

The Heights Primary School Policy for

ADMISSIONS 2025/2026

Responsible officer: Headteacher
Responsible Committee: Local Advisory Board
Admission Authority: Bellevue Place Education Trust (BPET)

Date of last review: February 2024
Date of next review: October 2024

1. Introduction

The Heights Primary School is a mainstream, outstanding primary school and provides school places for children aged 4-11. It opened in September 2014 in response to Reading Borough Council's school place consultation and is a free school.

The Heights Primary School joined the Bellevue Place Education Trust (BPET) on 1 December 2023. The Admissions Authority for the school is BPET who works with Reading Borough Council who co-ordinate the admission's process.

The Heights Primary moved to its permanent location at Mapledurham Playing Fields (at the heart of the catchment area) during the summer of 2021. The Heights promotes sustainable travel to and from school, and parents are strongly encouraged to support the School's Green Travel Plan. In recognition of these efforts we have been granted the Modeshift Stars Gold Award for sustainable travel.

The Heights has a vision to ensure all children ASPIRE: Achieving Success Promoting Individual Responsibility and Excellence. The Heights aims to be an innovative and dynamic place to stimulate young minds and ensure the best quality teaching staff and resources are used to achieve ambitious targets.

This policy has been approved by the Bellevue Place Education Trust in consultation with the Local Advisory Board and parents. The Heights is committed to straightforward, open, fair and transparent admissions arrangements and every effort has been made to ensure that these arrangements fully comply with the School Admissions Code 2021, the School Admissions Appeals Code and admission law as they apply to academies.

The policy is reviewed on an annual basis. The school last consulted on its Admissions Policy for the 2021 2022 academic year.

This policy was approved on 5 March 2024 by the BPET Board of Trustees.

2. Published Admissions Number (PAN)

For the 2025/26 academic year the Published Admissions Number (PAN) of The Heights Primary School is set at 50 for admission into Reception.

3. Application Process

Applications will be processed in accordance with the current coordinated admission scheme:

<https://brighterfuturesforchildren.org/for-parents-carers/schools/admissions-arrangements/>

In accordance with these arrangements, applications to The Heights Primary School must be submitted to the child's home Local Authority (LA), which may or may not be Reading Borough Council. The common application form provided by the relevant LA will need to be completed in order to apply for The Heights Primary School.

Parents/carers should complete the common application form provided by the relevant LA online (or paper copy by request) by the agreed deadline date.

4. Applications for Entry in 2025/26

Reading Borough Council's composite prospectus (guide for parents and carers) gives information about the school and assists parents in expressing their preference for a school. This can be obtained from the Brighter Futures for Children School Admissions webpage or from the Reading School Admissions Team at the Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading, RG1 7LU.

For 2025/26 admissions, the application must be submitted by 15th January 2025. Applications received after 15th January 2025 will be considered as a late application and considered in accordance with the coordinated admission arrangements of the home LA.

The normal admission round ends on 31st August 2025. After this date, any waiting list will be treated as In-Year admissions and the waiting list will be transferred to the school.

Applications will be considered for children whose fifth birthday falls on or between 1st September 2025 and 31st August 2026 and summer born children (whose fifth birthday falls on or between 1st April 2025 and 31st August 2025) who have not yet commenced full time education.

Parents will be informed by their home LA on 16th April 2025 if a place is offered at The Heights Primary School.

School admission authorities are required to provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday, but flexibilities exist for children whose parents do not feel they are ready to begin school before they reach compulsory school age:

1. Although children do not need to be in statutory education until the September, January or April after their fifth birthday, places offered are on a full-time basis from September 2025.
2. Parents may delay entry into school until their child reaches compulsory school age, being January 2026 or April 2026 following their 5th birthday.
Parents considering this are asked to contact the Headteacher as soon as possible.
3. Parents of children born on or between 1st April 2020 and 31st August 2020 ('summer born children') may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group to be admitted into Reception rather than Year 1 in September 2026. In such cases, applicants should submit an application on the common application form by the agreed deadline and also complete an offset request form. In these circumstances, the governing body is responsible for making the decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned. Parents should note that whilst there is in general no statutory barrier to children being admitted outside their normal age group, parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group.

If such a request is granted:

- (a) The original Reception place will be reallocated to another child; and

- (b) The parents/carers will need to re-apply for a Reception place in the next school year in the normal way. If the child receives a place in the following year, they will usually progress through the school in this year group (i.e. out of their normal age group).
Parents considering delayed entry are asked to contact the Headteacher as soon as possible.

4. Parents are also entitled to request part time education until the term after the child reaches the age of 5.
In such instances they should discuss details with the Headteacher.

The school will organise a transitional programme of visits and induction, details of which will be released shortly after Offer Letters have been sent out by the LA.

5. Over-subscription

If there are more applications than places available priority for places will be given according to the following over-subscription criteria. The over-subscription criteria take no account of the parents'/carers' order of preference and applications for each school named by the parents/carers.

Please note that children with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or Education Health & Care (EHC) plan that names The Heights Primary School will be allocated a place above all other applicants.

In the event of over-subscription available places will be awarded in the following order:

- 1) Looked after Children or Previously Looked after Children – Please see Note 1.
- 2) Children who have strong medical or social grounds for admission to The Heights School in particular. Please see Note 2.
- 3) Children whose permanent home address is in the catchment area of the school and have a sibling who is expected to be attending the school when the child starts school. Please see Note 3.
- 4) Children who have a sibling who was attending the school on 3rd October 2014 (the first national school census day for 2014/2015) and have a sibling (not necessarily the same sibling) who is expected to be attending the school when the child starts school. Please see Note 4.
- 5) Children whose permanent home address is in the catchment area of the school.
- 6) Children whose permanent home address is not in the catchment area of the school but have a sibling who is expected to be attending the school when the child starts school. Please see Note 3.
- 7) Other children.

6. Notes Relating to the Over-subscription Criteria

Note 1 – Category 1 – Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order including those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. 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 Children Act 1989).

Appropriate evidence needs to be submitted.

Note 2 – Category 2 – Medical / Social Reasons

Children with a chronic medical condition or strong social grounds in the family will be considered in this category provided a written request from a professional (i.e. Educational Psychologist, Social worker, Doctor) supporting the child or family is submitted. The request must state that The Heights is the *only* school suitable for the child because of the medical or social reasons of the child or family and that no other school can meet their needs. It is **not** sufficient for the professional to report what the parent/carer told them.

Note 3 – Category 3 and 6 – Divert rule

Where the child was admitted to The Heights Primary School as a lower preference school to their catchment area school, or the parents/carers did not apply for a place for their child at The Heights but were allocated a place at The Heights by Reading School Admissions Team, and, in either case, at the date the place was

offered the child's home address was outside the catchment area of The Heights, the application for any younger siblings for The Heights will be treated as within the catchment area of The Heights and within category 3.

However, please note that the usual tiebreaker will continue to apply, so in the case of more applicants than places in category 3, places will be allocated to those living closest to the data point of the area.

The divert rule does not apply if the older sibling joined the school as an In-Year Transfer.

Please mention this category on your application form if it applies to your child.

Note 4 – Category 4 – Siblings of founder pupil

Please mention this category on your application form if it applies to your child.

7. Definitions

Catchment Area and Data Point

The catchment area is shown on the school website. The data point is the school building at 129 Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7LB.

Tiebreaker

If it is not possible to offer a place to all children in a particular category, places will be allocated to those living nearest to the data point of the area, as defined in the above Catchment Area section. The distance is measured as a straight line between the Ordnance Survey data point for the child's home address and the identified data point above. In the rare event that it is not possible to decide between the applications of those pupils who have the same distance measurement then the place will be offered using random allocation.

Parent/Carers

A parent/carer is any person who has parental responsibility or care of the child. Parental responsibility for a child is set out in the Children Act 1989.

Home address

This is the permanent address of the parent/carer and their child, subject to the following criteria:

1. The home address is taken to be the address on the offer date (16th April 2025 for normal on time applications) and any change of address after submitting the application must be notified to the Admissions Team at Reading School Admissions Team, and the application will be reviewed using the new address.
2. The Local Advisory Board reserves the right to seek additional evidence of proof of address. If such additional evidence is required it must be provided within 2 weeks of the request being made.
3. Should the child regularly spend nights during the school week at more than one address the following rules will apply:
 - (a) the home address is taken to be the address where the child spends the most of these nights; and
 - (b) Should the child regularly spend nights during the school week (Sunday to Thursday nights) at more than one address and spend an equal number of nights during that time at more than one, the home address will be that of the parent/carer in receipt of child benefit for the child,

or, if child benefit is not receivable or if this is not one of the addresses at which the child spends most nights, that at which the child is registered with their GP

- (c) Where a family claims or it is evident that a child is resident at more than one address, justification and evidence of the family's circumstances (e.g. legal separation) will be required.
- 4. Temporary addresses cannot be used to obtain a school place whilst retaining a previous permanent home unless evidence is produced to show that this address is no longer available to the family (i.e. the property has been rented out). Where an application has been submitted which shows a new temporary address evidence of a rental agreement of at least a year that goes beyond 1st September 2025 will have to be submitted.

Any place offered based on misleading information and/or with the intention of deception or fraud concerning a permanent home address will be withdrawn.

Siblings

Siblings are older siblings for purposes of admission criteria during the routine admission rounds. Siblings are children who have either the same mother or father, or they are children who live together in a family unit and with their parent/carer(s). Siblings include adopted or foster brothers or sisters. Siblings must live at the same permanent home address as each other. If they do not live at the same address, then they are not treated as siblings.

Multiple births (twins, triplets etc.) and siblings with a different date of birth in the same year group: Places are offered according to the over-subscription criteria. In the event that this would result in splitting up children each case will be considered and in most cases the other child/children will be offered a place provided the admission will not prejudice the provision of efficient education and efficient use of resources.

8. In-Year Applications

The In-Year admissions arrangements for the school year 2025-2026 will use this Admission Policy 2025/26.

In Year Applications should be made directly to the School Office via admissions@theheightsprimary.co.uk who will advise if a place is available. In the event that no place is available, the applicant may choose to join the waiting list. Should places subsequently become available it will be allocated to those on the waiting list in accordance with the over-subscription criteria in Section 5 above.

The waiting lists for In-Year Transfers are reviewed at the end of each academic year. Applicants are asked to confirm whether they would like to keep their child on the waiting list. If an applicant does not reply they are removed from the waiting list.

9. Waiting Lists

After 16th April 2025 a child's position on the waiting list is determined according to the over-subscription criteria and will be re-ranked when new children are added to the list as a result of late applications, change of preference or change of address. When a place becomes available this will be offered to the next child on the waiting list. After the 1st September 2025 children identified for placement as part of Reading Borough Council's Fair Access Protocol can be placed above those on the waiting list. Positions on the waiting lists may go up or down due to pupil withdrawals, new or revised applications. The waiting list will be kept open until end of July 2026.

Any change of address after 16th April 2025 must be notified to the Reading School Admissions Team as the over-subscription rules will be applied to the applicant's circumstances at the date the offer is made.

10. Admissions Appeal

Parents who are unsuccessful in obtaining a place have the right to appeal against the decision to an Independent Appeal Panel and the appeal will be considered according to the School Admissions Appeals Code.

How to appeal will be explained by the home Local Authority.

The Appeal Panel has the power to make a decision to admit the child. That decision is legally binding upon the school. Appeals should be made within 20 days from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful.