

Admissions Policy

This document sets out the admission arrangements for Abacus Belsize Primary School (the School) for the year 2025/2026. The admission arrangements in this policy were determined on 24 November 2023.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain **how parent(s)/carer(s) can apply** for a place for their child at the School
- Set out the School's **arrangements for allocating places to the student(s)** who apply
- Explain **how parent(s)/carer(s) can appeal** against a decision not to offer their child a place

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](#).

Reference in the codes and elsewhere to admission authorities shall be deemed to be references to the Anthem Community Council acting on behalf of Anthem. This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

The school is committed to equality of opportunity and to eliminating unlawful discrimination. In respect of admissions, the school will not discriminate on the grounds of disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief (including lack of religion or belief); sex; sexual orientation; age or marital or civil partnership status, against a person in the arrangements and decisions it makes as to who is offered admission as a student. All students and prospective students are treated equitably.

The School will participate in the co-ordinated admission arrangements operated by the local authority and will adhere to the Local Authority Fair Access Protocol. Notwithstanding these arrangements, the Secretary of State may direct the School to admit a named student on application from the local authority. Before doing so the Secretary of State will consult the School.

How to apply

For applications in the normal admissions round parent(s)/carer(s) should use the co-ordinated admission application process arranged by their home local authority (regardless of which local authority the School is in). Parent(s)/carer(s) can use this form to express their preference for a minimum of three state-funded schools, in rank order.

Parent(s)/carer(s) will receive an offer for a school place directly from their local authority.

Consideration of applications

The School will consider all applications for places. The School has an agreed admission number of 30 (the Published Admission Number – PAN) student(s) for entry in Reception. Where fewer than 30 applications are received, the School will offer places to all those who have applied. We reserve the right to check any address and other information provided so we can apply the oversubscription criteria accurately and fairly. As an admission authority we have the right to investigate any concerns we may have about your 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 if a false address was given which denied a place to a student with a stronger claim.

The School may set a higher PAN for any specific year. Before setting a PAN higher than its agreed admission number, the School will inform the local authority and reference this change on the School's website. Students will not be admitted above the PAN unless exceptional circumstances apply, and such circumstances shall be reported to the Secretary of State.

Procedures where the School is oversubscribed –

If the School is oversubscribed, after the admission of student(s) with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) where the school is named in the EHCP, priority for admission will be given to those student(s) who meet the criteria set out below, in order:

- Looked After Child(ren) and Previously Looked After Child(ren)¹, including those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order).
- Student(s) with a sibling attending the school at the time of application². In the event of there being more siblings than there are remaining places in a year group, it is possible that a sibling under these circumstances would not be offered a place. Where siblings exceed the remaining places in a year group, places will be allocated by the drawing of lots. Please also see the note on multiple births and siblings in the same year below.

¹ A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Child(s) Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school. 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. Previously looked after child(s) are child(s) 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). This includes child(s) who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and child(s) who were adopted under the Adoption and Child(s)'s Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders). Child arrangements orders are defined in s.8 of the Child(s) Act 1989, as amended by Section 12 of the Child(s) and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order. Section 14A of the Child(s) Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

² 'Sibling' is defined in these arrangements as half, full, step, adoptive or foster brother or sister living predominantly in the same home as the child at the time of application and/or at the time of admission.

- Student(s) of any member of staff at the School, in either of the following circumstances:
 - a) The member of staff has been employed at the School for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the School is made, or
 - b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

- Student(s) from within the existing catchment area originally designated to founders by the Secretary of State by random allocation. The home address is considered as the address where the child lives for the majority of term time with a parent (as defined in section 576 of the Education Act 1996) who has parental responsibility for the child (as defined in the Student(s) Act 1989). Where a child lives normally during the school week with more than one parent at different addresses, the home address accepted for the purposes of school admissions will be the one where the child spends the majority of term time. If a parent can show that their child spends an equal amount of time at two addresses during school term time with a parent, they can choose which address to use on the application. If a parent has more than one home, we will accept the address where the parent and child normally live for the majority of the school term time as the home address.

- Student(s) living outside the catchment on a straight line distance from St Peter's Church, Belsize Square, NW3 4HJ to the applicant's normal residence.

Tie-break

The oversubscription criteria are listed in the order we apply them. If it is necessary to distinguish between more than one applicant in any criteria, the next criteria will be applied until the tie-breaker is used. 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 by someone who does not work at the school or the local authority.

Multiple births and siblings in the same year

In the case of multiple births (e.g. twins, triplets) and where there is only one place available in the School, these will be considered together as one application and the School is authorised to exceed its admission number.

If brothers and sisters in the same year group are split by operation of the oversubscription criteria, the school will go above its published admission number to accommodate all student(s) unless this would make the class too large and prejudice the education of the other student(s) or when this would breach infant class size limits.

Student(s) of UK Service Personnel (UK Armed Forces)

In order to support the military covenant aimed at removing disadvantage for UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces), and Crown Servants returning from abroad the following arrangements will apply;

- If an application is supported by an official letter declaring a posting and a relocation date then an intention to move to a confirmed address or quartering within the UK will be accepted for a student(s) for the purposes of implementing the oversubscription criteria.
- Where an application is not supported by an official letter declaring a posting and relocation date, or is not being made due to a new posting then the student's current address will be used to examine the application against the oversubscription criteria until the child is formally resident in the new address.
- Proof of intended occupation of the residential address such as mortgage statement, exchange of contracts or signed tenancy agreement will be required. For applicants participating in the Future Accommodation Model trial, a letter accepting an address under the scheme will be accepted if a signed tenancy agreement cannot be provided.
- An offer may be withdrawn if a student does not reside at the address listed on the application form if the school is oversubscribed and use of an incorrect address has resulted in a place being denied to another child who would otherwise have been offered the place.
- If a family have provided the required proof of posting, a unit postal address will be accepted for the purposes of operating the oversubscription criteria if parent(s)/carer(s) are unable to provide an address or prefer to use the unit address. This unit will be the base to which the parent has been posted.
- In all cases where an applicant is considered after national offer day of the admitting year and parent(s)/carer(s) can demonstrate that the child is a child of a crown servant returning from abroad or is a child of a serving member of the armed forces, the School will consider whether to offer a place at a School even if the School has reached its official PAN. When making the decision whether to offer over PAN the School will consider the circumstances of each case including:
 - If the applicant would have been offered a place had they applied on time in the admissions round of the year of entry.
 - Whether there is any student on the reserve list with higher priority under the oversubscription criteria.
 - Whether admission of a further student would prejudice the efficient education and efficient use of resources and this prejudice would be excessive.

The School has discretion to admit above the admission number in these circumstances, but they are not obliged to do so. If a place is refused, parent(s)/carer(s) will be informed of their right of appeal.

Student(s) below compulsory school age

Where student(s) 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. A student reaches

compulsory school age on the prescribed day following his/her fifth birthday (or on his/her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days correspond to school terms. They are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

Parent(s)/carer(s) may defer their child's entry to the School until later in the School year but not beyond the point at which the student reaches compulsory school age, and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the School year the offer was made for, whichever is the sooner. Where the parent(s)/carer(s) wish, student(s) may attend part-time until later in the School year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. Parent(s)/carer(s) must contact the Headteacher to make these arrangements.

Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parent(s)/carer(s) are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parent(s)/carer(s) of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to School until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than Year 1. It is important for parent(s)/carer(s) to note that they will have the opportunity and responsibility to provide whatever evidence they wish to support their request. Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made based on 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:

- Parent(s)/carer(s)' 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

If applying during the normal admissions round, parent(s)/carer(s) can apply for a place in the child's normal age group at the usual time. At the same time, parent(s)/carer(s) may make their application for admission out of the normal age group. 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. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parent(s)/carer(s) have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parent(s)/carer(s) will be informed of the School's decision before April 16 and will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Once informed of the School's decision, parent(s)/carer(s) may withdraw their application for the normal age group if their application for deferment is agreed or decide to accept the offer of the normal age range if they are refused. Alternatively, they could refuse this offer and make an in-year application (see below). Parent(s)/carer(s) 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.

Operation of waiting lists

Where in any year the School receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate. The School will hold the waiting list for the duration of the academic year. The School will also maintain waiting lists for year groups other than Reception.

Student(s)'s position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out above. Where places become vacant, they will be allocated to student(s) on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. The waiting list for admissions will be ranked again every time a child is added, in line with the published oversubscription criteria. For the intake year the list is held until the end of August. After this the school admissions code requires that schools keep the reserve list until the end of the autumn term.

Where a child changes address after joining the waiting list, parent(s)/carer(s) must inform the school and provide proof of the new address. The distance and random ranking will then be recalculated once proof of address is provided to the school.

In-year applications

Parent(s)/carer(s) can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. Applications for in-year admissions should be sent to the school. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all student(s) whose EHCP names the School will be admitted. If admission would cause an infant class to be unlawfully large or prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources, it may be necessary to refuse a place.

If there are no spaces available at the time of the application, the child's name may on request be added to the waiting list for the relevant year group. Please see above for how the waiting list is operated.

Appeals

If an application for a place at the school is unsuccessful (whether made during the normal admissions round or in-year), parent(s)/carer(s) will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals. If parent(s)/carer(s) wish to appeal, they must set out the grounds for the appeal in writing and send it to the school: admin@abacus.anthemtrust.uk Further details on the school's appeals timeline can be found on our website.

Monitoring of this policy

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Anthem every year.

Whenever relevant changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the School will publicly consult on these changes in accordance with the Admissions Code.