



# Forge Valley School

## Admissions policy

<b>Governor Committee:</b>	Full Governing Body
<b>Ratified by Governors:</b>	September 2023
<b>Due for review:</b>	September 2024
<b>Member of Staff responsible:</b>	Mark Barker, Assistant Head Teacher for Attendance & Behaviour

Ratified by J Stringer, Chair of Governors

*We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of all school policies on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations*

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## Important contacts

ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
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Chair of Governors	Judith Stringer	0114 234 8805 <a href="mailto:jstringer@taptonttrust.org.uk">jstringer@taptonttrust.org.uk</a>
Local Authority Admissions Team		<a href="mailto:ed-admissions@sheffield.gov.uk">ed-admissions@sheffield.gov.uk</a> Inclusion & Learning Service, Floor 5, North Wing, Moorfoot, Sheffield, S1 4PL

Forge Valley School's Pupil Admission Number (PAN) is 260 per year group for the years 7 to 9 and 240 pupils for years 10 and 11.

# 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 a pupil a place

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

As an Academy, Forge Valley School is its own Admission authority. However, Forge Valley School has chosen to retain the Local Authority's admission arrangements since it became an Academy. Applications for admission are handled by the Local Authority Secondary Admissions Team. They can be contacted at 5th Floor West, Moorfoot Buildings, Sheffield, S1 4PL. Their telephone details are as follows: 0114 273 5790. Email [ed-admissions@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:ed-admissions@sheffield.gov.uk).

# 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** 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, or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order

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.

# 4. How to apply

Forge Valley School operates within the statutory Admission Code of Practice. The admission arrangements set out in this document include the oversubscription criteria and other detailed information that explain how the school manages this function. The Academy is the “Admission Authority” and is responsible for setting and applying its own admission arrangements.

The admission arrangements that are set out below are those determined by Tapton School Academy Trust for admission to Forge Valley School. Tapton School Academy Trust is fully supportive of the wider admission arrangements operated by Sheffield Local Authority and these arrangements continue the operation of a defined catchment area and feeder primary schools that have been operated historically for admission to the school.

Sheffield Local Authority co-ordinates the allocation process for the normal year of entry (Year 7) for all Sheffield residents and applies the criteria on behalf of Tapton School Academy Trust by agreement.

Sheffield Local Authority is also responsible for coordinating “in-year” applications on behalf of the Learning Trust.

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 can use this form to express your preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order.

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.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in 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 Oversubscription criteria**

All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plan, names the school, will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

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.

Highest priority will be given to looked after children and all previously looked after children who apply for a place at the school.

### **Priority One - Children in Public Care (Looked After)**

All Admission Authorities **MUST** prioritise the admission of "Relevant Looked After Children" within their admission criteria. A "Relevant Looked After Child" is defined as:

"a child who is looked after by a local authority in accordance with section 22 of the Children Act 1989(b) and who (a) is looked after at the time an application for admission to a school is made and (b) in relation to whom the local authority has confirmed that the child will still be looked after at the time when the child will be admitted to the school."

The Admission Code of Practice extend this category to also include children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order.

This includes those 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. 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 arrangement order or special guardianship order). All references to previously looked after children in this Code mean such children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after and those 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. Oversubscription criteria **must** then be applied to all other applicants in the order set out in the arrangements.

### **Priority Two - Catchment area with Sibling**

Children who normally reside with a parent or person with parental responsibility in the defined catchment area and who will have a brother or sister at Forge Valley School on the day of admission will be considered next.

The definition of a sibling for these purposes is given below. This means that all catchment/sibling applications are prioritised before catchment applicants irrespective of distance. The normal distance tie-breaker will apply within each category. A sibling is defined as a child who permanently or usually lives at the same address as:

- a brother and/or sister (including half brothers/sisters)
- a stepbrother and/or stepsister
- in both cases, will attend the preferred school at point of entry

In circumstances where an older sibling attends Forge Valley School sixth form, sibling priority will only be afforded if the older sibling attended the school prior to Y12.

### **Priority Three - Catchment area**

Children who normally reside with a parent or person with parental responsibility in the defined catchment area.

### **Priority Four - Siblings**

Children who have a brother or sister at Forge Valley School on the day of admission will be considered next.

The definition of a sibling for these purposes is given below. This means that all catchment/sibling applications are prioritised before catchment applicants irrespective of distance. The normal distance tie-breaker will apply within each category. A sibling is defined as a child who permanently or usually lives at the same address as:

- a brother and/or sister (including half-brothers/sisters)
- a stepbrother and/or stepsister
- in both cases, will attend the preferred school at point of entry

In circumstances where an older sibling attends Forge Valley School sixth form, sibling priority will only be afforded if the older sibling attended the school prior to Y12.

#### **Priority five – Attendance at a contributory feeder school**

Applicants for a Year 7 place at Forge Valley School whose children attend a designated feeder primary school but do not fit into any of the above categories above will be considered next. Forge Valley School's designated feeder primary schools are: Shooters Grove, Malin Bridge, Rivelin, and Wisewood Primary School.

*Parents are advised In the Sheffield Guide for Parents " that If they choose to send their children to a non-catchment primary school, they have a lower priority for entry to the linked secondary school and that there is no guarantee of a place there."*

#### **Priority Six**

All other applicants that do not fall into one of the above categories will be considered next.

## **6.2 Tie break**

In the case of 2 or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above. If the admission number is reached mid-category, there are 2 stages of further consideration carried out within the above outlined categories:

1. Where exceptional medical, social or special educational needs are demonstrated and evidenced by a professional. Where exceptional medical, social or special educational needs are demonstrated and supported by a professional, an application may be prioritised by the Admission Committee (AC) but only within its admission category. It is the parent's responsibility to provide supporting evidence. The applicant must supply sufficient supporting evidence from relevant professionals at the time of the original application, for the Academy to consider whether an individual case constitutes exceptional circumstances to be prioritised. In any event, the evidence must support the view that the child must attend the school applied for and that they could not have their needs met at any other school. Applications will only be submitted to the Admission Committee for further consideration if they are accompanied by supporting evidence.

If no exceptional circumstances are present; admissions are prioritised by the straight-line distance from the centre of the home to the centre of the school building.

In circumstances where exceptional circumstances are not demonstrated, the final tie-breaker will be the distance from the home address to the school building. This is a straight-line measurement from the house to a specific point at the school building. Where the remaining place could be made for a number of children living equidistant from the school the determination of the single offered will be made by random allocation.

The random allocation will:

- be independently supervised by a representative of the Legal and Governance Service of Sheffield LA
- take place on a date and time notified in advance to the participating parents so that they can attend

as witnesses

More details can be found on the Local Authority website  
at <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/education/information-for-parentscarers/pupil-admissions.html>

## School admission refusals

We operate a catchment, area-based admissions policy. Sometimes, children are refused admission to a school and placed on a waiting list. This is because there were more applications received than places available. In this instance, we use our admissions policy to prioritise places.

### Refused on prejudice grounds

Oversubscribed schools will refuse further admission on the grounds that the admission of extra pupils would prejudice the provision of efficient education.

Places refused on prejudice will only apply to secondary school places and key stage 2 primary school year groups.

Details of schools last year that were oversubscribed under prejudice are available in the Oversubscribed secondary schools and Oversubscribed junior schools' documents.

## 6.3 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. We may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8.108) 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, only in such a case that we have good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour that may adversely affect the provision we can offer. In this case, we will refer these pupils to the Local Authority for consideration under the Fair Access Protocol.

A decision to refuse a child entry under the Fair Access Panel for challenging behaviour is based on the following definition.

The 2021 Code now defines "*challenging behaviour*" at footnote 76 as "*where it would be unlikely to be responsive to the usual range of interventions to help prevent and address pupil misbehaviour or it is of such severity, frequency, or duration that it is beyond the normal range that schools can tolerate. We would expect this behaviour to significantly interfere with the pupil's/other pupils' education or jeopardise the right of staff and pupils to a safe and orderly environment.*"

## 6.4 Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Sheffield'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.

## 7. In-year admissions

Forge Valley School participates in the Local Authority's coordinated Admission Scheme for in-year admissions. If a parent of a child on our roll wishes to apply for a transfer to another school, they must obtain a transfer form from the school for completion of Section 2. The application must then be sent to the Local Authority which will process the application on the parent's behalf. The Local Authority will confirm the outcome of the application in writing within 10 school days, but they must be notified in writing within 15 school days.

Local authorities must, on request, provide information to prospective parents about the places still available in all schools within their area. To enable them to do this, the admission authorities for all schools in the area must provide the local authority with details of the number of places available at their schools whenever this information is requested, to assist a parent seeking a school place. Such details should be provided no later than two school days following receipt of a request from the local authority.

If the application is refused, the Local Authority will advise on the statutory appeal procedure. Details of the Co-ordinated Admission Scheme and how in-year applications are managed can be seen at <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/schools-childcare/apply-school-place.html>

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, subject to challenging behaviour as described in 6.3 above.

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by one of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6.1 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

If parents wish to change their child's school to Forge Valley School at any time after the normal age group admission, the following must be completed.

Parents should contact their home school's Headteacher and request a transfer form. This must be signed by the headteacher and sent to the local authority.

The home school would normally assist families with the completion of this form if it is required.

Applications for in-year admissions should be sent to the following address:

ed-admissions@sheffield.gov.uk  
0114 273 5790

Where a place is refused, the reason for the refusal must be included, along with full details of the statutory right of appeal. As soon as reasonably practicable, but in any event within 2 school days, the LA must also be notified of the application and outcome. Where a place is offered, the child should be admitted as soon as possible.

## 8. Appeals

Appeals for entry to Year 7 will be administrated by the Local Authority on behalf of the Forge Valley School and in line with the statutory Appeal Code of Practice. Appeals will be heard at the Sheffield Town Hall. Parents will be advised of the exact closing date for appeals applications and appeal procedures when they receive notification of the outcome of their application. Appeal Application Forms can be obtained from the Local Authority or downloaded from their website.

You will be notified of the date and time of your appeal in writing by the City Council. Schedules will be determined after the closing date for receiving appeals. Year 7 appeals for those submitted on time are normally concluded before the Spring Bank half term at the end of May or in the first two weeks of June.

Please note that the appeal panel is independent of the Academy and the Local Authority and its decision is legally binding on both the Academy and on parents. For any further advice on the appeals process please contact the Admissions Team on 0114 273 5790 or email [ed-admissions@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:ed-admissions@sheffield.gov.uk)

## 9. Waiting Lists

A waiting list will be maintained until 31 December 2023 for a transfer to Forge Valley School. Year 7 - Parents may remain on the waiting list beyond December if they wish and would be required to contact the admission team.

## 10. Key Dates

Closing date for Applications: 31 October 2023  
National Allocation Day: 1 March 2024



## **11. Admissions Team Contact Details**

Any enquiries should be referred to the Local Authority's Admissions Team:

Telephone: 0114 273 5790

Email: [ed-admissions@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:ed-admissions@sheffield.gov.uk)

Admissions Team: Inclusion and Learning Service, Floor 5, West Wing, Moorfoot, Sheffield S1 4PL

## **12. Transition**

Forge Valley School has close links with our family of primary feeder schools. Pupils in Year 6 have many opportunities to work with our staff in school before the main transition days in July prior to starting at Forge Valley School in September. Year 7 pupils soon settle into their school routine because of their familiarity with the school and key staff.

We understand the transition from primary to secondary school can be an anxious time for pupils, they often worry about being with their friends and meeting older pupils. We have worked with our family of primary feeder schools to put pupils in groups of two or three, based upon who will best support their learning at Forge Valley School. We will endeavor to ensure that pupils are with at least one person they know from primary school.

A Head of Year will have pastoral oversight for the year group, with an Assistant Headteacher having an overall view of the transition period. There will also be a member of the Senior Leadership Team linked to each year group.

## **13. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the governing board every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed 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.