



PIONEER ACADEMIES COMMUNITY TRUST

Admissions Arrangements & Policy for the School Year 2026/27

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1. Introduction

Pioneer Academies Community Trust is its own admissions authority; this means that the Trust is responsible for setting its own admissions arrangements.

For the purposes of aligning with other local schools and academies, the Trust continues to use Barnsley local authority for the coordination of all admissions in our area, and making offers of places. Further details on how to apply for a school place can be found on the council's website [School Admissions](#)

2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- explain how to apply for a place at a school within Pioneer Academies Community Trust
- set out the arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place.

3. 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](#)

The Trust is required by our 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.

4. 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.

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.

5. Admission Arrangements

The admission arrangements set out how many children the schools will admit and how they will decide which applicants will qualify for places if the number of applications is more than the number of places available.

For the school year 2025/2026 the schools that make up Pioneer Academies Community Trust will apply the following admission arrangements via the associated procedures of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council. These have not changed from previous years [Primary School Places](#)

Applications for pupils having an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) will be dealt with in accordance with the Code of Practice on Special Educational Needs.

Where a school is named in a child's EHCP following consultation with the Headteacher and the Trust, the school is required to admit the pupil.

If there are fewer applications than places available, all applicants will be allocated a place.

6. 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 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 7. 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.

7. Allocation of places

7.1 Published Admission Number

The schools within the Trust each have an agreed admission number of **30** pupils for entry in Reception.

7.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plans name 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.

1. Highest priority will be given to looked-after children and all previously looked-after children who apply for a place at the school.
2. Priority will next be given to children with brothers and/or sisters attending the school on the proposed date of admission.
3. Priority will next be given to children living nearest the school; the distance to be measured by a straight line between the centre point of the child's ordinary place of residence and the main entrance to the school building.

7.3 Children below compulsory school age

Where children below compulsory school age are offered a place at the school, they will be entitled to attend the school full-time in the September following their fourth birthday.

Parents may defer their child's entry to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age, and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year the offer was made for.

Where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

Requests for a child to start their schooling on a part-time basis or to defer the start until they reach compulsory school age should be addressed to the Headteacher, following notification of a place at the school.

7.4 Summer born children (children born between 1st April and 31st August)

In line with the DfE's non-statutory guidance ([Summer Born Children](#)) the Trust supports the rights of parents to decide their child will not start school until compulsory school age, but does not believe it should become the norm for summer born children to begin reception at age 5.

The Trust would encourage parents who are considering delaying their child's admission to visit our schools to better understand the provision on offer and how children's individual needs are supported.

Parents wishing to delay their child's entry to school must apply to the Admissions Service also providing any supporting information and evidence for consideration.

Parents must however, still apply for a school place during the normal admissions round by the published closing date for their child's chronological year group.

The request for delayed admission must be made at the same time as the application for admission into the normal age group. The Trust as the Admission Authority delegate the decision to the Headteacher of the school who will take account of all information provided.

Parents will be notified as soon as possible of the decision and prior to primary offer day.

Should the request for delayed admission be agreed, the parent can withdraw their application for the child's chronological year group.

The parent will then need to apply again in the following year as part of the main admissions round and their application will be considered with all other applications at the time.

There is no guarantee that the child will be admitted to the school of preference at that time.

If the request for delayed admission is refused, the parent must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group or refuse it and make an in-year application for admission to Year 1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday.

7.5 Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Barnsley local authority'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.

8. In-year admissions

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.

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 1 of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 7.2 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Applications for in-year admissions should be sent to the local authority admissions team who will liaise with the relevant school.

Parents will be notified of the outcome of their in-year application in writing within 15 school days.

9. Appeals

If your child's application for a place at the school is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals. If you wish to appeal, you must follow the procedures set out by the Admissions Team [School Admissions Appeals](#)

As the admissions authority, the Trust employ the services of an independent appeals clerk who will coordinate the appeals process on behalf of the school:

Admission Appeal Clerk
PO Box 1694
Huddersfield
HD1 9DL
Telephone: 07949 707868 Email: churchschoolappeals@gmail.com

Normally appeal hearing will be held within six weeks of the closing date for receiving the notice of appeal.

10. Monitoring arrangements

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

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the governing board of each school 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.