



HEARTWOOD

LEARNING TRUST

ADMISSIONS POLICY, CITY OF YORK

2026-2027

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO THE HEARTWOOD LEARNING TRUST
SCHOOLS/ACADEMIES* WITHIN THE CITY OF YORK

**PREVIOUSLY COMMUNITY OR VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED*

Please note: This policy complies with the requirements of the School Admissions Code 2021 and all current legislation regarding school admissions.

Introduction

1. This policy applies to applications for the following schools for whom the Heartwood Learning Trust is the admission authority, which are located within the City of York Local Authority area, and which do not have separate admission arrangements. These schools are:

- **Burton Green Primary School**
- **Poppleton Ousebank Primary School**
- **Skelton Primary School**
- **Vale of York Academy**

The Heartwood Learning Trust is also the admission authority for the following York schools that are not covered by this policy, but instead have their own separate admission arrangements. These schools are:

- **Manor CE Academy**

You can view these other policies by contacting these schools directly.

The Trust is responsible for determining the school's admissions arrangements (including this policy) and deciding who can be allocated a place in accordance with it.

2. This policy applies in the following admissions rounds:

- for **Burton Green Primary School, Poppleton Ousebank Primary School and Skelton Primary School** - the primary admissions round, that is when applying for a place in Reception as the normal year of entry to start primary school for the first time;
- for **Vale of York Academy** - the secondary admissions round, that is when applying for a place in Year 7 as the normal year of entry to start secondary school for the first time.

3. The **Published Admission Number (PAN)** is the number of pupils it is intended to admit into the first year group of school. This number differs for each school and for 2026-27 these PANs are:

- for **Burton Green Primary School, 30** places
- for **Poppleton Ousebank Primary School, 60** places
- for **Skelton Primary School, 26** places
- for **Vale of York Academy, 150** places

4. This policy complies with and operates within the relevant City of York Coordinated Admissions Schemes in the City of York Local Authority area. The admission authority for these schools is the trust board of the Heartwood Learning Trust.

5. In-year admissions are those that are made either during the school year, or for admission into year groups other than the normal year of entry. Where applications for an in-year place are received, whether a place can be offered will depend upon the availability of places in the relevant class/year group. If there are more applications for a place than places available, then the oversubscription criteria as in this policy will be applied to ascertain which child is most entitled to a place.

6. The admission of children into the Reception year at a primary school is a completely separate process to nursery admissions. Attendance at a particular nursery class or early years provider does not give a child any priority within the admissions policy for admission to primary school, even if the school and nursery are located on the same premises or run by the school itself.
7. Attendance at a particular primary school does not give a child any priority for admission to a secondary school covered by this policy, even if both schools are within the Heartwood Learning Trust, located on the same premises, or run by or share the same leadership or resources.
8. Advice and information for parent/carers on school admissions, including key information that applies to all applications as well as some frequently asked questions are available in the City of York Guide for Parents which is available at www.york.gov.uk/guideforparents or upon request from the City of York School Admissions team. It is recommended that all applicants consider the information in the [Guide for Parents](#) before making an application.
9. The admission of children with an **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)** are covered by different admission regulations. Following consultation, if a school within the Heartwood Learning Trust has been named, a place will be allocated for these children before considering other applications.

Admissions into Reception

1. Children will normally be admitted into the year group relevant to the child's age and will start full-time in the school year they turn five. All children will be offered the opportunity of a full time place from September in the year of entry.
2. This policy includes an option of 'delayed entry'. This means that parents/carers may secure a place at a school under the normal admission arrangements but choose to postpone their child's admission to school, as long as their admission is not delayed beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. A child normally reaches compulsory school age at the start of the term following their fifth birthday. The table below sets out the position:

Date of Birth	Date of Compulsory School Age	Latest Date Child may Start School Full-time
1 September 2021 - 31 December 2021	31 December 2026	The start of the 'Spring' term in January 2027
1 January 2022 – 31 March 2022	31 March 2027	The start of the 'Summer' term in April 2027
1 April 2022 – 31 August 2022	31 August 2027	The start of the 'Autumn' term in September 2027

If you would like to delay your child's entry, so they do not start full-time in September 2026, you must still apply at the normal time. Once allocated a school place, you should then advise the school in writing of your child's intended start date and keep in regular contact with the school regarding any changes to this intended

date. Start dates are recommended to be at the start of each half term, but these can be varied by agreement with the school.

The school will hold a place for that child and not offer it to another child during the remainder of the Reception year. You should contact the school to make arrangements for admission of your child by no later than 20 school days before the intended start date. If you do not contact the school in the 20 school days before an intended and/or previously communicated start date, the school will make all reasonable efforts to contact you by telephone and in writing at any known physical address or email address. In the event that all attempts to contact you are unsuccessful, the school place may be withdrawn.

3. Parents/carers will also be able to request a part-time place until the start of the term after the child turns five. It is a legal requirement that all children must enter formal full-time education at the start of the term after their fifth birthday, but if you would like to discuss part-time education for your child so they do not start full-time in September 2026, you must still apply at the normal time. Once allocated a school place, you should then ask the school in writing what part-time provision may be offered, advise them of your child's intended full-time start date and keep in regular contact with the school regarding any changes to this intended date.
4. Some parents/carers of 'summer born' children (those children born between 01 April and 31 August) may wish to investigate the possibility of 'deferred entry' into a lower year group. If you are considering this for your child, please contact the LA [School Admissions team](#) who can provide you with information and advice.

If you would like to defer your child's entry, so they do not start in Reception in September 2026, but instead start Reception in September 2027, you must still apply at the normal time and parallel to your application, put a formal request in writing to defer your child's admission to a lower year group.

For the purposes of coming to a decision on such deferrals for those children living in the City of York, the LA has developed a city-wide policy and invited all other admission authorities to take part in joint arrangements. Heartwood Learning Trust has adopted the City of York Delayed and Deferred Admissions Policy for the purposes of administering requests for deferred entry for 'summer born' children. More information on delayed and deferred entry can be found in the [City of York Delayed and Deferred Admissions Policy](#).

Places are not held open for children who defer entry, so parent/carers must, if their request is approved, reapply **by 15 January the following year** for a place in Reception alongside children who are one school year younger. Parents/carers may make an identical application for the same schools, or request different schools from their initial application.

Parents/carers should be aware that as the numbers of applications and preferences, and even the number of available places, may differ from year to year, that a deferral does not mean a place at the same school can be allocated one year later. It will not be known which school is allocated for an agreed deferral until 16 April or next working day in the school year the child turns 5 and the results of the application one year later may result in a different school being allocated.

5. If you would like to investigate accelerating your child's entry, so they do not start in the year group relevant to the child's age (the school year they turn five), but instead start at an earlier time, you should contact the Trust at an early stage to discuss your intentions and what the best approach might be.

If you would like to accelerate your child's entry, you should then put a formal request in writing, together with any supporting information, by no later than 29 November 2025. The Trust will then consider your request, if necessary in conjunction with other schools, the LA, early years providers and professionals.

If the request is approved, wherever possible you should submit an application as part of the normal admissions round, for the year group it has been agreed is the most appropriate for the child. Parents/carers should make it clear in their application that an application out of the usual year group has been agreed. The application will then be considered in accordance with this admissions policy. The Trust will not give the application lower priority on the basis that the child is being admitted out of their normal age group. If the request is rejected, you should apply in the usual way for your child to join their correct age group. Should parents/carers disagree with a decision to refuse their request, they should put their complaint in writing and follow the Trust's complaints policy.

6. Applications should be made by the closing date for applications which is 15 January 2026. Applications can be made online at www.york.gov.uk/schooladmissions. It is expected that most applications will be made online, but where applicants cannot apply online, they may request support from the Trust, LA, schools, or a paper application form known as the 'School admissions application for Primary School in September 2026'. There is no additional 'Supplementary Information Form' required to apply for a school place at any Heartwood Learning Trust school covered by this policy.
7. When making an application, parents/carers are advised to supply any additional information that may be required to the admission authority by providing this information in writing directly to the school or by emailing education@york.gov.uk with the child's details. For example, additional information will need to be provided when applying on the basis of being 'previously looked after' or having exceptional social or medical needs which relate to the preferred school. Further guidance on additional information can be found in the [Guide for Parents](#).
8. Any school's resources, such as teachers and classrooms, have to be used carefully to ensure the best possible standards for education and a safe environment. If no limit were set on the number of children that can go to a school each year these standards could not be maintained. Infant Class Size legislation may also limit the number of pupils that can be admitted in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. For these reasons each school has a Published Admission Number – that is the number of places available that will be offered in the year of entry.
9. Applicants will be responsible for travel arrangements and the costs of travel to and from school.
10. **Burton Green Primary School, Poppleton Ousebank Primary School and Skelton Primary School** each have their own catchment area. The City of York Local Authority advises applicants to consider their 'catchment' school when making an application. If the place your child is allocated is at a school which you are not in the catchment area for, or if you move out of the catchment area you now reside in, then you may have less chance of being successful when applying for any younger siblings. Catchment areas are designated by the Local Authority and are made available to applicants in the [Guide for Parents](#), online at www.york.gov.uk and upon request from the City of York School Admissions team.

Admissions into Year 7

1. Pupils will normally be admitted into the year group relevant to the pupil's age.
2. If you would like to investigate accelerating your child's entry, so they do not start in the year group relevant to the child's age, but instead start at an earlier time, you should contact the Trust at an early stage to discuss your intentions and what the best approach might be.
3. If you would like to accelerate your child's entry, you should then put a formal request in writing, together with any supporting information, and details of whether your child has previously been educated out of their chronological age group, by no later than 29 November 2025. The Trust will then consider your request, if necessary in conjunction with other schools and professionals.
4. If the request is approved, wherever possible you should submit an application as part of the normal admissions round, for the year group it has been agreed is the most appropriate for the child. Parents/carers should make it clear in their application that an application out of the usual year group has been agreed. The application will then be considered in accordance with this admissions policy. The Trust will not give the application lower priority on the basis that the child is being admitted out of their normal age group. If the request is rejected, you should apply in the usual way for your child to join their correct age group. Should parents/carers disagree with a decision to refuse their request, they should put their complaint in writing and follow the Trust's complaints policy.
5. Applications should be made by the closing date for applications which is 31 October 2025. Applications can be made online at www.york.gov.uk/schooladmissions. It is expected that most applications will be made online, but where applicants cannot apply online, they may request support from the Trust, LA, school, or a paper application form known as the 'School admissions application for Secondary School in September 2026'. There is no additional 'Supplementary Information Form' required to apply for a school place at any Heartwood Learning Trust school covered by this policy.
6. When making an application, parents/carers are advised to supply any additional information that may be required to the admission authority by providing this information in writing directly to the school or by emailing education@york.gov.uk with the child's details. For example, additional information will need to be provided when applying on the basis of being 'previously looked after' or having exceptional social or medical needs which relate to the preferred school. Further guidance on additional information can be found in the [Guide for Parents](#).
7. Any school's resources, such as teachers and classrooms, have to be used carefully to ensure the best possible standards for education and a safe environment. If no limit were set on the number of pupils that can go to a school each year these standards could not be maintained. For this reason each school has a Published Admission Number – that is the number of places available that will be offered in the year of entry.
8. Applicants will be responsible for travel arrangements and the costs of travel to and from school.
9. Vale of York Academy maintains a catchment area. The City of York Local Authority advises applicants to consider their 'catchment' school when making an application. If the place your child is allocated is at a school

which you are not in the catchment area for, or if you move out of the catchment area you now reside in, then you may have less chance of being successful when applying for any younger siblings. Catchment areas are designated by the Local Authority and are made available to applicants in the [Guide for Parents](#), online at www.york.gov.uk and upon request from the City of York School Admissions team.

Oversubscription Criteria

Some schools will be oversubscribed – that is where the number of applicants exceeds the **Published Admission Number**. Where this is the case, priority is given to certain categories of children. The oversubscription criteria set out below will be used to prioritise all applicants who have applied for a place at a school in these circumstances in the following priority order:

1. **Children who are either currently or have previously been ‘looked after’.**

This applies to all children who are currently or have previously been, in the care of a local authority; all children who have been adopted from local authority care, subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order; and all children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of adoption, residence or special guardianship order.

It is the responsibility of parent/carers, or the child’s social worker to provide the information to the admission authority that this criterion applies.

2. **Children who live within the catchment area normally served by the preferred school, with a sibling at the preferred school at the time of admission.**

Catchment areas are designated by the Local Authority and are made available to parent/carers in the [Guide for Parents](#), online at www.york.gov.uk, and upon request from the City of York School Admissions team. Siblings are defined as brothers or sisters living in the same house, as their primary place of residence (including half-, step- and foster-brothers or sisters).

The Trust uses the address provided in the application, and using GIS software, determines which catchment area an address, and therefore a child, resides in. This address must be the address at which the child is ordinarily resident. Further detailed advice on addresses is contained within the [Guide for Parents](#).

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to include with their application the name of any sibling(s) where this criterion applies for checking by the Trust.

3. **Children who live within the catchment area normally served by the preferred school.**

Catchment areas are designated by the Local Authority and are made available to parent/carers in the [Guide for Parents](#), online at www.york.gov.uk, and upon request from the City of York School Admissions team.

The Trust uses the address provided in the application, and using GIS software, determines which catchment area an address, and therefore a child, resides in. This address must be the address at which the child is ordinarily resident. Further detailed advice on addresses is contained within the [Guide for Parents](#).

4. **Children considered by the admission authority to have exceptional social or medical needs which makes the preferred school the most suitable school for the child.**

The admission authority may consult with other medical or educational professionals for a further opinion as to whether the child should be allocated a place at the preferred school due to a particular medical condition or social need. A medical condition alone does not guarantee Exceptional Social Medical (ESM) criteria.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to provide the additional information where they believe this criterion applies. To be given priority on this basis, the admission authority would have to be satisfied that the child's needs were such that the preferred school would be the most suitable school for the child.

The Trust may defer these considerations and decisions to others to consider any documentation provided by parents/carers and assess whether these needs are 'exceptional' in nature. Those applications with supporting information that the Trust determines are 'exceptional' would have to be where only the preferred school could meet the child's needs.

5. Children with a sibling at the preferred school at the time of admission.

Siblings are defined as brothers or sisters living in the same house, as their primary place of residence (including half-, step- and foster-brothers or sisters).

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to include with their application the name of any sibling(s) where this criterion applies for checking by the Trust.

6. Children who live closest to the preferred school using the nearest available safe walking route.

Distances are measured by a GIS mapping system from the child's home address to the closest entrance of the school.

Distances are measured using a system of walking routes rather than straight line distances to better reflect the length of the journey from home to school. Within a contiguous urban area these routes are those that are properly paved and lit alongside roads and other walkways and do not include the York outer ring road. Outside a contiguous urban area, for example for applications from outside the City of York area, these distances continue to be measured along the road network.

Tie-Break

Where there are fewer places than children in an oversubscription priority as above, in order to decide to whom places will be allocated, the following tie-breakers will be applied:

- first, to the child(ren) who also fulfil the next highest priority;
- second, to the child(ren) living closest to the school as defined in priority 6;
- and third, if the measurement of the distance from home to school above does not distinguish between two or more applicants with equal priority, random allocation will be used as the final tie-breaker, and independently verified.

Where the application of the above would lead to a place being made available for a child of multiple birth, but not their sibling(s), we will work within the Admissions Code in order to make a place available for the sibling(s) wherever reasonably possible.

For example, for two children who are both resident in the catchment area without a sibling on roll at the time of admission and are thus assigned the same (third) priority, the place would first be allocated to the child who also fulfils the next highest priority, for example, an exceptional social or medical need (fourth priority) over a child who lives closer to the school (sixth priority).

Appeals

1. Applicants refused a place at the school have a statutory right of appeal. If a preference for a place at the school is refused, the applicant will be informed of the reasons and of their right of appeal. This right does not apply if they are allocated a place but it is not in their preferred year group.
2. Heartwood Learning Trust subscribes to the City of York's independent appeals procedure and any decision made under this admissions policy can be appealed using that process. Appeals are heard by an independent appeals panel and their decisions are legally binding in line with the School Admission Appeals Code. We will publish our appeals timetable on our website by 28 February 2026. Applicants who wish to appeal should contact the LA School Admissions team to request the correct appeal form. Appeal forms should be returned within 20 school days of the date the place was refused.
3. Applicants will only be able to appeal once in any one school year unless, in exceptional circumstances, the admission authority has accepted a second application because of a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent/carer, child or school.

False Information

Where an offer of a place has been made on the basis of fraudulent or intentionally misleading information, which has effectively denied a place to a child with a stronger claim, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

Late Applications

1. Applications received after the relevant closing date for applications may be treated as 'late' applications – that is processed after all 'on-time' applications.
 - For applications for **Burton Green Primary School, Poppleton Ousebank Primary School and Skelton Primary School** - in the primary admissions round, applications will be treated as late after 15 January 2026;
 - For applications for **Vale of York Academy** – in the secondary admissions round, applications will be treated as late from 1 November 2025.
2. Where possible, 'late' applications and changes of preference and/or circumstances will be treated as 'on-time' applications if:
 - a) this is accompanied by a satisfactory reason provided at the time of application; and
 - b) it can be accommodated within the timescales of the coordinated scheme and/or admission authority's processes.

3. Late applications received after the offer day, but before the start of the school year will be processed using the same arrangements and criteria as 'on-time' applications, although the availability of places will depend on where places are still available as well as the preferences of applicants.
4. Late applications received after the first day of the school year will be considered as 'in-year' applications. However, these preferences, if unsuccessful, will be held on a waiting list until the end of the first term in line with 'on-time' applications as set out below.

Waiting List

1. If a school is oversubscribed, a waiting list will be held from when offers have been made until 31 December 2026. After 31 December 2026, if there is still a waiting list, an 'in-year' waiting list is then held until the end of that school year. Beyond the first school year, refused preferences do not 'roll over' into future school years. Should applicants wish to remain on a waiting list for a future school year, they should submit a new application by 05 July in the relevant year.
2. A child's position on the list will be determined by the oversubscription criteria set out in this policy and will reflect their current circumstances where these circumstances have been provided to the admission authority. The list will also contain all other on-time and late preferences that have been refused or are requested. Should a place become available while the waiting list is in operation, a place will be made available to the applicant on the top of the waiting list on the day the place becomes available.
3. Applications may only be made once for each school year unless there has been a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent/carer, child or school, which the admission authority agrees requires a new application.
4. Being on a waiting list does not affect a parent's/carer's right of appeal against an unsuccessful preference.

Timetable

by 12 September 2025	Opening date for applications. 'School admissions application for Primary, Junior and Secondary School in September 2026' form made available and online applications start to be accepted at www.york.gov.uk/schooladmissions
By 14 September 2025	Letter to parent/carers of Year 6 pupils in City of York primary schools informing parent/carers of dates of secondary school open evenings and that applications should be made online by 31 October 2025. Parent/carers without access to the internet will be informed they should contact the School Admissions team for a paper copy of the 'School admissions application for Secondary School in September 2026' form
September and October 2025	Secondary school open activities

31 October 2025	Closing date for 'on-time' Secondary applications (both online and by paper 'School admissions application for Secondary School in September 2026' form)
From 1 November 2025	Secondary applications received may be treated as 'late'
15 January 2026	Closing date for 'on-time' applications (both online and by paper 'School admissions application for Primary & Junior School in September 2026' form)
From 16 January 2026	Primary and Junior applications received may be treated as 'late'
1 March 2026 or next working day	Secondary allocations communicated to City of York resident applicants by email and/or by letter (National Offer Day)
13 April 2026	Deadline for return of Secondary school appeal papers for 'on-time' applicants
16 April 2026 or next working day	Primary and Junior allocations communicated to City of York resident applicants by email and/or by letter (National Offer Day)
27 April – 16 June 2026	Admission appeals for 'on-time' Secondary applicants
15 May 2026	Deadline for return of Primary & Junior appeal papers for 'on-time' applicants
8 June 2026 – 17 July 2026	Admission appeals for 'on-time' Primary & Junior applicants
September 2026	Start of the school year
31 December 2026	Waiting list for all community and voluntary controlled primary, infant and secondary schools closes

Contact Details for Correspondence

The Chair of the Trust Board

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<https://hlt.academy>

Schools in the Heartwood Learning Trust covered by this policy

Burton Green Primary School (Primary, 5-11)
Poppleton Ousebank Primary School (Primary, 5-11)
Skelton Primary School (Primary, 5-11)
Vale of York Academy (Secondary, 11-16)

[View school contact details on the City of York website](#)