



Admissions Policy

2020/2021

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TOVE LEARNING TRUST

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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain **how to apply** for a place at Rushden Academy
- Set out the trust's **arrangements for allocating places to the pupils** who apply to these academies
- 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](#)
- [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](#).

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This policy complies with the Tove Learning Trust 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 Northamptonshire County Council.

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

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.

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

Parents resident in Northamptonshire can apply online at:

www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/schooladmissions

The Academy will use the LA's timetable for applications to the Academy each year (exact dates within months may vary from year to year):

- In September the Academy will publish its prospectus information about the arrangements for admission for the following September.
- September/October details will be provided about the Academy's Open evening and other opportunities to visit the Academy.

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- By 31st October parents must complete the common application form (CAF) and return it to the LA administrator (see website address above).
- On 1st March 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. It is considered that children should be educated in their normal age group, with the curriculum differentiated as appropriate and they should be educated out of their normal age group in very limited circumstances.

The decision to allow a child to repeat a year or to admit a child into a cohort outside their chronological year lies with the Academy, in liaison with the Local Authority. 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 Principal'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 appendix A.

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. Parents should contact the school directly if they wish to request a place for a child outside of the normal age group.

6. Allocation of places

6.1 Admission number

The school has the following agreed admission numbers for pupils for entry in Year 7:
180

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The Sixth Form admission number is 140. The criteria for admission is as follows:

Level 3 qualifications

For both Academic (A Level) and Vocational (e.g. BTEC):

- At least a grade 4 in English and maths (minimum of 5 in some subject areas)
- The individual student's Attainment 8 figure is used as an indicator for suitability of study
- Any other specific grade needed for individual courses

Whatever the level of ability, all students are expected to show a commitment towards studying, an enthusiasm for success and a willingness to follow the dress code.

6.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose statement of special educational needs (SEN) or 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 in appendix A, in order until all places are filled.

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 random allocation as a tie breaker to decide between applicants. This process will be independently verified.

7. In-year admissions

The local authority will co-ordinate admissions for in-year applications. You can apply for a place for your child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose statement of SEN or EHC plan names the school will be admitted.

Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for (as agreed by the local authority), 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 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 appendix A of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

8. Appeals

Parents have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel should they be dissatisfied with an admission decision in relation to the offering of a place for a child to the school. The Independent Appeals Panel which offers this service to Rushden Academy is The Peterborough Diocese Board of Education which is entirely independent of the school and will be comprised of three members who will include:

- At least one person who has no personal experience of Rushden Academy defined as a 'lay member'.
- At least one person with experience in education.

The arrangements for appeals will be in line with the Code of Practice on Academy Admission Appeals published by the Department for Education as it applies to academies.

Parents will normally have 14 days (10 working days) after notification of a place not being offered at the school to lodge an appeal. The notification will indicate the reasons for refusal of a place and of the right of appeal.

Parents wishing to appeal against an admission decision by Rushden Academy should send a completed appeal form to the Clerk to the Appeal Panel at the address given on the appeal form. Other documents may be submitted in support of an appeal and should be lodged with the Clerk to the Appeal Panel not less than 7 days before the appeal hearing.

Parents will be given 14 days (10 working days) notice of the appeal hearing, unless they agree to a shorter period of notice. At least 7 days before the hearing Rushden Academy will provide the parent with a written statement detailing the reasons why it has not been possible to allow the student to attend the school. The Appeal panel will have the discretion to refuse to admit late evidence.

The Clerk to the Appeal Panel will, if possible, inform parents of the Appeal Panel's decision on the day of the hearing. In the case of the appeal hearings taking in excess of one day the Clerk to the Appeal Panel will contact parents with the decision on the final day of the hearings. The parents will also be informed of the outcome in writing within 14 days (10 working days) of the date of the hearing. In the case of unsuccessful appeals the Appeal Panel will give the parents their reasons for not upholding the appeal.

9. Fair Access

Rushden Academy participates in the Northamptonshire County Council Fair Access Protocol.

The purpose of the Fair Access Protocol is to ensure that vulnerable children are offered a school place as quickly as possible and to evenly spread children with

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additional needs across all schools in the county. The protocol only applies to mid-term applications; it does not operate when children transfer from primary school to secondary school.

10. Fraudulent or Misleading Applications

We have the right to investigate any concerns we may have about an application and to withdraw the offer of a place if we consider there is evidence that you have made a fraudulent claim or provided misleading information, for example a false address was given which denied a place to a child with a stronger claim. We reserve the right to check any address and other information provided so we can apply the oversubscription criteria accurately and fairly.

11. Monitoring arrangements

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

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the trust will publicly consult on these changes.

This policy was been approved by the board on: **12/11/19**

Signature of AIB chair:



Name of AIB chair: **Tim Foster**

Appendix A – Rushden Academy

1. Oversubscription Criteria:

If there are more requests than there are places available within the Academies admission number, places will be allocated in accordance with the following criteria and in the order shown below:

- a) Children who, at the time of admission, are in the care of a local authority or are provided with accommodation by the authority (looked after children). Also children who were previously looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order, residence order or a special guardianship order. A looked-after child is defined in Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.
- b) Children who live in the catchment area served by the Academy, who have a brother or sister attending the Academy provided that the brother or sister is of compulsory Academy age and will continue to attend that Academy the following year. The definition of brother or sister includes step-brothers, step-sisters, half-brothers, half-sisters and adopted brothers and sisters and children living in foster care, that are living at the same permanent address.
- c) Other children who live in the catchment area served by the Academy.
- d) Children living outside the catchment area with a brother or sister who currently attends the Academy, provided that the brother or sister is of compulsory Academy age and will continue to attend that Academy the following year
- e) Children by reference to the distance from home to the preferred Academy. If it is not possible to meet all of the requests in any one of the categories described above, they will be prioritised by reference to distance from home to the Academy. If a tie break situation arises, places will be offered as per paragraph 6.3 above.

Brothers and Sisters

We see the benefits of children from the same family attending the same Academy and we give priority to brother and / or sister connections in its policy for allocating places. The definition of brother or sister includes step-brothers, step-sisters, half-brothers, half-sisters and adopted brothers and sisters and children living in foster care living at the same permanent address. However, where the Academy is over-subscribed no guarantee can be given that places will be available for brothers and sisters. Where the final place in a year group is offered to one of twins or other multiple births the parent has to decide which child will take up the place.

Compulsory Academy age

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Brothers and sisters are required to be of compulsory Academy age within the oversubscription criteria. This means they must be attending in Years 7 to 11 at the time that the applicant would be joining the Academy.

Distance

If it is not possible to meet all of the requests in any one of the categories described above, the requests will be prioritised within that category by reference to distance. A straight-line measurement will be made, using a computerised mapping system, from the centre of the child's residence - to the centre of the preferred Academy site. The address used must be the child's permanent home address. The shortest measurement will have the highest priority. Where the final place in a year group can be taken by two or more children living an equal distance from the Academy, the Local Governing Body will use the tie break method as per paragraph 6.3 in the policy.

Home address

A pupil's home address is considered to be a residential property that is the child's only or main residence. At the time places are allocated, proof of permanent residence at the property concerned may be required. Where documentary evidence can substantiate to the satisfaction of the Local Authority that care is split equally between parents at two homes, parents must name the address to be used for the purpose of allocating a place.

If a place at the Academy is offered on the basis of an address that is subsequently found to be different from a child's normal and permanent home address, then that place is liable to withdrawal.

Children of UK service personnel and other Crown Servants will be treated as meeting the residency criteria for a catchment area once proof of posting has been provided.

Catchment area

One of the aims of the Academy is to serve its neighbourhood and develop links with the local community to strengthen the Academy and the community. The area served by an Academy is known as the catchment area.

Late Applications

All applications received up to and including 31 October 2020 will be treated as on time. Applications received after this date due to a house move will be treated as on time up to 31 December 2020. All other applications received after 31 October 2020 will be considered to be late and may not be processed until after 1 March 2021.

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Operation of Waiting Lists

Subject to provisions regarding waiting lists the Local Authority's co-ordinated admissions scheme, the Academy will operate a waiting list for each year group. Where in any year Rushden Academy receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until 31st December. This will be maintained by Rushden Academy and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.

Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription set out in paragraph 1 (clauses a to e) above. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.