

South Central Region of Aspirations Academies

Wykham Park Academy
Admissions Policy
For Admissions in September 2024

Revised Jan 2022

THE ADMISSION OF STUDENTS TO Wykham Park Academy

This document sets out the admission arrangements for Wykham Park Academy.

The Academy will act in accordance with, and will ensure that the Independent Appeal Panel acts in accordance with all relevant provisions of the statutory codes of practice (the School Admissions Code of Practice and the School Admission Appeals Code of Practice) as they apply at any given time to maintained schools and with the law on admissions as it applies to maintained schools. Reference in the codes to admission authorities shall be deemed to be reference to the Aspirations Academies Trust, which governs Wykham Park Academy.

Wykham Park Academy will participate in the co-ordinated admission arrangements operated by Oxfordshire LA.

Notwithstanding these arrangements, the Secretary of State may direct Wykham Park Academy to admit a named student to the Academy on application from an LA. Before doing so the Secretary of State will consult the Academy.

A rationale for the admission arrangements across the Aspirations Academies Trust can be found on the Trust website: www.aspirationsacademies.org

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS APPROVED BY SECRETARY OF STATE

The admission arrangements for Wykham Park Academy for the year 2024/25 and for subsequent years are:

Wykham Park Academy has an agreed admission number of 180 students in Year 7. The Academy will accordingly admit 180 students into Year 7 if sufficient applications are received.

Wykham Park Academy has an agreed admission number of 40 students in Year 12 for students from **outside Wykham Park Academy** .

Wykham Park Academy may set a higher admission number as its Published Admission Number for any specific year. The Academy is not required to consult on any proposed increase to the PAN; however it must notify the Local Authority of the increase and specify the changes on the Academy website.

Students will not be admitted above the Published Admission Number unless exceptional circumstances apply and such circumstances shall be reported to the Secretary of State.

PROCESS OF APPLICATION FOR YEAR 7

The Local Authority Common Admissions Form (CAF - secondary) must be completed and returned to the Local Authority for all admissions to Wykham Park Academy by 31st October 2024.

If the number of students applying exceeds the Pupil Admission Number all applicants to the Academy* will be required to sit a Cognitive Ability Test. Wykham Park Academy is measured for academic performance against national averages. Wykham Park Academy's aim is to provide places for local children within a profile that compares to the national distribution of ability. This is achieved through the use of three ability bands - high, middle and low. To allocate Year 7 students to the appropriate band all applicants to the Academy are required to sit a Cognitive Ability Test. As these tests are conducted before the students join the academy this also allows the academy to provide an

individually appropriate education for each student from the moment they arrive in September. Students are allocated to an ability band on the basis of their Cognitive Ability Test score. There will be 3 ability bands (low, middle, high) - the percentage of places available in each band will be determined by the profile of the national distribution of ability. This will be determined by an external education testing organisation who administer the on-line test. The percentage of places in each band will vary from year to year, however, as a guide the national ability profile in 2014 was: Low ability = 22% of students, Middle ability = 54% , High ability = 24%.

*(*It is not compulsory for the following children to sit the Cognitive Ability Test:*

Children whose statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan names the school

- Looked after children (Note 1) and all previously looked after children. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, (Note 2) (or became subject to a child arrangements order (Note 3) or special guardianship order (Note 4).*

However, it is strongly recommended that these pupils do sit the test as the test will enable appropriate interventions and support to be readily available from the start of term, as well as enabling placement in the correct band).

- When it appears that the academies applications will exceed the PAN the Test will be sat in the September of the year that applications for places are made. There will be a choice of two Test days. This means that Year 6 pupils who are considering applying for a place at the Academy in October will sit the test in the September 2024. Any student ill on the day of the test will be provided with an opportunity to sit the test on an alternative day, provided the illness is supported by an official medical note.
- Any student who applies for a place at the Academy without having sat the Cognitive Ability Test will sit the test before the final place allocations are made in March 2025. *As the test is administered on-line it is relatively easy to arrange a suitable test date.*
- Any student with identified Special Educational Needs, who chooses to sit the test, will take the test without additional support as the test is designed to pick up on any learning issues.
- The Cognitive Ability Test is not a pass or fail test. It is used to allocate each applicant to an ability band on the basis of their test score. Parents will be informed of the test result by the end of September 2024.
- When it appears that the academies applications will exceed the PAN an advert inviting all interested Year 6 pupils to apply to sit the Wykham Park Academy Cognitive Ability Test will be placed in local newspapers and on the academy website as well as through a letter to parents sent out to all local primary and junior schools within a three mile radius of the academy. Parents will be asked to contact the Academy to ask for their child to sit the test. Following this application to sit the test a letter of invitation will be sent out by post, which will include a Test Registration Card (on which the following information is included: Student's Name, Test Session, Unique Child Number and Registration Desk number for the test). **This Test Registration Card MUST be brought by the student to the relevant test session. The student WILL NOT be allowed to sit the test without the Test Registration Card** as this is proof of the child's identity at the child's home address. Students who apply but have not yet sat the test will be invited to take the ability tests by letter sent to the address stated on the Common Application Form.

Notification of Offer of Places: Parents will be informed by Oxfordshire Local Authority (or their home authority if they do not live in Oxfordshire) which school they have been allocated in writing by a letter posted on 1 March 2025. Parents are asked to confirm their acceptance of the offer with the Local Authority in which they live by 16 March 2025.

Parents and students will then be offered an opportunity to visit the academy before September 2025 and meet staff as part of preparing them to give them the best possible start in the academy.

Procedures where the Academy is oversubscribed for places in Year 7

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admissions number, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below:

Applications will be considered against the ability band in which the applicant is placed by the Cognitive Ability Test score. The number of places available in each ability band will be determined by an education testing organisation (who administer the on-line Test) by matching the percentage of places in each band to the ability profile of the applicants for places that year. After the admission of students whose statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan names the school, the following criteria will be applied to determine those children who will be offered places within each band.

The criteria are listed in priority order:

Looked after children (*Note 1*) and all previously looked after children. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, (*Note 2*) (or became subject to a child arrangements order (*Note 3*) or special guardianship order (*Note 4*)). Such students will be given top priority in each band before the oversubscription criteria is applied.

Children with a sibling already at the Academy, ordered by shortest distance between home and Wykham Park Academy (*see Note 5, Note 6 and Note 7*)

Children who currently attend a Primary Aspirations Academy*, currently Dashwood Wykham Park and Harriers Wykham Park Academy, ordered by shortest distance between home and Wykham Park Academy (*see Notes 6 and 7*). **The philosophy of the Aspirations Academies Trust considers all-through, age 2-19 education to be very effective practice and brings many educational benefits to our young people and their parents. Wykham Park Academy works very closely with the staff and pupils at both Dashwood Wykham Park Academy and Harriers Wykham Park Academy with many shared staff and joint initiatives in place. Pupils from both Dashwood Wykham Park Academy and Harriers Wykham Park Academy have attended Wykham Park Academy for many years, this number will increase as the philosophical, educational and operational ties between the academies strengthens further. The Aspirations Academies Trust publicises to parents of pre-school age the advantages to them of choosing and all-through age education in Wykham Park. The philosophy of the Trust is to develop a small District of local schools in the Wykham Park area providing guaranteed all-through age education for 180 students in each year group.*

Children of staff in the following circumstances (*see Note 8*):

where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and

children of newly appointed staff, filling a post with a “demonstrable skills shortage” (School Admissions Code 2012)

Children who have the shortest distance between home and Wykham Park Academy (*see Notes 6 and 7*).

If at the end of this process there are unallocated places in any band these will be filled by unallocated applicants from the next nearest band(s) using the same allocation criteria set out above. Where there are two applications that cannot be separated a fair tie-breaker process shall be used. This process will be conducted randomly through the use of an electronic random sorter. This random

allocation will be made/done using an electronic random sorter managed by appointed person drawing the names. The appointed person will be an independent Academy administrator who has no involvement in the school admission process.

Notes:

(1) A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order, 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. 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). An adoption order is an order under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders). A 'child arrangements order' is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 as amended by Section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014. 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).

In all categories, priority will be given to those who have a brother or sister attending Wykham Park Academy at the time of admission but not application. This means that there will be no sibling connection for admission purposes as follows:

- a) applicants for entry to Year 7 if they have a brother or sister in Year 11 unless the CAPF records an expressed intention of the sibling staying on into Year 12*
 - b) applicants for entry to Year 7 if they have a brother or sister in Year 13*
- The definition of a brother or sister is:*

- A brother or sister sharing the same parents*
- Half-brother or half-sister, where two children share one common parent*
- Step-brother or step-sister, where two children are related by a parent's marriage*
- Adopted or foster children*

Where the final place in a year group is offered to one of twins or triplets or other children from multiple births living at a single address, the Local Authority, on behalf of Wykham Park Academy's Admission Authority, will use random allocation to determine who will be offered a place at Wykham Park Academy .

- 6. The home address of a child is considered to be his/her permanent residence. The address must be the child's only or main residence. Documentary evidence may be required. Where a child spends time with parents at more than one address, then the address given should be the one that they live at (i.e. sleep at) for the majority of term-time weekdays. Where care is split equally between mother and father, parents must name which address is to be used for the purpose of allocating a school place*
- 7. Priority will be given to those children who live closest to the school by a straight line distance measured from the centre point of the land parcel of the child's home address to the gates of the Academy. This will be measured by the Local Authority using their free service.*
- 8. Under the oversubscription criteria the word staff will mean: All staff who have been continuously employed by the school for a period of at least 2 years for the purpose or working in the school as follows:*
 - All full time teaching staff*
 - All full time support staff – defined as those on a 37 week and above contract*
 - All part time teaching staff with a 45% and above timetable*
 - All part time support staff who work at least 15 hours per week for 37 weeks or more*

The 2 year qualification period may be waived if a post is hard to fill.

The definition does not include contract staff. If a service has been 'in house' and is subsequently 'contracted out' children or staff will no longer be eligible for priority admission under this criterion.

The definition does not include peripatetic staff

Appeals Process

Unsuccessful applicants may appeal for a place in the academy. Parents wishing to appeal should write to the academy to request appeals papers. The letter should be addressed to the Principal, Wykham Park Academy, Ruskin Road, Wykham Park, Oxfordshire OX16 9HY. Appeals will be heard by a panel which is independent of the Academy and the Governors.

Late Applications

Applications received after the closing date will only be considered alongside those received by the closing date under the following circumstances:

The family was unable to complete an application form before the closing date because they moved into the local area after the issue of application forms.

OR

The family was unable to comply with the admissions timetable because of exceptional circumstances which prevented the application arriving on time – the circumstances must be given in writing and attached to the application form.

Applications received after the notification date (i.e. after places have been offered) will be added to the list of continued interest in admission criteria order. The list of continued interest for Year 7 will be kept until the last day of December 2025. Each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria. Priority will not be given to children based on the date their application was received or their name added to the list. This means that a child's position on any waiting list can move down as well as up.

Admission of Children Outside of their Normal Year Group

The Aspirations Academies Trust as a general rule does not recommend the admission of children outside of their normal year group. However, the decision to admit a child outside of their normal Year group will be made 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; 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; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. In each case, a meeting will take place between the Principal and the parent(s)/carer(s) prior to a decision being made. The Principal of the Academy will discuss the issue with either the Executive Principal or Chief Executive before making a decision. When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the admission authority **will** set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

Withdrawing an offer or a place

The admission authority, The Aspirations Academies Trust, **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 the parent has not responded to the offer, the admission authority **will** give the parent a further opportunity to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not. Where an

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

Admission to Post 16 provision

Every student in Year 11 at Wykham Park Academy is entitled to a place in the Banbury Campus Sixth Form providing there is a course suitable for him/her and the student meets the entry requirements. Entry into Year 12 from students outside the whole campus has been set at 40. After the admission of students whose statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan names the school, the following criteria will be applied:

Over-subscription Admissions Criteria:

Looked after children (*Note 1 - see Notes above*) and all previously looked after children. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, (*Note 2*) (or became subject to a child arrangements order (*Note 3*) or special guardianship order (*Note 4*)). These students should meet the academic requirements for the level of course applied for as published in the Academy prospectus.

- b) Children with a sibling already at the Academy, ordered by shortest distance between home and Wykham Park Academy (see Note 5, Note 6 and Note 7)*
- c) Children who have the shortest distance between home and Wykham Park Academy (see Notes 6 and 7).*

Sixth Form Application Procedure:

All external students interested in a place at Wykham Park Academy Sixth Form should complete an application form available directly from the Academy or online from the academy website.

Late Applications:

Late applications will be considered, although it will be more difficult to comply with subject preferences. Applications received after the notification date (after places have been offered) will be added to the list of continued interest in admission criteria order. The list of continued interest for Year 12 will be kept until the last day of December 2024.

Arrangements for In Year Admissions

All applications made during the academic year (in year admissions) including applications in and outside of the normal year of entry for Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, must be made to the Academy (the application form is available on the academy website). All such applications will be considered and if the year group applied for has a place available in the appropriate band the Academy will admit the child unless the applicant has significant behavioural issues, in which case the child will be referred to the Local Authority Fair Access panel. (Such refusals will only occur where the student concerned has been previously excluded from two or more schools or where special circumstances apply as specified in the Admissions Code of Practice. However, the Secretary of State may direct the Academy to admit such students and such a direction will be binding.) If more applications are received than there are places available, the oversubscription criteria above for Year 7 or for sixth form places shall apply. This will require the applicant sitting the cognitive ability test.

Parents whose application is turned down are entitled to appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel.

A waiting list will not be held by the Academy for In Year Admissions in Year 8, 9, 10 or 11 or for In Year admissions for Year 7 after 31st December of the first year. All In Year applications will need to be made to the Academy and will be allocated under the admissions criteria, according to their ability band, (This will require the applicant sitting the cognitive ability test), when a place becomes

available. Any places allocated under in-year admissions will be notified to the LA to allow it to update its records.

Although most children will be admitted to the Academy within their own age group, the Academy will make decisions on the year group of entry on the basis of the circumstances of each individual case. Parents do not have a right of Appeal if a place is offered in a year group other than the year group in which they applied for.

Fair Access Admissions:

Wykham Park Academy will adhere to the Fair Access Protocol as determined by the LA to ensure that 'Hard to Place' students will receive a suitable school place. Managed Move requests for students from other Secondary Schools will also be given consideration as part of the adherence to the National Admissions Code.

ANNUAL PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Consultation

Wykham Park Academy will set admission arrangements annually. Where changes are proposed to admission arrangements there will be a public consultation on these arrangements. If no changes are made to admission arrangements the Academy consultation will only take place at least every 7 years.