

# **CASTLE HILL**

Academy

A PLATANOS  TRUST SCHOOL

## **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

**2025-2026**

# Admissions Policy

## 1. Admissions process

The academy has a nursery and a two (2) form of entry primary (infants and juniors) school for children aged 2 – 11 years. The Platanos Trust is committed to ensuring that the school's admissions arrangements are consistent with the Trust's values and with the School Admissions Code and maintains its character as a comprehensive school. We have an unshakeable belief that our pupils can achieve beyond expectations regardless of their starting points.

The following admissions arrangements will apply to all applications. The school has a published admission number (PAN) of 60 pupils for entry into Reception each year. The school will accordingly provide for this number each year if sufficient applications are received. Where fewer than 60 applications are received, the Academy Trust will offer places at the academy to all those who have applied.

The academy participates in the Local Authority co-ordinated admission procedure. Therefore, applications in the 'normal round' (that is the main cycle of applications for Reception places from the beginning of the school year) are administered by the local council and all deadlines within that process should be adhered to by applicants.

## 2. Priority admissions

As according to the Admissions Code, children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming the school will be admitted. The school will also give top priority to applications on behalf of children in, or previously in, public care ('looked after children') residing with the primary carer with the relevant documentary evidence, including those children 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.

## 3. Oversubscription

If the number of applications to the school is higher than the number of places available, the allocations will be made as according to the oversubscription criteria as set out in the order below.

1. Children in the care, or previously in the care, of a Local Authority ('looked after children'; see Note 1 below), including those children 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. Children with an EHCP with supporting evidence naming the school are automatically admitted.
2. Siblings: children with a sibling (or siblings) who are in attendance at the school at the time of enrolment of the new pupil (see Note 2).

3. Children of all staff where:
  - a) The member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for a admission to the school is made; or
  - b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
4. Distance: priority will be given to pupils living nearest to the academy as measured in a straight line (see Notes 3, 4 and 6).

**Tie-breaker:** In the event that two applicants fall at the exact same position and cannot be separated by the above oversubscription criteria, the place will be allocated by random allocation, supervised by someone independent of the school.

#### **4. Waiting lists**

The Academy Trust is the admissions authority and therefore the school will operate a waiting list for each year group. Where in any year the academy receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until the end of the academic year. This will be maintained by the Academy Trust and it will be open to any parent/carer to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.

Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria above.

#### **5. Nursery year**

The school has an on-site nursery with 70 part-time places (35 a.m. and 35 p.m.). Please contact us directly for admissions to our nursery.

Please note that children who are on roll at the nursery **are not** automatically guaranteed a transfer to the school's Reception Year when they have completed their nursery education.

An application for admission to Reception Year must be made in the normal way at the normal time following the Local Authority admissions process.

#### **6. Enhanced Learning Provision (ELP)**

Our school has an Enhanced Learning Provision (ELP) for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). There are 45 places available within the ELP, which covers the full primary age range and these are allocated in partnership with Croydon's Special Educational Needs (SEN) Team.

The places in the ELP are managed separately and are in addition to those provided in the main school and do not impact on the places available in the main school (as determined by the school's published admission number). Please contact the Croydon SEN Team for further information on the allocation of places.

## **7. Admissions outside of the normal age group**

Parents/carers may, under certain circumstances, request that their child be admitted to a year group outside of their normal age group (e.g. children born in the summer term admitted to reception a year later after their fourth birthday). The Academy Trust is the admission authority for considering such requests and will decide whether the individual circumstances make it an appropriate arrangement on educational grounds, based on the professional judgment by the school of what is in the best interest of the child and taking into account the evidence and rationale provided by the parents/carers.

Parents/carers must consider the impact this may have and, where relevant, should submit evidence of support from a relevant professional along with their application, and set out the year group in which they wish their child to be allocated and the reasons for their request. Once a year group has been identified and agreed, the same oversubscription criteria will be applied.

Please contact the school for further information.

## **8. Deferred entry for Reception places**

Parents/carers offered a place in Reception for their child have a right to defer the date their child takes up the place, or to take the place up part-time, until the child reaches compulsory school age. Children reach compulsory school age on 31 August, 31 December or 31 March – whichever of those three dates follows (or falls on) the child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Places cannot be deferred beyond the beginning of the summer term of the school year for which the offer was made.

## **9. Making an application**

Parents/Carers resident in Croydon must ensure that they complete the Local Authority (Croydon) **Common Application Form (CAF)** for admissions to our school's Reception Year. This is now normally completed online. Please ensure that we are clearly listed as one of the preferred schools on the CAF. *All CAFs must be submitted to the home borough.*

**Applying to us from another borough other than Croydon.** Parents/Carers resident in another borough are welcome to apply to our school for their child. Please *contact your home borough* for a CAF and instructions on how to apply to a school in a different borough. Ensure that we are clearly listed as one of the preferred schools. You should also contact Croydon and access their admissions booklet on the Croydon Council website, which will contain further information such as entry arrangements.

For **nursery applications**, please contact the school office directly for an application form or download our application form found on our website under the Nursery section.

All applicants should also complete the school's **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)** and return the form directly back to the school office. The form can be obtained from our school office or downloaded directly from our website under the Admissions section.

## **10. In-year applications**

Applicants for '**In-Year**' admissions (i.e. applying to join the school in the middle of the academic year) must contact the school directly. The Academy Trust is the admissions authority who administers 'in-year' applications. An 'In-Year' admissions form will need to be completed and this is available from the school office or the school website.

## **11. Late applications**

All applications for the normal admissions round (not including in-year admissions) received by the Local Authority after the deadline will be considered to be late applications. These will be considered after those received on time. If all available places are allocated to children whose applications were received on time, parents/carers who have made a late application may request that their child is placed on the school's waiting list.

## **12. Appeals**

Appeals against admission decisions are heard by an Independent Admissions Appeal Panel and will be in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code. An appeal against a refusal of a place must be made within 20 school days of the date of the refusal letter. The appellant should contact the school directly.

The appeals process is run in accordance with the statutory processes and timescales set out in the School Admissions Appeals Code.

### **Note 1**

'Looked-after children' are defined as children in public care at the date on which the application is made.

'Previously looked-after children' are all children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order, *immediately* after being looked after. This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

‘Looked after’ and ‘previously looked after’ children who have been in state care *outside* of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted will be prioritised along with those who are ‘looked after’ or ‘previously looked after’ in England. A child will be 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.

If an application is made under the ‘looked after’ criterion, it must be supported by a letter from the relevant Local Authority Children’s Services Department and/or relevant documents.

**Note 2**

A sibling is defined as a brother/sister, half- brother/sister, step-brother/sister, foster-brother/sister or adopted brother/sister whose main residence is at the same address.

**Note 3**

"Home" is defined as the permanent address where the child normally resides as their only or principal residence. Addresses of child minders, business or relatives cannot be considered.

Parents/carers will be asked to provide documentary evidence to confirm an address and parental responsibility. The academy should be notified of changes of address immediately. Failure to do so or the provision of false information could result in the child being denied a place at the academy.

**Note 4**

Child's permanent address. The child's address should be that of the child's permanent place of residence. A business address, work place address, or child-minder's address will not be accepted. A relative's or carer's address can be considered **ONLY** if those person(s) have legal custody of the child. In these circumstances, evidence of legal custody/parental responsibility, i.e. a court order must be supplied.

**Note 5**

Change of address. Changes of address can be considered only where the academy receives either a letter from a solicitor confirming the exchange and completion of contract for the new place of residence, or a copy of the new tenancy agreement stating commencement date.

**Note 6**

The distance will be measured in a straight line from the child’s home address to the designated entrance(s) of the academy, with those living closer to the academy receiving higher priority.

The local authority measures the straight line distance using a computerised measuring system (GIS) and geographical reference points as provided by the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG).

If a child lives in a shared property such as flats, the geographical references will determine the start point within the property boundaries to be used for distance calculation purposes.

**Note 7**

Child-minding arrangements cannot be taken into account when allocating places.

**Note 8**

Tiebreaker: In the event of oversubscription and applicants cannot be separated by the above admissions criteria (even after taking into account distance), then the place will be allocated by random allocation as a last resort.

**Note 9**

Shared custody. If parents share custody of a child, only one address must be provided in the application. It must be the address where the child normally resides, and the applying parent must prove the child's residency at this address, e.g. relevant court documents or the address where the child benefit is payable. If the child resides with each parent for an equal amount of time each week we will treat the address at which the child benefit is payable as the normal place of residence.

**Note 10**

**Statutory maximum infant class size.** The maximum number of pupils permitted to be in a class in Reception Year, Year 1 or Year 2 is 30 pupils per one teacher. There are specified circumstances in which some categories of children will not be counted towards the class size, allowing for these children to be admitted to a class containing 30 or more pupils without breaching the statutory maximum infant class size. These children are known as “excepted pupils” until the class size falls back to 30 pupils (for example twins). Parents/carers are referred to Paragraph 2.15 of the School Admissions Code for further details (found on the Department for Education’s website).