ATTENBOROUGH LEARNING TRUST

Admissions Policy
Sparkenhoe Community Primary School
2026-7

Status: Policy
Applies to: All schools within Attenborough Learning Trust
Approved by: SSIC
Date approved: February 2026
Policy owner: Head of Governance
Version: 1.0

This policy should be read in conjunction with relevant statutory guidance and Trust policy and procedure.

Admissions Policy

This policy applies to all schools in Attenborough Learning Trust for 2026-2027. In each school the Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that all school specific information is completed.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out clearly the admission arrangements for families when seeking a first time or 'in year' school place at SPARKENHOE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL. Arrangements are made in accordance with Local Authority coordinated admissions arrangements.

1.2 Policy statement

This policy is to comply with the statutory duty placed on Attenborough Learning Trust and its primary, infant and junior schools to adhere to the national School Admissions Code, September 2021.

1.3 Definitions

This policy which follows the guiding principles and requirements of the National School Admissions Code and where the words 'must' and 'must not' represent a mandatory requirement.

1.4 Responsibilities

Attenborough Learning Trust has the responsibility to adhere and comply with the National School Admissions Code, 2021 working in partnership with Local Authorities

1.5 Related policies

National School Admissions Code, 2021

1.6 Monitoring

This policy will be monitored by the Trust and schools for which it applies to.

1.7 Review

The policy will be reviewed annually by the Trust Board for determination for the following year admission intake. If any proposed changes are suggested, these need to be consulted as per the requirements of the School Admissions Code

2. Admission arrangements

SPARKENHOE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL is a 3-11 years school in Leicester providing state funded education. SPARKENHOE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL is a member of the Attenborough Learning Trust. The purpose of this policy is to ensure families understand the process of applying for a school place and determine how places are allocated and offered in a transparent and fair manner.

The school admits children into Reception from the start of the autumn term. The Local Authority will make the offers of places on behalf of SPARKENHOE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL as required by the School Admissions Code, 2021

2.1 Published Admissions Number (PAN)

The school admits 60 pupils per year group at First Time Admissions (FTA). This is known as the Published Admission Number (PAN).

2.2 Special Educational Needs

Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) will be allocated a place before other applications are considered. These allocations will reduce the number of places available.

2.3 First Time Admissions

SPARKENHOE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL has a single start for first time admissions at the start of the autumn term for children aged four. Children are offered a school place from four years of age, the autumn term following their fourth birthday.

2.4 Making a First Time Admission Application (FTA)

Arrangements are made in accordance with the Local Authority's First Time Admissions Coordinated scheme. This means families must apply to the Local Authority where they live using the Common Application Form before the closing date for submissions (15th January). Families are encouraged to list three choices of schools on the application form including the catchment school for that area. Contact your Local Authority to find out your catchment school(s). The easiest way to apply for a school place is to apply online. To apply online or speak to the admission service at your Local Authority, please use the contact details below:

Leicester City Council

School Admissions Service - 0116 454 1009-option 1

admissions.online@leicester.gov.uk

Leicester City Council Admissions Website

2.5 Late Applications

Any applications received after the 15th January will be considered as a late application. These applications will be considered once all other applications that were received on time have been assessed against the oversubscription criteria by the Local Authority.

3. Priority and Oversubscription Criteria

Where the school receives fewer preferences than there are available places all pupils will be offered a place. At the point of first-time admission, if there are more requests for places than available, places will be allocated up to the PAN in accordance with the priority oversubscription criteria. All other outstanding requests will be refused subject to the provisions relating to exceptional circumstances.

3.1 Priority Criteria for Infant and Primary Schools

Criterion 1: Children in the care of a local authority within England or who were previously in the care of a local authority within and outside of England (see note 1).

Criterion 2: Children who have a serious medical condition or exceptional social or domestic needs that make it essential they attend the school requested (see note 2).

Criterion 3: Children whose home address is in the catchment area of the infant or primary school with a sibling at the school or the linked junior school, who will still be on roll when the applicant starts school (see note 3).

Criterion 4: Children whose home address is outside the catchment area of the infant or primary school with a sibling at the school or linked junior school, who will still be on roll when the applicant starts school (see note 3).

Criterion 5: Children whose home address is in the catchment area of the infant or primary school (see note 4).

Criterion 6: Children who are sons / daughters of staff working at the school for at least 2 years at the time of application (see note 5).

Criterion 7: Children whose home address is outside the catchment area of the infant or primary school and who have requested a place.

Within each criterion priority will be given to children living closest to the school, as measured on a straight-line basis using a geographical information system measuring from the Geo-code reference point from the child's home address to the Geo-code reference point for the school.

3.2 Priority Criteria for Junior Schools

Criterion 1: Children in the care of a local authority within England or who were previously in the care of a local authority within and outside of England (see note 1).

Criterion 2: Children who are on roll at the linked infant school at the closing date for applications who will still be on roll when the applicant starts school. These schools are:

- Green Lane Infant to Bridge Junior
- Inglehurst Infant to Inglehurst Junior
- Uplands Infant to Uplands Junior

Criterion 3: Children who have a serious medical condition or exceptional social or domestic needs that make it essential they attend the school (see note 2).

Criterion 4: Children whose home address is in the catchment area of the junior school with a sibling at the school or the linked infant school, who will still be on roll when the applicant starts school (see note 3).

Criterion 5: Children whose home address is outside the catchment area of the junior school with a sibling at the school or linked infant school, who will still be on roll when the applicant starts school (see note 3).

Criterion 6: Children whose home address is in the catchment area of the junior school (see note 4).

Criterion 7: Children who are sons / daughters of staff working at the school for at least two years at the time of application (see note 5).

Criterion 8: Children whose home address is outside the catchment area of the junior school and who have requested a place.

Within each criterion priority will be given to children living closest to the school, as measured on a straight-line basis using a geographical information system measuring from the Geo-code reference point from the child's home address to the Geo-code reference point for the school.

3.3 Notes on Priority Criteria

Note 1: A "looked after" child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority in England, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in England, in the exercise of their social services function at the time of making an application to the school. A "previously looked after" child is a child who was looked after, either in England or outside* of England, but ceased to be because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order. 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.

Note 2: All schools in Leicester have experience in dealing with children with diverse social and medical needs. However, there may be exceptional cases where there are compelling reasons why it is essential they attend the school requested. A separate application to be considered under this category will need to be made. Please refer to the full guidance shown in the Leicester City coordinated scheme.

Note 3: Sibling means a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister or child of the parent/carer's partner. In every case, the child must be living in the same family unit at the same address. Siblings must be on roll at the point of entry.

In the case of twins, triplet or other children of multiple births, if the final place is offered to one child, and the remaining sibling(s) would ordinarily be refused, places will be offered to the remaining sibling(s).

Catchment area is a geographical area, from which children may be afforded priority for admission to a particular school. Information about the catchment area for each school can be found on the Schools' Directory.

Note 4: Home address" means the child's permanent home address at the time of application. In the case of split households, it is the address of the person who receives the Child Benefit. 'At the time of application' means the closing date for applications. Informal accommodation arrangements with family and friends are not accepted unless there are very special circumstances and supporting proof is required. An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as the home address for the purpose of applying for a school place.

Catchment area is a geographical area, from which children may be afforded priority for admission to a particular school. Information about the catchment area for each school can be found on the Schools' Directory.

Note 5: Admission authorities may give priority in their oversubscription criteria to children of staff in the following circumstances:

- Where 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; and/or
- The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage

3.4 Tie Break

If any applicants live exactly the same distance from the school, they will be prioritised by the drawing of lots, supervised by an independent officer. This will be carried out by the presiding Local Authority. Where children of multiple birth (twins, triplets etc) are tied for the final place, we will admit such siblings even if this means exceeding the school's PAN.

If a tie-break is necessary to determine which child is admitted, the allocation of a place will be determined first by proximity to the school with those living nearest to the school being given priority. Measurement of distance is in a straight line from the centre point of the home property to the school's main designated front gate, using a computerised mapping system administered by the Local Authority.

3.5 Withdrawal of Allocated Places

The Local Authority for SPARKENHOE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL may withdraw places once offered in the following

circumstances:

- Where it is determined that the places were offered in error.
- Where the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.
- Where the family has not responded to the offer within the designated reasonable amount of time (20 school days)

3.6 Fair Access Protocol

Local Authorities are required to have Fair Access Protocols in order to make sure that unplaced, vulnerable children are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. SPARKENHOE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL will comply with Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol. This may mean admitting children above the PAN.

4. Deferred & Part-Time Entry into school

4.1 Deferred Entry

A family can defer the date of their child's admittance into school until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year which the application was made for. The request for deferred entry should be made in writing to the school and accompanied where possible with lead professional documentation supporting the application. Deferred entry should be indicated on the Common Application Form.

4.2 Part Time Entry

Where a family wishes, a child may attend school part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. The place at the school will be held open for the child and not made available to another child until the end of the academic year the place was applied for. Part-time entry should be indicated on the Common Application Form.

4.3 Admissions of Children Outside Their Normal Age Group

Families may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group, for example if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. The request for delayed entry should be made in writing to the school and accompanied where possible with lead professional documentation supporting the application.

Families of summer born children may choose not to send their 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 year rather than year one. (Children born between 1st April and the 31st August are classed as summer born). If families of a summer born children wish to defer until entry of the start of year one, they must make a new in-year application. If the families of summer born children wish for their child to start in reception a year later, and therefore be admitted outside their normal year group, they must request delayed entry as part of their Common Application Form.

When requests for entry outside of a child's normal age group are made, the school will base its decision on what is best for the child. The school will take into consideration the views of the family, headteacher and other professionals involved, using any supporting evidence.

To maintain fairness and consistency of approach, each case will be assessed using the following process and principles:

- An early discussion with the families, headteacher and other appropriate professionals

(for example Education Psychologist) as necessary, supported by existing documentation.)

If it is agreed to delay the child's entry in to school, this allows families to re-apply a year later along with other children; it does not mean a place will be held or guaranteed. Families have the statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at the school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if the child is offered a place at the school, but it is not in the preferred age group.

5. In Year (Mid-Term) and casual Admissions

Mid-Year application arrangements are made in accordance with the Local Authority's Mid-Term Admissions Coordinated scheme 2026/2027. This means families must apply to the Local Authority

where they live using the Common Application Form. It is recommended that families also contact the Local Authority which the desired school is located in to discuss applications.

Where there are multiple in-year admissions and the school do not have sufficient places for every child who has applied for one, places must be allocated based on the oversubscription criteria in the determined admission arrangements only. If places are available in the relevant year group they will be allocated. In determining whether a place is available, consideration will be given to whether the admission of a further child would prejudice the efficient provision of education and the efficient use of resources.

Where it is determined that a place must be refused, a refusal letter will be sent from the Local Authority to explain to the family their right to appeal, and how they should do this.

6. Over Subscription/Waiting Lists (OSL)

Families whose child have been refused a place will automatically be added to the Over Subscribed List (OSL) unless a higher preference school has been offered. The waiting list will be maintained until the end of the Autumn Term (31st December) after which it will be cleared. The OSL will be maintained by the home Local Admission Authority.

A child's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. This means that names can move down the list if someone applies later but fits into a higher criterion. Where places become vacant, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

7. Children of UK Service Personnel and Crown Servants

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, the school is required by Admissions Law to:

- Allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area (as long as one is available), provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date. The Trust will not refuse to process an application and must not refuse a place solely because the family do not yet have an intended address, or do not yet live in the area.
- Use the address at which the child will live when applying the oversubscription criteria, as long as the families provide some evidence of their intended address. We must use a Unit or quartering address as the child's home address when considering the application against the oversubscription criteria, where a family request it.

8. Children Who Have Been Permanently Excluded Twice or Display Challenging Behaviour

Where a child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools there is no requirement for the Trust to comply with preference of the family for a period of two years from the last exclusion. The Trust will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry, except for families of service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas.

Where the school receives an in-year application for a year group that is not the normal point of entry and there is good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour we may refuse admission and refer the child under the Fair Access Protocol. This may be the case if the cohort has a particularly high proportion of either children with challenging behaviour or previously permanently excluded pupils on roll compared to other local schools, and therefore we consider that admitting another child with challenging behaviour would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

9. Exceeding the PAN

The PAN only applies to the normal year of entry which is Reception. This means that the Trust may not refuse admission to other age groups on the grounds that they have already reached their PAN. The Trust may, however, refuse admission where the admission of another child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources in that year group. This includes Infant Class Size prejudice at any point of admission where the admission of a pupil would mean there were more than 30 pupils to one teacher.

The PAN can be exceeded under very limited exceptional circumstances such as:

- Looked After and Previously Looked After Children,
- Children with an EHCP naming the school,
- Children who are the subject of a successful appeal,
- Children admitted through the Fair Access Protocol.

In such circumstances:

- Families submit their application in the usual manner.
- Where the school wishes to exceed its admission number to accommodate exceptional circumstances the Trust will inform the Admissions Service.

Any admissions above the PAN will not constitute an increase to the PAN.

10. Appeals

All applicants refused a place at the school have a statutory right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code. Appeals will be dealt with by the Local Authority and details of how to appeal, including timescales, can be found on Local Authority website.

Any appeal will be heard by an independent appeal panel whose decisions can override the Admissions Policy. The panel will decide whether to uphold or dismiss the appeal. Where the panel upholds the appeal, the school is required to admit the child.