

## **Park Hall Junior Academy**

### **Admission Arrangements**

**September 2024 / 2025**

Children are normally admitted to Park Hall Junior Academy at the age of seven regardless of ability or aptitude.

Park Hall Junior Academy is fully inclusive and welcomes applications for the admission of children with special educational needs (SEN), physical, mental or behavioural disabilities and other protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010. The school's admission arrangements are determined and implemented with its equality duties in mind, including the public sector equality duty (PSED).

Children with an EHC plan are admitted to school under separate statutory procedures which are managed by the child's home local authority. Parents of children with an EHC plan should liaise with their home local authority's SEN team if they want Park Hall Junior Academy to be named in the child's EHCP as their child's school.

Where this happens in the normal admission round (i.e. admission to Year 3 in September) children with an EHC plan naming the school will be allocated places before all other children, which will reduce the number of places left within the PAN. At all other times, children with an EHC plan naming the school will be admitted irrespective of pupil numbers.

#### **Definition of a 'parent'**

In education law, the definition of a 'parent' includes a natural or adoptive parent of the child (regardless of whether they child lives with them, has contact with them, or they have parental responsibility for the child). It also includes a person who is not a natural or adoptive parent of the child, but who has care of and/or parental responsibility for the child.

#### **Published Admission Number (PAN)**

The published admission number for Year 3 is 102.

#### **Oversubscription criteria**

Where applications for admission exceed the number of places available, the following oversubscription criteria, in order of priority as set out below, will be used to decide which children will be admitted.

##### **1. Looked after children and previously looked after children.**

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, in England. A 'previously looked after child' is a child who was looked after in England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship order, as well as a child who appears to us to have been in state care outside of England (i.e. in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation or any other provider whose sole/main purpose is to benefit society), but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted.

Applications in this category may need to be supported by documentary evidence confirming the child's status, such as a signed letter from the child's social worker or former social worker confirming their current or previous status, an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order.

In the case of children adopted from state care outside England (as defined above), evidence of having been in state care outside England and of being adopted will be required. Ideally, this should be received by the application deadline in the normal admission round. When assessing the evidence provided, the DfE's current guidance will be followed.

Where the Virtual School Head has already verified the child's status, parents should let the Local Authority/school know, as there should be no need for further evidence to be provided in this case.

**2. Where the child has a sibling currently attending either Park Hall Infant Academy or Park Hall Junior Academy (Reception to Year 5), who will still be in attendance during the year of admission of the child.**

*A sibling is a child who resides at the same address as the child for whom a place is being requested and is one of the following:*

- a brother or sister sharing the same parents
- a half brother or sister sharing one common parent
- a step brother or sister (i.e. related by their parent's marriage) or legally recognised co-habitation
- any other child for whom the applicant child's parent would meet the definition of a 'parent' in education law (i.e. they have care of and/or parental responsibility for the child) and who is a permanent resident at the same address.

**3. Where the child is on the roll at Park Hall Infant Academy at the time of application and at the time of admission**

**4. Where there are exceptional medical or social grounds (supported in writing by the child's medical practitioner or social worker) for admitting the child which show that attendance at Park Hall Junior Academy is essential, and that no other school within a reasonable distance is suitable.**

*Applications in this category must be supported by evidence and will be subject to verification by the school's Admissions Committee. The medical or social grounds must relate to the child. The social grounds criterion is only likely to apply to children in need as defined by the Children Act (1989).*

**5. All other children not falling into the above categories.**

**Child's home address**

The home address for the child must be their permanent residence **at the time the place is offered**. It will be a residential (not commercial) property. If the property is rented or leased, the written rental agreement or lease must be signed by both parties (one of whom must meet the definition of a 'parent' in education law) and be for a **minimum of 12 months**.

If a child spends part of their week at a different address, their home address will be considered to be the address at which they live and sleep for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Thursday during term time.

Documentary evidence may be requested to support that the home address given in the application form meets the definition set out above.

Applications for the admission of children of UK Armed Forces Personnel with a confirmed posting or Crown servants returning from overseas, will be accepted and processed before the relocation date, where the application is accompanied by an official letter declaring the relocation date. The address used to apply the criteria in this policy will be the one at which the child will live, as long as the parents provide some evidence of this with their application. Alternatively, the parents can ask for a unit or quartering address to be used.

### **Tie breaker**

Where there are more applications than places received in any of the above categories, places will be allocated by reference to the distance of the child's home to the school, as measured in a straight line, from the centre point of the home address to the centre point of the school, using the Local Authority recommended software, with those living nearest to the school being accorded the highest priority.

Where there are two or more children for whom the distance is equidistant, random allocation will be used to allocate the place. The random allocation process will be supervised by someone independent of the school.

### **Multiple births**

While the school recognises the importance of allocating children who are twins, triplets or children of higher multiple births together, it is not always possible to ensure this. The school will try to ensure that as far as possible siblings (including twins, triplets or children from other multiple births) can attend the same school. However, in the event that there is an insufficient number of places to allocate to twins, triplets etc a decision will be made to consider going above the academy's PAN.

### **Applications to Year 3 in September and Late Applications**

Applications for admission to Year 3 in September are known as 'applications in the normal admission round'. Such applications may be made by the parents of pupils attending a single phase infant school or an all through primary school.

Parents must complete a Common Application Form (**CAF**) from their child's home Local Authority (usually via their website) and submit this and any supporting evidence on or before the closing date for applications, which is **15 January 2024**.

Offers in the normal admission round are made on 'national offer day', which is **15 April 2024**. This will include offers in respect of applications made after the closing date for applications, but in time to be responded to by national offer day.

A 'late application' is an application received before the first day of term in September but not in time for an offer to be made on national offer day. Late applications will be considered after all other applications have been processed, thereby reducing the chances of achieving an offer of a place at the school.

### **Mid-Year Admissions (i.e. In Year applications)**

An in-year application (known in Walsall as a Mid-Year admission) is an application for admission to Year 3 submitted on or after the first day of term in September, or for admission to any other year group at any time. This is also referred to as admission 'outside the normal admission round'.

The PAN set for Year 3 applies only for the duration of that school year. Applications to Year 3 may be refused where there are no places remaining in the PAN set for that intake, regardless of whether the application is made in the normal admission round or in-year.

Where an in-year application is received for a year group other than Year 3, the child must be admitted to the school unless admitting an additional child would prejudice the efficient provision of education and/or efficient use of resources. Where there are multiple applicants for a year group other than Year 3 and the school determines that some but not all of these applicants can be admitted without causing prejudice, the school will apply oversubscription criteria set out above to determine which of the children are offered a place.

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Parents wishing to obtain admission to the school for their child should contact the School Office, to enquire about the procedure to be followed.

Parents should carefully consider the oversubscription criteria stated above to determine whether other documentation must be submitted in support of the application. If not, there will be a risk that the child will be placed in a lower oversubscription category because they were not identified as qualifying for a higher one.

Ideally, parents will be notified in writing of the outcome of their in-year application within **10 school days** of receipt. In any event, parents will be notified of the outcome in writing within **15 school days**.

Where a place is offered, arrangements will be made for the child to be admitted and start school as soon as possible, particularly where they are not currently attending a school.

Where the application is refused, the refusal letter will set out the reasons why the admission of an additional child would prejudice the provision of efficient education and/or the efficient use of resources, in addition with information about the statutory right of appeal (including the deadline for lodging one).

### **Waiting List**

A waiting list for the school is maintained by Walsall Council on behalf of the school until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024. From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 the list will be maintained by Park Hall Junior Academy. Any place that becomes available will be allocated strictly according to the oversubscription criteria and tie breaker set out in this policy.

The name of all children who were unsuccessful in achieving a place at the school and were allocated a place at a lower preference school will be included on the list.

Children who are allocated a place at the school under the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over children on the waiting list.

### **Statutory Right of Appeals**

All parents have a statutory right of appeal against the refusal of a place, following an application in or outside of the normal admission round.

Any parent wishing to appeal against the refusal of a place should write to the Chair of Trustees at the school's address, saying that they would wish to appeal and the grounds for making the appeal. The Chair will arrange for an independent admission appeal panel to hear the appeal, and will contact the parents to explain the procedure and to invite them and/or their representatives to the hearing.

Full details of the statutory right of appeal will be included in the letter confirming the refusal of a place. The school will publish a timetable for appeals against the refusal of a place in the normal admission round alongside this policy, on or before 28 February in the year in which offers are made.

### **Requests for admission outside of normal age group**

Parents have a right to request that their child is admitted to a year group other than their child's normal age group. Such requests must be considered by the Admission Committee on behalf of the Trust Board, who will need to decide whether or not to agree the request in principle, or refuse the request, taking into account the factors below.

Requests for admission outside normal age group are not applications for admission, which must still be made in the usual way. Parents should make their requests well ahead of any application deadlines, so that they can obtain a decision in principle which will enable them to make informed decisions when applying for admission and deciding their school preferences. A separate request must be made to the admission authority for each school being considered.

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Decisions regarding admissions outside of the normal age range are made by the Admission Committee on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the parents' views, information about the child's academic, social and emotional development, the child's medical history and the views of their medical professionals, whether they have previously been educated or attended nursery out of their normal age group, and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group, if it were not for being born prematurely. They will also take into account the views of the Head of School.

Parents should make their request by submitting it in writing, together with any supporting evidence, to the school, either by email to [postbox@parkhall-jun.walsall.sch.uk](mailto:postbox@parkhall-jun.walsall.sch.uk) or by post/hand delivery to the school marked for the attention of Chair of Trustees.

The Admission Committee will notify parents of the outcome of their request formally in writing, explaining in full its reasons so that parents can properly understand why it came to that decision.

Where the request is agreed in principle, the letter should accompany the application for admission.

**Parents do not have a statutory right of appeal against a refusal of a request for admission outside normal age group, but they may submit a complaint under the school's Complaints Policy if they do not believe the request was dealt with by the Admission Committee properly.**