Ormiston Academies Trust

# Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy Admissions policy 2026-2027

## Policy version control

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# 1. Policy statement and principles

## 1.1. Policy aims and principles

1.1.1. This policy is designed to ensure there is an open and fair admissions procedure for all applicants and to help guide parents and their children through the application process. The academy's admissions arrangements will not disadvantage unfairly, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social or racial group, or a child with a disability or special educational needs, and that other academy policies do not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child.

1.1.2. This policy details the academy's arrangements for admissions and will apply to all admissions for the academic year 2026 - 2027. This includes in-year admissions within this period.

1.1.3. Parents are encouraged to visit the academy with their child if they are planning to apply for a place. We have a number of open days during the year, these will be publicised on our website, social media and by the LA. Arrangements for visits outside these dates can be made through the academy office: 0121 552 5501.

1.1.4. Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT) is the admissions authority will consult on the admissions arrangements at least once every seven years or if there are proposed changes to the admission arrangements which require consultation.

1.1.5. As the admission authority, OAT delegates the workings of the admissions process to the academy.

1.1.6. This policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by OAT / the academy and is written in line with current legislation and guidance.

## 1.2. Monitoring and review

1.2.1. This policy will be reviewed annually or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and / or government guidance
- As a result of a major change in circumstances
- As the result of a decision of an Adjudicator

1.2.2. If there are urgent concerns these should be raised to the member of SLT in charge of policies in the first instance.

# 2. Academy admissions

2.1. The academy admits students between the ages of 11 and 16. The main intakes are:

- Secondary

We encourage entry at the academy's main intake time so as to aid academic progression without interruption, however, applications are welcome for entry in any year.

## 2.2. Definitions

2.2.1. The academy uses the following definitions when applying this policy:

## 2.3. Distance

2.3.1. This is the straight-line distance between the academy main gate and the child's home address (front door).

2.3.2. This is a LA computerized system for ordinary admissions. Where two dwellings with the same front entrance the closest dwelling to the front door (lower floor and counting clockwise) will be regarded as being closer to the academy.

## 2.4. Dual address

2.4.1. Where a child lives at two different addresses, the 'home' address will be determined as the address at which the child resides for the majority of school nights. School nights are Sunday night to Thursday night inclusive. In a case where the child spends an equal number of school nights at each address, then the address where the child benefit is paid will be used. Where no child benefit is claimed the address used to register the child with a doctor will be used.

## 2.5. Catchment area

2.5.1. Our current catchment area is 1.1 miles.

## 2.6. Feeder schools

2.6.1. OSCA has a range of feeder schools from the local and surrounding areas.

## 2.7. Siblings

2.7.1. A sibling is defined as:

- A brother or sister (including half brothers or sisters) who shares one or both parents, whether or not resident in the same household
- A stepbrother or sister where the two children are related by a parent's marriage
- An adopted or foster child living in the same household under the terms of the resident's order
- Another child living in the same household where the adult has parental responsibility

2.7.2. In the case of twins or other children from multiple births (two or more siblings in one year group) and where only one place is available, the application will be considered together as one application and for a relevant year group the Published Admissions Number (PAN) will be increased accordingly.

## 2.8. Eligibility criteria

2.8.1. Entry to the academy is subject to the regulations regarding nationality, residency status and eligibility to study in the United Kingdom.

## 2.9. Waiting list

2.9.1. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available, children who have been refused a place will be automatically placed on a waiting list unless there is a specific request that this should not happen. The child may gain entry to the academy if a place becomes available.

2.9.2. The academy will maintain a waiting list until 31 December 2026 following the main academy intake. Each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the academy's oversubscription criteria in which the application was originally considered. Priority will not be given to children based on the date their application was received or the date when they were added to the list.

## 2.10. Withdrawal of a place

2.10.1. The academy will only withdraw an offer of a place if:

- The place was offered in error
- Acceptance of the place was not received in a reasonable period of time
- The offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application (the academy may request evidence to ensure the child meets the admissions criteria) – if the 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

2.10.2. The academy will not withdraw the place if the student has started at the academy unless the place was obtained fraudulently. If this is the case, then the academy will decide whether to withdraw the place based on the circumstances including the length of time the child has been at the academy.

## 2.11. Determining arrangements and consultation

2.11.1. Admissions arrangements will be determined annually by the academy local governing body, this will happen even if there are no changes from previous years and a consultation is not required.

2.11.2. If the academy changes any significant aspect of the admissions procedure, then OAT will be informed prior to making changes and prior to the beginning of the consultation process. Any significant changes proposed by the academy must be approved by OAT.

2.11.3. The academy will consult on admissions arrangements when changes to the academy's arrangements are proposed (no consultation is required for an increase in PAN or changes to ensure compliance with the admissions regulations). Where the admission arrangements have not changed from the previous year there is no requirement to consult, subject to the requirement that we must consult on our admission arrangements at least once every seven years, even if there have been no changes during that period.

2.11.4. The academy will publish any consultation for admissions on its website and notify appropriate stakeholders. If there are any substantive responses to the academy's consultation, then these will be sent to OAT. Any subsequent changes will be made in consultation with OAT.

2.11.5. Once the academy's admissions arrangements have been determined it will notify the appropriate bodies and publish a copy of the determined arrangements on its website.

## 2.12. Admission of children outside their normal age group

2.12.1. Parents may seek a place for their child outside their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. If parents wish to do this they must contact, in the first instance, Rebecca Maiden or Malcolm Lovatt on 0121 552 5501. Contact with the academy must be made at the earliest opportunity to avoid any delays in the application process.

2.12.2. The decision whether a child is admitted outside of their normal age group will be made on a case-by-case basis by the academy's local governing body and any decision will be in the best interests of the child concerned. A panel of at least three governors will consider the admission request based on:

- The student's academic development
- The student's social and emotional development
- Views of the parents and principal
- Medical history and/or views of a medical professional, where relevant; and
- Any additional relevant information available

2.12.3. The panel will have to be satisfied that the child would be able to cope with the work of the year applied for **and** that the student would be able to cope with the personal development whist being with a year group who are of a different age. In order to support any application parents will need to submit evidence to demonstrate that the admission into a different year group is in the best interests of the child.

2.12.4. Once the governing body has made a decision the parent can then apply for admission of their child to the academy using the process detailed in this policy. Where no place is offered, parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place however this right does not apply if the child is offered a place at the academy even if it is not in their preferred age group.

## 2.13. Complaints about admissions arrangements

2.13.1. Any person, or body, can make an objection to the Schools Adjudicator when they consider the academy's arrangements are unlawful, or not in compliance with the School Admissions Code / relevant legislation relating to admissions. The deadline for any such complaint is 15 May in the year before the arrangements are to apply.

2.13.2. Complaints about the appeals panel can be made to the Secretary of State.

# 3. Secondary admissions

3.1. The process detailed in this section is for admissions for secondary admissions. For further information on this process please contact Malcolm Lovatt, Assistant Principal on 0121 552 5501.

## 3.2. Number of spaces (PAN)

3.2.1. The academy has a PAN of 240 for admission to Year 7.

## 3.3. Application process

3.3.1. Applications for the 2026 academic year begins September 2025.

3.3.2. To apply you need to complete the local authority's (LA) common application form (CAF)[1] and submit this directly to the LA by the deadline, 31 October 2025. For further information, please see Sandwell MBC Admissions Webpage: Apply for a school place | Sandwell Council

3.3.3. Late applications will not be considered until all other applications have been reviewed.

3.3.4. All offers of secondary places will be made through the LA. The academy will not contact parents about the outcome of their application until the offer from the local authority has been received. All offers will be made on the secondary national offer day (1 March or the next working day).

## 3.4. Admissions criteria

3.4.1. Any parent may apply for a place at the academy for their child.

3.4.2. If the number of applications is less than the number of spaces, then all children will be offered places.

3.4.3. Where a pupil has an Education Health and Care plan which names the academy that pupil will be admitted, and the number of available places reduced accordingly.

## 3.5. Oversubscription criteria

3.5.1. Where the academy receives more applications than there are places available priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the oversubscription criteria set out below:

1) Children who have an Educational Health Care Plan that states Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy as the most appropriate provision for their education due to the specific needs of the child.
2) Looked after children and Previously Looked After Children including those who appear to the academy to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be so as a result of being adopted[2]. A Looked After Child is either a child who is in the care of a local authority, or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (definition used is in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) Previously Looked After Children are those who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order immediately following having been looked after.

[1] Please note that the CAF is required to be returned to the local authority in the area that you live.

[2] 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.

3) Medical Needs for which an official form has been filled in and submitted, containing a doctors signature to state that they believe that Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy is the only appropriate school that can meet the medical needs of the child.
4) Siblings of any child who currently attends Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy
5) The children of staff who are directly employed by Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy
6) Distance door to door, in a direct and straight line from Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy to the child's primary residence.

3.5.2. If there are not enough places to satisfy all applications under any one criterion, priority will be given to in accordance with proximity to the academy. Where two or more applicants live an equal distance from the academy and it is not possible to differentiate between them, priority will be determined by a random allocation process. This process will be independently verified by someone independent of the academy and OAT.

## 3.6. In-year admissions

3.6.1. Applications for in-year admissions are accepted and will be processed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with these published admission arrangements. In-year admissions forms can be obtained from the local authority.

[The LA co-ordinates the academy's in-year admissions, and any application for an in-year admission will need to be made through the LA]

3.6.2. The academy will participate in the LA's Fair Access Protocol. Students included in the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those held on the waiting list. Once a student has been identified for admission to the academy under the Fair Access Protocol the academy will notify the local authority within seven calendar days of the decision to accept or refuse the student's admission.

3.6.3. It the academy refuses entry, the local authority may request a direction from the Secretary of State. The decision of the Secretary of State will be binding upon the academy.

## 3.7. Unsuccessful applications

3.7.1. The academy will inform the child's parent if a decision has been made to refuse their child a place at the academy for which they have applied, this will include the reason why admission was refused, information about the right to appeal, deadlines and contact details. Any appeal is before an independent admissions appeal panel.

3.7.2. A timetable for organising and hearing appeals will be set and published on the academy's website by 28 February each year for the normal admissions round. The academy will inform OAT of any admissions appeals.

3.7.3. A child is allowed to be on the academy waiting list while an appeal is lodged, and the appeal will not affect their position on the list. The decision of the appeals panel is binding on the academy.