



## The Magna Carta School – Unity Schools Trust Admissions Policy 2026-27



<b>Policy Approved:</b>	December 2024
<b>Next Review:</b>	January 2026
<b>Effective Date:</b>	September 2025

### 1. Aims of this Policy

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 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 2021](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

The school is required to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#).

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** will be considered to be children who are in the care of a Local Authority or being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989, e.g. fostered or living in a children's home, at the time of making an application to the school.

**Previously looked-after children** will be considered to be:

- Children who have previously been in the care of a Local Authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 and who have left that care through adoption, a child arrangements order (in accordance with Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 and as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014) or special guardianship order (in accordance with Section 14A of the Children Act 1989).
- Children who were previously in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of having been adopted. 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.

A person will be considered to be a child's **parent** if they are living in the same family unit as the child at the same address and are:

- their mother or father;

- any other person who has parental responsibility, such as an adoptive parent, step-parent, a special guardian or person named in a child arrangement order;
- any other person who does not have parental responsibility but otherwise has the care of the child, such as a foster carer.

#### **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 schools are in). You can use this form to express your preference for a maximum of six state-funded schools, in rank order. The closing date for applications is 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025.

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority.

#### **5. Request for Admission Outside the Normal Age Group**

Parents may choose to seek a place outside their child's chronological (correct) year group. Decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and what is in the best interests of the child concerned:

- Parents who are applying for their child to have a decelerated entry to school, i.e. to start later than other children in their chronological age group, should initially apply for a school place in accordance with the deadlines that apply for their child's chronological age. If, in liaison with the Head of School for admissions, Governors agree for the child to have a decelerated entry, the place cannot be deferred and instead the applicant will be invited to apply again in the following year for the decelerated cohort
- Parents who are applying for their child to have an accelerated entry to school, i.e. to start earlier than other children in their chronological age group, must initially apply for a school place at the same time that other families are applying for that cohort. If, in liaison with the Head of School for admissions, Governors agree for the child to have an accelerated entry, the application will be processed. If it is not agreed for the child to have an accelerated entry, the applicant will be invited to apply again in the following year for the correct cohort.

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 Head of School'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 Admission Number

The school has an agreed admission number of 255 pupils for entry in Year 7.

### 6.2 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.

- i. Highest priority will be given to looked-after children and all previously looked-after children who apply for a place at the school.
- ii. Priority will next be given to children on the basis of social or medical need. The exceptional social or medical circumstances might relate to either the child or the parent/carer.

Supporting evidence from a professional is required such as a doctor and/or consultant for medical cases, or social worker, health visitor, housing officer, the police or probation officer for other social circumstances. This evidence must confirm the circumstances of the case and must set out why the child should attend the school and why no other school could meet the child's needs.

Providing evidence does not guarantee that a child will be given priority at the school and in each case, a decision will be made based on the merits of the case and whether the evidence demonstrates that a placement should be made above any other.

Common medical conditions and allergies can usually be supported in all mainstream schools, therefore priority under the school's social or medical need criterion would not normally be given for these

In addition, routine child-minding arrangements would not normally be considered to be an exceptional social reason for placement at the school.

- iii. Priority will next be given to children of staff at the school, in either of the following circumstances:
  - a. The member of staff has been employed at the school for 2 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.

For applications made as part of the normal intake, the length of employment will be considered as of the closing date for applications. For in year applications and for the purpose of maintaining a waiting list, the length of employment will be considered as of the date the application is received or the date a place becomes available, if a place is considered from the waiting list.

Any applications made under this category must be supported by a Supplementary Information Form which must be completed and returned to [admissions@mcs-unity.co.uk](mailto:admissions@mcs-unity.co.uk).

- iv. Priority will next be given to children with siblings who are still on roll at the school at the time of admission. A sibling of the same parents will be considered to be a brother or sister whether living at the same address or not. Fostered and adopted children and step, or half brothers and sisters, living at the same address will all be classed as siblings.
- v. Priority will next be given to children who attend named feeder schools: The Hythe School, Thorpe Lea Primary School, Manorcroft School, St. Ann's Heath Junior School, St. Jude's Church of England Junior School, Thorpe Church of England Primary School and Lyne and Longcross C of E (Aided) Primary School.
- vi. Priority will then be given to remaining applicants based on the distance they live from the school, with children living nearest having higher priority.

### **7. Tie Break**

Within each priority, where there are more applicants than places available, priority will be given to children who live nearest the school. The distance is measured in a straight line from the address point of the student's home, as set by ordnance survey, to the nearest school gate available for students to use.

Where two or more children share a priority for a place, e.g. where two children live the same distance from the school, the school will draw lots to determine which child should be given priority.

In the event that the school has one place to offer and the next child on the waiting list is one of twins, triplets or other children of multiple births, the school will offer both twins, all triplets or children of multiple birth a place even if this means temporarily going over the published admission number.

### **8. Home Address**

The child's home address excludes any business or childminder's address and must be the child's normal place of residence. It also excludes any relative's address unless the child lives at that address as their normal place of residence. Where the child is subject to a child arrangements order and that order stipulates that the child will live with one parent/carer more than the other, the address to be used will be the one where the child is expected to live for the majority of the time. For other children, the address to be used will be the address where the child lives the majority of the time. In other cases, where the child spends an equal time between their parents/carers, it will be up to the parent/carers to agree which address to use. Where a child spends their time equally between their parents/carers and they cannot agree on who should make the application, we will accept an application from the parent/carer who is registered for child benefit. If neither parent is registered for child benefit we will accept the application from the parent/carer whose address is registered with the child's current school.

A temporary address will not generally be accepted if the main carer of the child still possesses or rents a property that has previously been used as a home address, nor will we accept a temporary address if we believe it has been used solely or mainly to obtain a school place when an alternative address is still available to that child. All distances will be measured using Surrey County Council's Geographical Information System to the nearest school measuring point to the home address.

The address to be used for the initial allocation of places will be the child's address at the closing date for application. Changes of address may be considered if there are exceptional reasons behind the change, such as if a family has just moved to the area. The address to be used for waiting lists, after the initial allocation, will be the child's current address. Any offer of a place on the basis of address is conditional upon the child living at the appropriate address on the relevant date. Applicants have a responsibility to

notify the school of any change of address.

### **9. Late Applications**

Applications received after the published closing date will be deemed as late and will only be considered, in accordance with Surrey's Secondary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme, after those received by the published closing date.

### **10. Waiting List**

Unsuccessful applicants will be placed on our waiting list.

Waiting lists will operate according to our oversubscription criteria without regard for the date the application was received or when a child's name was added to the waiting list.

The waiting list for each year group will be in operation until **31<sup>st</sup> August 2027**. After this date, applicants will need to complete an in-year application to continue on the waiting list from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2027.

### **11. Fair Access Protocol**

We participate in Surrey'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.

### **12. 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 6 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 following email address:

[admissions@mcs-unity.co.uk](mailto:admissions@mcs-unity.co.uk).

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

### **13. 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 set out the grounds for your appeal in writing and send it to the following email address: [admissions@mcs-unity.co.uk](mailto:admissions@mcs-unity.co.uk).

You can find details of the school's appeals timetable on the following webpage: [Admissions – Magna Carta School](#)

### **14. Monitoring Arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees every year.