



Avanti Meadows Primary School, Bishop's Stortford

Admission Policy for 2021/2022

Introductory Statement

Avanti Meadows Primary School ("the School") is part of the Avanti Schools Trust, more information about the school can be found by visiting the website at www.avanti.org.uk/avantimeadows

The Trust Board of Avanti Schools Trust ("the Trust Board") is the "admission authority" for all schools within the trust, and is responsible for determining and implementing the admission arrangements for those schools.

Avanti Meadows Primary School is part of the Avanti Learning Village, the new all-through (4 to 16) provision in the north of Bishop's Stortford. The number of pupils admitted at 4 (Rising 5) years of age to Reception will be 90 and the number of pupils admitted at 11 years of age (Year 7) to the secondary phase of the Learning Village will be 180. In the first year of opening the school will admit up to 60 children into its Reception year group.

Although an application must still be made, in the future Year 6 pupils at Avanti Meadows Primary School will automatically be guaranteed a place in Year 7 at the Avanti Learning Village's secondary school although parents and carers will be free to submit applications for Year 7 places at other schools if they wish.

Admission Arrangements for entry into Avanti Meadows Primary School in September 2021.

Applications should be made online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions or parents can request an application form from the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043.

Definition of "Parent"

In this policy, a "parent" is defined as including a natural or adoptive parent of a child (irrespective of with whom the child lives, or whether the parent has contact with or parental responsibility for the child), as well as non-parents who have care of, or parental responsibility for, the child.

Published Admission Number ("PAN")

The published admission number ("PAN") for entry to Reception in 2021 is 60. Where fewer applicants than the published admission number for the relevant year group are received, offers will be made to all those who have applied.

Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan

As required by Section 324 of the Education Act 1996, Avanti Meadows Primary School will offer a place to children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that names the school. Children will be admitted to the school under separate statutory procedures, rather than under this policy. Where they will be admitted in the normal admission round (i.e. in the September following their fourth birthday), the number of places available within the PAN stated above will be reduced, otherwise they will be admitted over the PAN where necessary.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where the school is oversubscribed, the available places will be allocated to children in the following order of priority:

1. Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, 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 or became subject to a child arrangements order¹ or a special guardianship order.*
2. Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school.**
3. Children with a sibling*** attending the school at the time of application.
4. Children living in the Bishop's Stortford North development (boundaries/map included)
5. Children of a member of the school's staff who has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time of application.
6. All other children.

* A "looked after child" means any child who is in the care of a local authority or is being accommodated by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions as defined in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989. A child who was "a previously looked after child" means a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted, became subject to a child arrangements order (defined by Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 as amended), or became subject to a special guardianship order (defined by section 14A of the Children Act 1989). Relevant evidence will be required to be submitted (as per section 2.5 of the 2021 Admissions Code). A child who appears to have been in state care outside of England means a child who was in the care of or was accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation, or other care provider whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society. Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under Rule 1. Children who were not "looked after" immediately before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order, will not be prioritised under rule 1. Applications made for these children, with suitable supporting professional evidence, can be considered under rule 2. ¹ Children previously looked after abroad and subsequently adopted will be prioritised under Rule 1 if the child's previously looked after status and adoption is confirmed by Hertfordshire's "Virtual School".

** Rule 2 applications will only be considered at the time of the initial application, unless there has been a significant and exceptional change of circumstances within the family since the initial application was submitted. All schools in Hertfordshire have experience in dealing with children with diverse social and medical needs. However, in a few very exceptional cases, there are reasons why a child has to go to one specific school. Few applications under Rule 2 are agreed. All applications are considered individually but a successful application should include the following: a) Specific recent professional evidence that justifies why only one school can meet a child's individual needs, and/or b) Professional evidence that outlines exceptional family circumstances making clear why only one school can meet the child's needs. c) If the requested school is not the nearest school to the child's home address clear reasons why the nearest school is not appropriate. d) For medical cases – a clear explanation of why the child's severity of illness or disability makes attendance at only a specific school essential. Evidence should make clear why only one school is appropriate. A Rule 2 application will generally not be upheld in cases where more than one school could meet the child's need. In exceptional cases relating to a disability, where more than one school in the county can meet the child's specific needs, a clear and compelling case can be made for the "nearest" school with the relevant facilities, environment or location. You must clearly explain why attendance at the "nearest" school with these facilities is essential. Applications under Rule 2 can only be considered when supported by a recent letter from a professional involved with the child or family, for example a doctor, psychologist or police officer. The supporting evidence needs to demonstrate why only one named school can meet the social/medical needs of the child. Applications for children who were not

“looked after” immediately before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order may be made under this rule.

*** A “sibling” is defined in this policy as a full or half brother or sister, an adopted brother or sister, a step-brother or sister or a foster brother or sister. For the avoidance of doubt, the children of extended family members (for example, cousins) or friends will not be a sibling for the purpose of this policy.

Order of allocation and tie breaker

The order in which places will be allocated in each of the categories above will be by reference to the distance the child lives from the school, with those living closest to the school receiving highest priority. Distance will be measured by Hertfordshire County Council’s computerised mapping system which measures ‘straight line’ distances to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the ‘AddressBase Premium’ address point of your child’s house to the address point of the school. ‘AddressBase Premium’ data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences. When measurements involve flats in the same block, the distance will be to the main entrance of the block, with those on lower floors given priority.

In using distance as a tie-breaker, should there be more than one applicant for a final place living an identical distance from the school in question, the county council on behalf of the school, will use the random allocation facility within the Synergy “Admissions and Transfers System” pupil data base which is used for allocations.

Child’s Home Address

For the purpose of this policy, the child’s home address will be the residential address at which the child lives and sleeps for more than 50% of their time from Monday to Friday during term time. If a child spends time equally at two addresses it will usually be the address at which the child is registered with their GP and dentist. Business addresses will not be accepted. The child must be living at the address at the time of application and is anticipated to be living there at the time of admission.

Where an issue arises, the Trust Board reserves the right to seek supporting evidence that the residential address stated in the application for admission meets this definition before the child is admitted.

Children of UK Service Personnel and Crown Servants

The children of UK service personnel (UK armed forces) with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, the admission authority will: a) 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 Admission authority will not refuse to process an application and will not refuse a place solely because the family do not yet have an intended address, or do not yet live in the area. b) use the address at which the child will live when applying their oversubscription criteria, as long as the parents provide some evidence of their intended address. The Admission authority will use a Unit or quartering address as the child's home address when considering the application against their oversubscription criteria, where a parent requests this. This is an exception to the rule that the child must be living at the address at the time of application.

Statutory Maximum Infant Class Size

The statutory maximum number of pupils in a class in Reception to Year 2 is 30, however regulations set out categories of children who will be regarded as "excepted pupils" not counting towards the class size and can therefore be admitted.

Twins and siblings of a higher multiple birth will be "excepted pupils" where one or more of them achieve a place under the oversubscription criteria set out above, but their twin or sibling(s) of a higher multiple birth do not. In these cases, the twin or sibling(s) of a higher multiple birth will be admitted over the PAN.

Deferred Entry to Reception Year

Children are entitled to a full-time place in Reception year in the September following their fourth birthday. Children do not, however, reach compulsory school age until one of three prescribed days following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday, if it falls on a prescribed day). These prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

Parents who achieve a place for their child in Reception Year have a right to decide that they will defer the date that their child will start school until their child reaches compulsory school age, without losing the achieved place.

However, parents of "summer born children" (i.e. children born on or between 1 April and 31 August) cannot defer the date that their child will start school beyond the first day of the final term of the school year without losing the place that has been achieved, which will then be allocated to another child. Parents of "summer born children" do, however, have the right to release the achieved place and delay their child's start date for one whole academic year, when they will either seek admission to Year 1 (which is subject to availability of a place) or make a request for admission outside normal age group to Reception Year (which is at the discretion of the Trust Board) and go through the normal admission allocation process for that cohort (see below)

Part-Time Attendance in Reception Year

Parents have a right to decide that their child will attend School part-time until they reach compulsory school age on one of the three prescribed dates set out above. In the case of "summer born children", this right can be exercised during the final term of the school year. The right can also be exercised at the same time as deferred entry.

For example, a child born on 15 February will not reach compulsory school age until 31 March but is entitled to a full-time place in Reception Year from the preceding September. The child's parents can

decide that their child will not start school until 1 January and will attend part-time until 1 April, when they will attend full-time.

Admission of Children outside their Normal Age Group

Parents have a right to ask for their child to be admitted to a school to a year group other than their child's year group, either above or below. It is, however, for the Trust Board to determine whether to agree or refuse the application. In particular, parents of "summer born children" (i.e. those born on or between 1 April and 31 August) who want to delay their child starting school for one school year can ask for their child to be admitted to Reception Year rather than Year 1 at that time, one year below their normal age group.

The procedure for asking for admission of a child to a year group other than the child's normal year group is by letter to the school giving details of all relevant circumstances and attaching any relevant supporting evidence. The Trust Board will consider the request and make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the parent's views, the Principal's view, information about the child's academic, social and emotional development, the child's medical history and the view of their medical professionals (where relevant), whether the child has previously been education outside their normal age group, and whether they would have naturally fallen into a lower age group if they had not been born prematurely.

Parents should note that, where the Trust Board refuses a request for admission to a year other than the child's normal age group, there is no statutory appeal against that decision as there is with the refusal of a place, however parents may submit a complaint under the School's published Complaints Policy. Where a request is refused, the Trust Board will write to the parents clearly setting out their reasons for doing so. Where the Trust Board agrees a request in principle, they will write to the parents confirming their agreement. A request for admission outside normal age group is not an application for admission, and parents will need to submit a separate application for admission in the usual way at the appropriate time. Where a request for admission to a different year group has been agreed in principle, the letter from the Trust Board confirming this must be submitted with the application for admission.

It is important for parents to note that obtaining the Trust Board's agreement in principle to admission to a different year group does not mean that the child will achieve a place in that year group. The separate application for admission will be considered with all other applications for that year group and the oversubscription criteria applied where necessary.

This means that parents who obtain agreement in principle to their child being admitted one year later than usual to Reception Year may not achieve a place, and will then be in the position of having to apply to other schools for admission outside normal age group, or applying for admission to Year 1 which is subject to place availability.

Applications for Admission

Applications for admission for 2021 should be made on the online school application form available at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions by the closing date, which is 15th January 2021. Parents will be notified of the outcome of applications on "national offer day" which is on 16th April 2021.

Following the offer of a place at the school, parents/carers can be asked to provide their child's proof of identification and main residence. The forms of identification may include the child's short birth certificate, NHS registration card, council tax bill and recent utility bills.

Applications received by the Local Authority after the closing date for applications stated above will be late applications, and will not be considered until after applications received on or before the closing date for applications have been considered and places allocated. This means that the chance of achieving a place will be reduced. The names of those children who do not achieve a place will be placed on the waiting list (see below).

In-Year Admissions

Applications for in-year admissions should be made to the Local Authority. If more applications are received than there are places available, applications will be ranked by the governing body in accordance with the admissions/over subscription criteria as outlined above. Applicants will be notified of the outcomes by the school.

Fair Access Protocol

The school is committed to taking a fair and reasonable proportion of children who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as identified in the locally agreed Fair Access Protocol. Accordingly, outside the normal admissions round, the Trust Board will admit a child for whom a place is requested under the Fair Access Protocol agreed for that school year, even where this will result in the PAN being exceeded.

Waiting Lists

The school operates a waiting list for each year group for the duration of the school year. The names of all children who do not achieve a place in Reception Year will be placed on the waiting list, and it will be open to other parents to ask for their child's name to be placed on the waiting list following an unsuccessful application.

A child's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out above, and not by reference to the date that the application for admission was made. This means that a child's place on the waiting list may go down as well as up, as more applications are received from children with higher priority.

Statutory Right of Appeal

Parents have a statutory right of appeal to an independent appeal panel in the event of a refusal of a place. Appeals are dealt with strictly in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code 2012.

Information on the appeal timetable (including the deadline for requesting an appeal) will be published on the school's website (www.avanti.org.uk/avantimeadows) on or before 28 February after the closing date for applications for that year. Information will also be included in the letter sent to parents notifying them of a refusal.

False and/or Intentionally Misleading information

Parents should note that an offer of a place is likely to be withdrawn if it is found that it was made on the basis of fraudulent or intentionally misleading information provided by parents.