

# Admissions Policy

## R A Butler Academy Infant School 2027-28



Date of policy	November 2025
Review date	November 2026
Headteacher's signature	<i>Signed copy on file in HT office</i>
Chair of Governors' signature	<i>Signed copy on file in HT office</i>

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## 1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at the school
- Set out the school's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

## 2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- [School Admissions Code 2021](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

As an academy, the school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 3. Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority.

**Looked-after children**, as defined in section 22 of the Children Act 1989, are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

**Previously looked-after children** are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order (defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014), or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order (defined in section 14A of the Children Act 1989)

This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

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.

A child reaches **compulsory school age** on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

A **parent** is any individual who holds parental responsibility, as defined under the Children Act 1989, or any person who has care of a child, where the child lives with them either full or part time and they look after that child.

## 4. How to apply

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the application form provided by your home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools are in).

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority.

## 5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group. To do so parents should include a request with their application, specifying why admission out of normal year group is being requested.

Parents of a summer born child (born from 1 April to 31 August) may choose not to send that 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. When such a request is made, the school will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the views of the headteacher and any supporting evidence provided by the parent.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parents' views
- 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
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- The headteacher's views

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group.

## 6. Allocation of places

### 6.1 Published admission number (PAN)

The school has a published admission number of 90 pupils for entry in Reception

### 6.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated and are required to be admitted to a school regardless of their place in the priority order. Where possible such children will be admitted within the PAN.

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

In the event that the school receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in order, until all places are filled

1. Highest priority will be given to looked-after children and all previously looked-after children who apply for a place at the school.
2. Priority will next be given to children of staff\* at the school, in either of the following circumstances:
  - a) The member of staff has been employed at the school for 2 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 for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage
3. Priority will next be given to children with siblings\*\* on the roll of the school (either in the Infant School or Junior School) at the point of application for the new pupil.
4. Priority will next be given to children living in the catchment area\*\*\*.
5. All other children.

\* For the purpose of clarification, members of staff are employed to work at both the Infant and Junior Schools of R A Butler Academies.

\*\* For applications made in the normal admission round, a relevant sibling is a child who has a brother, sister, adopted brother or sister or stepbrother or stepsister living in the same family unit in the same family household and address who attends either R A Butler Academy Infant or Junior School in any year group excluding year 6.

For mid-year applications a sibling is a child who has a brother, sister, adopted brother or sister or stepbrother or stepsister living in the same family unit in the same family household and address as a child who attends or has been offered a place at the preferred school or partner school at the time of application and determination and with a reasonable expectation that the sibling will be attending at the time of admission.

Biological and adopted siblings who attend the preferred school in any year group, excluding year 6, will also be treated as siblings irrespective of place of residence. Children residing in the same household as part of an extended family, such as cousins, will not be treated as siblings.

#### Multiple Births (Twins, Triplets etc)

For applications made in the normal admission round, if the last child to be offered a place is a twin and their sibling cannot be offered initially, the school will offer a place to their sibling even where this takes the number in the year group over the school's Published Admission Number (PAN). In the case of triplets or other multiple births, if the majority of children can be offered a place initially, the school will offer places to the remaining children. For example, if two triplets can be offered a place, the remaining child will also receive an offer of a place.

For mid-year applications, where a family moves into an area necessitating a change of school for their twins (or triplets etc) and the majority can be offered a place then a place will be offered for the remaining children). However, where the family does not move but wishes to transfer the children to another local school where there are insufficient places for all of them, then a place would not normally be offered for all.

\*\*\*Children from the villages of Swards End, Little Walden, Wendens Ambo and Audley End are recognised as within the catchment area and are deemed to reside in South Road. Parents should check with the Local Authority whether children are eligible for School Bus transportation, as R A Butler Academy may not be the closest school.

A map of the catchment/priority admissions are for R A Butler Academies can be found on the Admissions page of the website.

### 6.3 Tie break

In the case of 2 or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, the school will use the distance between the school and a child's home as a tie breaker to decide between applicants. Priority will be given to children who live closest to the school.

Distance will be measured in a straight line from the child's home address to the school's front gates on South Road. For the purposes of this policy, a child's home address is defined as the place where they live and sleep for the majority of nights in a normal school week, with their parent(s).

If a child lives in different properties (shared care), parents must provide the address where the child lives for the majority of the week. In cases of equal shared care, both parents must agree which address should be used on the application. For applications made in the normal round, if there is no agreement, the local authority will decide which address will be used.

Where the distance between 2 children's homes and the school is the same, random allocation will be used to decide between them. The school will draw random sealed envelopes with the name of one child per envelope. This process will be independently verified.

## **6.4 Waiting list**

We will maintain a clear, fair and objective waiting list for children entering Reception until the end of the academic year of each school year of admission. If your application is unsuccessful, your child's name will be added to the waiting list. Where places become available, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria outlined in section 6.2. Priority will not be given to children based on the date their application was received, or when their name was added to the list.

Under the School Admissions Code, looked-after children, previously-looked after children, and those allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol (see section 6.6 below) must take precedence over those on the waiting list.

## **6.5 Children below compulsory school age**

Where children below compulsory school age are offered a place at the school, they will be entitled to attend the school full-time in the September following their fourth birthday.

Parents may defer their child's entry to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age, and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year the offer was made for.

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.

## **6.6 Fair Access Protocol**

We participate in Essex County Council's Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible and before anyone is considered from the waiting list. Eligibility for the Fair Access Protocol does not limit a parent's right to make an in-year application to the school for their child. Any application will be processed in accordance with the usual in-year admission procedures (see section 7).

## **6.7 Challenging behaviour**

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. The exception to this is where we may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, i.e. where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that isn't the normal point of entry, in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraphs 3.10 to 3.13) apply.

## **6.8 Children of UK service personnel and crown servants**

Families of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, will be allocated a place in advance of the family arriving in the area, provided a place is available and the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date.

We will use the address at which the child will live when applying our oversubscription criteria, provided the parents provide some evidence of their intended address. Alternatively, the unit or quartering address will be

used as the child's home address when considering the application against the oversubscription criteria, where this is requested by a parent.

## **6.9 Withdrawing an offer of a place**

We will not withdraw an offer unless it has been offered in error, a parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

Where a parent has not responded to the offer, we will give them a further opportunity to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not respond.

If an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, we will consider the application afresh and a right of appeal will be offered if an offer is refused.

We will not withdraw an offer of a place once a child has started at our school except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In these circumstances, we will consider the length of time that the child has been at the school before deciding whether to withdraw the place.

## **7. In-year admissions**

Parents can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose EHC plans name the school will be admitted.

Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for, your child will be offered a place.

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to the waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by 1 of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6.2 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Applications for in-year admissions should be sent to the following address: [admin@rab.academy](mailto:admin@rab.academy)

You can find details on our in-year admissions and an application form on the following webpage: [www.rab.academy/admissions](http://www.rab.academy/admissions)

Parents will be notified of the outcome of their in-year application in writing within 15 school days.

## **8. Appeals**

If your child's application for a place at the school is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals. If you wish to appeal, you must set out the grounds for your appeal in writing and submit it to Essex Appeals:

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/admissions/after-your-school-offer/appeals>

Appeals will be heard by an independent appeal panel.

## **9. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Local Governing Body every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the published admission number), the governing board will publicly consult on these changes. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years. Consultation will be for a minimum of 6 weeks and will take place between 1 October and 31 January of the school year before the arrangement are to apply.