a fraudulent or misleading application.

Where parents fail to respond to the offer of a place, the school will give parents a further opportunity to respond and explain to them that their offer will be withdrawn unless they respond by a specified date. Where an offer of a place is withdrawn based on misleading information, the school will consider the application afresh, and will offer a right of appeal if admission cannot be offered.

The school will not withdraw the offer of a place once the child has started at the school, except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In deciding whether or not to withdraw the offer of a place, account will be taken of the length of time the child has been at the school. Where the child has been at the school for less than a term, the school may consider it appropriate to withdraw the place.

Transfer for Year 6 to Hillcrest School

At the end of summer term 2023, Birmingham Local Authority will invite parents/carers of children who will transfer to secondary education in September 2024 to complete an online application form to outline their preferred secondary school preferences. Hillcrest School will provide Local Authority Preference forms for parents/carers who do not have access to the internet.

Parents/carers of children who live in Birmingham but whose children attend a primary school outside Birmingham will be advised to make their application online or return a preference form to School Admissions and Pupil Placements Service by 31 October 2023. Applications received after this date will be processed after places have been allocated to applicants who applied on-time, in accordance with the Local Authority's procedures for late applications. However, in very exceptional circumstances applications received after the closing date may be considered as on time if parents are able to provide evidence of exceptional circumstances that delayed their application.

The Local Authority Admissions Service will inform parents/carers by 1st March 2024 of their child's allocated secondary school. If allocated to Hillcrest School, parents/carers will receive a welcome pack within one week of this date. The pack will contain information on the school, an invitation to a tour of the school and a letter to be completed by parents/carers to either accept or reject their child's allocated place at Hillcrest school. If a parent/carer rejects the allocated place at Hillcrest School, we will notify the Local Authority Admissions Service immediately of this decision.

The Local Authority Admissions Service will update the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) on a weekly basis the names and addresses of pupils allocated a place at Hillcrest School after 1st March 2024. Parents/carers can also apply to directly to the Hillcrest School. The Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) will direct parents to the Local Authority Admissions Service if they apply directly to the school after 1st March 2024.

As part of our transition process, the pupil and their parent/carer will be invited to attend an induction interview at Hillcrest School in May/June 2024. Parents/carers will be asked to bring the following documentation to the interview:

- Child's full birth certificate **and** passport
- Parent/carer proof of identity, i.e. – passport, driving licence, etc
- Parent/carer Visa (if newly arrived in the country)
- Child's Visa (if newly arrived in the country)
- Proof of address, i.e. – utility bill, tenancy agreement, etc
- Court orders against parental mother / father or other family members (if relevant)

The Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) will contact the pupil's primary school to obtain information on their academic progress and learning needs, i.e. – SEND, EAL, G&T. In addition, information will be obtained on any relevant safeguarding and child protection concerns at the primary school and the contact details of any external agencies currently or previously involved with the child and their family, i.e. – social worker, family support worker, counsellor.

For some children, it may not be possible to secure admission. Where this is the case, Birmingham City Council will apply the Fair Access Protocol to secure the most appropriate educational provision.

In Year Admissions

Applications made outside the normal admissions round (in-year admissions) should be made directly to the school. Parents/carers can apply for a place for their child at any time and to any school. On receipt of an in-year application, the school will notify the local authority of both the application and its outcome, to allow the local authority to keep up to date with figures on the availability of school places in Birmingham.

As part of the in-year admissions process the following steps will be adhered to:

Step 1 - Parent/carer contact the school via telephone or email to request application form.

Step 2 - Parent/carer complete application form and return it to school (the application will only be considered after the parent has completed and returned the application form)

Step 3 - School will contact parent/carer to arrange a meeting to discuss admissions process

Step 4 - School will contact previous school to obtain information on child's background, Academic progress, attendance, behaviour, safeguarding concerns, contacts details of external agencies involved with the family, i.e. – Social Care, Family Support Worker, Police, Courts, etc

Step 5 - Parent/Carer will be invited to attend meeting at school with the Deputy Headteacher. Parent/Carer is required to bring following documentation to meeting:

Child's birth certificate **and** passport

Parent/carer proof of identity, i.e. – passport, driving licence, etc

Parent/carer Visa (if newly arrived in the country)

Child's Visa (if newly arrived in the country)

Proof of address, i.e. – utility bill, tenancy agreement, etc

Court orders against parental mother / father or other family members (if relevant)

Step 6 - The pupil will be invited into school to undertake age appropriate assessments (English, Reading, Comprehension, Mathematics, French, Science)

Step 7 - The pupil will start school the following week providing relevant information has been Obtained from the child's previous school.

For some children, it may not be possible to secure admission under the in-year admission process. Where this is the case, Birmingham City Council will apply the Fair Access Protocol to secure the most appropriate educational provision.

For children with an Education, Health and Care Plan, the in-year admission process does not apply. Parents should contact the Local Authority Special Educational Needs Team. The child is offered a place if the Local Authority Special Educational Needs Team names the school in the Education, Health and Care Plan.

The school will notify the Local Authority of every in-year application and its outcome as soon as reasonably practicable. The school will aim to do this within 2-5 school days to allow the Local Authority to keep up-to-date figures on the availability of places.

Off-site direction placements

Hillcrest School reserves the right to negotiate an **off-site direction placement** with a pupil's previous school (Birmingham only) if there are concerns about a pupil's previous attendance or behaviour. As a result, the pupil would be dual registered at Hillcrest School and their home school. The pupil would attend Hillcrest School for an initial 6-12 week period.

Parents/carers and staff from the pupil's home school would be invited to attend a meeting with the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) to review the managed move placement. As a result of this meeting the pupil may be offered a full-time place at Hillcrest School or the managed move placement could be extended for another fixed period or terminated if it was agreed that the placement was not successful. If the placement was terminated, the pupil would be expected to return to their home school.

The managed move placement at Hillcrest could be extended at each review meeting until the school either decides to take the pupil on roll permanently or terminates the placement.

Sixth Form

Guidance on sixth form admissions and appeals arrangements can be found on the school website.

Visits to School

Prospective parents/carers are welcome to visit the school at any time during the school day by appointment. An Open Morning for prospective parents is held in the Autumn Term.

Consultation

When changes are proposed to admissions arrangements, the school will consult on our admission arrangements that will apply for applicants the following school year. Where the admission arrangements have not changed from the previous year there is no requirement to consult. In line with DFE guidance, the school will consult on our admissions arrangements at least once every 7 years, even if there have been no changes during that period.

The consultation process will last for a minimum of 6 weeks between 1st October-31st January in the determination year.

Further information

Further guidance on Admissions and Appeals can be found in 'Secondary Education Opportunities for your child in Birmingham' and via <http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/schooladmissions>