



Admissions Policy

Thomas Hall School

2023-24

This policy is in force until further notice from:	28.02.23
This policy must be reviewed:	Annually
Policy Author(s):	Shamita Kumar
Date policy reviewed by Education Director:	28.02.23
Date policy reviewed by Compliance & Governance Officer:	28.02.23
Location of publication of policy:	School Website
Under the Trust's Scheme of Delegation this policy must be approved by	The Admissions Committee
Such approval was given on:	15 th February 2023

Introductory Statement

Thomas Hall School (“the School”) is part of Reach South Academy Trust. More information about the School can be found by visiting the website at <https://www.thomashallschool.org>

The Trust Board of Reach South Academy Trust (“the Trust Board”) is the “admission authority” for all schools within the Trust, and is responsible for determining and implementing the admission arrangements for those schools.

Definition of “Parent”

In this policy, a “parent” is defined as including a natural or adoptive parent of a child (irrespective of with whom the child lives, or whether the parent has contact with or parental responsibility for the child), as well as non-parents who have care of, or parental responsibility for, the child.

Published Admission Number (“PAN”)

Reception

The published admission number (“PAN”) for entry to Reception Year is 60.

Where fewer applicants than the published admission number for the relevant year group are received, offers will be made to all those who have applied.

Following the offer of a place at the school, parents/carers can be asked to provide proof of their child’s birth date and main residence. The forms of identification may include the child’s birth certificate, NHS registration card, council tax bill and recent utility bills.

Year 7

The planned number of places to be available in Year 7 is 60. This includes both newly admitted secondary pupils transferring from other settings and former Year 6 pupils at this school. The published admission number (“PAN”) for entry to Year 7 is 30. This is the number of places available, in addition to those required for our Year 6 pupils into Year 7.

Where fewer applicants than the published admission number for the relevant year group are received, offers will be made to all those who have applied.

Following the offer of a place at the school, parents/carers can be asked to provide proof of their child’s birth date. The forms of identification may include the child’s birth certificate, NHS registration card, council tax bill and recent utility bills.

Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (“EHCP”)

Children with an education health and care plan (“EHCP”) which names **Thomas Hall School** will be admitted to the school under separate statutory procedures, rather than under this policy.

Where they will be admitted in the normal admission round (i.e., reception or Year 7), the number of places available within the PAN stated above will be reduced. In respect of all admissions, the child will be admitted to the school even where this will result in the admission number (“AN”) for that year group being exceeded.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where the School is oversubscribed, the available places will be allocated to children in the following order of priority:

1. Children Looked After¹, looked after children, previously looked after children and children 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.
2. Children with a sibling² attending **Thomas Hall School** at the time of application.
3. Children of a member of the school’s staff in either or both of the following circumstances:
 - a. Has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time of application; and/or
 - b. Was recruited to fill a vacant post for which there was a demonstrable skill shortage.

For the avoidance of doubt, “a” and “b” above do not denote an order of priority.
– all children falling within this category will be treated equally, applying the tie breaker where necessary

¹A “looked after child” means any child who is in the care of a local authority or is being accommodated by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions as defined in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989. A child who was “a previously looked after child” means a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted, became subject to a child arrangements order (defined by Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 as amended), or became subject to a special guardianship order (defined by section 14A of the Children Act 1989). Relevant evidence will be required to be submitted (as per section 2.5 of the 2021 Admissions Code). A child who appears to have been in state care outside of England means a child who was in the care of or was accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation, or other care provider whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

²By sibling we mean a natural brother or sister, a half brother or sister, a legally adopted brother or sister or half brother or sister, a stepbrother or sister or other child living in the same household as part of a single-family unit. Parents must ensure that they have included full details of the sibling in the Admissions Application Form to be included in this category. Failure to do so will result in the child being placed into the next category that applies.

4. All other children. Children who do not fall into any of the categories above will be allocated places under this category by reference to the distance from child's home address (as defined in this policy) to the school.

Tie-breaker

School places will be allocated on the basis of our determined admissions arrangements as set out in this policy. The order in which places will be allocated, the categories above will be by reference to the distance the child lives from the school, with those living closest to the school receiving highest priority. Measurements for school admissions purposes are straight-line from the main entrance to a child's home (the residential building) to the star marker for the school on Devon's Geographical Information System, an electronic mapping system which can be viewed at www.devon.gov.uk/schoolareamaps.

In the case of buildings containing a number of dwellings (i.e., an apartment block), the distance will be measured from the same point in the building regardless of where within the building the child's home address is actually located, with the tie breaker being applied as necessary.

Further Tie Breaker

Where two or more children live an equal distance from the school, random allocation supervised by someone independent of the school will be used as a tiebreaker to determine the order in which places are allocated.

Random allocation will not be applied to multiple birth siblings (twins and triplets etc.) from the same family tied for the final place. We will admit them all (as the case maybe) and exceed our PAN.

Child's Home Address

For the purpose of this policy, the child's home address is determined as defined in Local Authority's Admissions Arrangements: Places are offered here based on where the child will attend school, not necessarily where they live when the application is made. If we have vacancies, then it doesn't matter whether the home address is relatively close to the school.

The home address is where a child normally lives. Where a child lives with parents with shared parental responsibility, each for part of a week or for one week in turn, the home address is determined by a joint declaration from the parents which may set out the pattern of residence. The address used will be the address from which the child attends school on most mornings in a normal school week.

If no declaration is received and there is no relevant Court Order, the home address will be the address at which the child is registered with a GP. If this is not possible or is in dispute, any other evidence provided by parents will also be considered in reaching a decision on the home address for admissions purposes. This may be necessary where parents don't agree on the child's home address. Parents are urged to reach agreement or

seek a Specific Issues Order from a court to decide which parent should or should not pursue an application. Where they do not, the admission authority will determine the home address.

Where we ask for evidence of a new address from which a child would attend school, this would often be written confirmation of a house purchase or a formal tenancy agreement. We recognise that some families may be unable to provide this. Parents who can't provide this evidence should contact us or the LA. There is no intention to disadvantage families where there is a genuine reason why evidence cannot be provided.

Children of UK Service Personnel and Crown Servants

The children of UK service personnel (UK armed forces) with a confirmed posting to the area of the School, and the children of Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area of the School, will be regarded as living at the address stated in the application for admission at the time of application where it is accompanied by an official letter confirming the relocation date and a unit postal address or quartering address.

Statutory Maximum Infant Class Size

The statutory maximum number of pupils in a class in Reception Year to Year 2 is 30, however The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012 set out categories of children who will be regarded as “excepted pupils” not counting towards the class size and who can therefore be admitted. Parents are referred to Paragraph 2.15 of the Admissions Code (which is accessible on the Department for Education’s website) for further detail in respect of the category of ‘excepted pupils’; where full details of excepted pupils are listed.

Deferred Entry to Reception Year

Children are entitled to a full-time place in Reception Year in the September following their fourth birthday. Children do not, however, reach compulsory school age until one of three prescribed days following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday, if it falls on a prescribed day). These prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

Parents who achieve a place for their child in Reception Year have a right to decide that they will defer the date that their child will start school until their child reaches compulsory school age. If this is within the same Reception year, they can do this without losing the achieved place. Parents who defer the date that their child will start school inform the school in writing.

In respect of parents of “summer born children” (i.e. children born on or between 1 April and 31 August) their children are considered to reach compulsory school age on the 31st August following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on the 31st August); these parents cannot defer the date that their child will start school beyond the first day of the final term of the school year without losing the place that has been offered. If they

do, the place will be allocated to another child.

However, parents of “summer born children” do, have the right to release the achieved place and delay their child’s start date for one whole academic year, when they will either seek admission to Year 1 (which is subject to availability of a place) or make a request for delayed admission outside normal age group to Reception Year. Agreement to this is at the discretion of the Trust Board). Parents must then make a formal application for admission in the next reception intake.

Part-Time Attendance in Reception Year

Parents have a right to decide that their child will attend School part-time until they reach compulsory school age on one of the three prescribed dates set out above. The right can also be exercised at the same time as deferred entry.

For example, a child born on 15 February will not reach compulsory school age until 31 March but is entitled to a full-time place in Reception Year from the preceding September. The child’s parents can decide that their child will not start school until 1 January and will attend part-time until 1 April, when they will attend full-time. Parents who exercise their right to send their children to school on a part-time basis until the child reaches compulsory school age as prescribed in the dates set out in the above clauses of the Admissions Policy must inform the school in writing.

Admission of Children Outside their Normal Age Group

Parents have a right to ask for their child to be admitted to a school to a year group other than their child’s year group, either above or below. It is, however, for the Trust Board to determine whether to agree or refuse the application.

The procedure for asking for admission of a child to a year group other than the child’s normal year group is by letter to the school giving details of all relevant circumstances and attaching any relevant supporting evidence. The Trust Board will consider the request and 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 parent’s views, the Principal’s view, information about the child’s academic, social and emotional development, the child’s medical history and the view of their medical professionals (where relevant), whether the child has previously been educated outside their normal age group, and whether they would have naturally fallen into a lower age group if they had not been born prematurely.

Parents should note that, where the Trust Board refuses a request for admission to a year other than the child’s normal age group, there is no statutory appeal against that decision as there is with the refusal of a place, however parents may submit a complaint under the Trust’s published Complaints Policy. Where a request is refused, the Trust Board will write to the parents clearly setting out their reasons for doing so.

Where the Trust Board agrees a request in principle, they will write to the parents

confirming their agreement. A request for admission outside normal age group is not an application for admission, and parents will need to submit a separate application for admission in the usual way at the appropriate time. Where a request for admission to a different year group has been agreed in principle, the letter from the Trust Board confirming this must be submitted with the application for admission.

It is important for parents to note that obtaining the Trust Board's agreement in principle to admission to a different year group does not mean that the child will achieve a place in that year group. The separate application for admission will be considered with all other applications for that year group and the oversubscription criteria applied where necessary. This means that parents who obtain agreement in principle to their child being admitted one year later than usual to Reception year may not achieve a place, and then be in the position of having to apply to other schools for admissions outside normal age group or applying for admission to Year 1 which is subject to place availability.

Applications for Admission

Applications can be made online at www.devon.gov.uk/admissionsonline. Copies of application forms can be found at <http://devon.cc/applicationforms>.

Reception

Applications for admission must be made to the parents' home Local Authority on their Common Application Form, which is accessible on their website.

Applications must be submitted to the home Local Authority by the closing date, which is **15th January 2023**.

Parents will be notified of the outcome of applications on "national offer day" which is on **16th April 2023**, as set out in the Admissions Code.

Year 7

Applications for admission must be made to the parents' home Local Authority on their Common Application Form, which is accessible on their website.

Applications must be submitted to the home Local Authority by the closing date, which is **31st October 2022**.

Parents will be notified of the outcome of applications on "national offer day" which is on **1st March 2023**, as set out in the Admissions Code.

Failure to submit the CAF by the application may result in the application being dealt with as a late application, which means that it will be accepted but will not be considered until all applications received on or before the application deadline have been considered, which may substantially reduce the chance of achieving a place.

Late Applications

Applications submitted to the Local Authority after the closing dates for applications stated above may be late applications and may not be considered until after applications received on or before the closing date for applications have been considered and places allocated. This means that the chance of achieving a place may be reduced.

Waiting Lists

The school will operate a waiting list for each year group until the end of the academic year. This will be maintained by the LA on behalf of the school and shared with the school. Waiting lists will only contain the names of children who have formally applied and been refused admission. Children's positions on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria. Positions will be reordered whenever anyone is added to or leaves the waiting list.

Therefore, a child's name can go up or down on the list. The length of time on a waiting list does not affect a child's position. Parents must confirm they wish the child to remain on the waiting list when requested to do so and must reapply at the end of the academic year. This is to ensure the list is kept up to date.

In-Year Admissions

Applications for in-year admissions should be made through Devon County Council by applying online or on a paper common application form, the D-CAF. If more applications are received than there are places available, applications will be ranked by the admissions authority in accordance with the admissions/over subscription criteria as outlined above. Applicants will be notified of the outcome by the Local Authority.

Fair Access Protocol

The school is committed to taking a fair and reasonable proportion of children who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as identified in the locally agreed Fair Access Protocol. Accordingly, outside the normal admissions round, the Trust Board will admit a child for whom a place is requested under the Fair Access Protocol agreed for that school year, even where this will result in the PAN or AN being exceeded.

Statutory Right of Appeal

Parents have a statutory right of appeal to an independent appeal panel in the event of a refusal of a place. Appeals are dealt with strictly in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code 2012.

Information on the appeal timetable (including the deadline for requesting an appeal) will be published on the school's website (<https://www.thomashallschool.org>) on or before 28 February after the closing date for applications for that year. Information will also be included in the letter sent to parents notifying them of a refusal.

False and/or Intentionally Misleading information

Parents should note that an offer of a place is likely to be withdrawn if it is found that it was made on the basis of fraudulent or intentionally misleading information provided by parents.

An admission authority must 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. Please refer to paragraph 2.12 and 2.13 of the Admissions Code for further detail.

Furthermore, in order to address the potential issue of offers being obtained through fraudulent or intentionally misleading applications, the school reserves the right to ask for additional information to check the veracity of the address and other information provided in the application.