



# Harris Primary Academy Benson

## HARRIS PRIMARY ACADEMY BENSON

### ADMISSION POLICY

#### FOR THE SEPTEMBER 2025 INTAKE

#### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Harris Primary Academy Benson (**Academy**) is a primary academy located in London Borough of Croydon. It is part of Harris Federation (**Trust**), a multi academy trust.
- 1.2 Admission to all state funded schools is governed by the School Admissions Code 2021 (**Code**). Under the Code, the Trust is the 'Admission Authority' for the Academy, and has a legal duty to formally determine the 'admission arrangements' for each year's intake in accordance with the requirements of the Code.
- 1.3 The Trust Board delegates the task of determining the admission arrangements each year to the Governing Body of the Academy. Thereafter, the Academy's admission arrangements are determined and implemented by a committee of three Governors which is called the Admission Committee.
- 1.4 This policy and all other admission related documents referred to herein and used during the admission process, together form the Academy's admission arrangements. Any proposed changes to the admission arrangements are subject to statutory consultation before they can be determined. Determined admission arrangements can only be varied in specific circumstances, and usually only with Secretary of State consent.

#### **2 Definition of a 'Parent'**

- 2.1 In this policy and 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.

#### **3 Inclusivity and Equality**

- 3.1 The Academy is fully inclusive and welcome 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 Academy's admission arrangements are determined and implemented with its equality duties in mind, including the public sector equality duty (**PSED**).

#### **4 Children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC plan)**

- 4.1 Children with an EHC plan are admitted to school under separate statutory procedures



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which are managed by the child's home Local Authority, not under the school's determined admission arrangements. Parents of children with an EHC plan should therefore liaise with their child's home Local Authority's SEN team if they want the Local Authority to consult the Academy in respect of a proposal to name the Academy in the child's EHC plan as their child's school.

- 4.2 Where, after consultation, the child's home Local Authority goes ahead and names the Academy in the child's EHC plan, the child will be admitted. Where this happens in the normal admission round (i.e. entry to Reception Year in September), these children will be allocated places before all other children, reducing the number of places left within the published admission number (**PAN**). At all other times, they will be admitted even where this means the PAN will be exceeded.
- 4.3 Parents should note that, where the Academy informed the child's home Local Authority during consultation that the proposed placement was not suitable for the child, but the Local Authority chose to name the Academy in the child's EHC plan anyway, the Academy may refer that decision to the Secretary of State for Education for a direction that the Local Authority acted unreasonably in doing so.

## **5 Published Admission Numbers (PANs)**

- 5.1 The PAN for **Reception Year** is **30** pupils.

## **6 Oversubscription Criteria for Reception Year**

- 6.1 Where there are more applications than places available, the order in which places will be allocated will be as follows:

### **6.1.1 Looked after 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 the Admission Committee (on behalf of the Trust) 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 guidance (accessible [here](#)) will be followed.

Where the Virtual School Head has already verified the child's status, parents



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should let the Local Authority/School know, as there should be no need for further evidence to be provided in this case.

## 6.1.2 **Children with Exceptional medical or social need**

For inclusion in this category, either the child or a close family member living with the child at the child's home address, must have an exceptional social and/or medical need which means that only Harris Primary Academy Benson is suitable for the child to attend, and no other local school is suitable, supported by an appropriate professional.

For the purpose of this category, a close 'family member' is a parent (as defined by the policy), or a singling (as defined by this policy) or grandparent who, in either case, lives with the family as a dependent of the applicant child's parent.

Applications in this category must be accompanied by a completed Exceptional Social and/or Medical Need Supplementary Information Form, to be received by the application deadline. The same parent must complete this form and the application form giving only their details.

This form is available to download on the Harris Primary Academy Benson website [here](#).

## 6.1.3 **Children with a sibling at the Academy in Years 1 to 6**

For inclusion in this category, the sibling must attend the Academy in Year 1 to Year 6 at the time of application/the application deadline and when the applicant child is admitted.

For the purpose of this category, a 'sibling' is a full sibling (sharing both parents), a half sibling (sharing one parent), a step sibling (one child's parent married to the other child's parent), or a child of their parent's cohabiting partner. In all cases, the sibling must live at the child's home address (as defined by this policy) as part of the same core family unit. For avoidance of doubt, a child of a friend or extended family member (e.g. cousin) will not be a 'sibling' for this purpose, even if they live at the same address as the applicant child.

For inclusion in this category, the sibling's full details must be provided in the application form.

## 6.1.4 **Children of staff members employed at Harris Primary Academy Benson**

For inclusion in this category, the staff member must be permanently based at Harris Primary Academy Benson for more than 50% of their normal working hours each week during term time, and have been:

- Employed for at least two years at the time of application; and/or
- Recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage,

as confirmed by their HR Manager.



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For avoidance of doubt, it is not possible for a staff member to have priority at more than one Academy within the Trust.

For the purpose of this category, a 'child' of a staff member is:

- Their natural or adopted child, whether they live with the staff member or elsewhere; and/or
- Their stepchild or child of their cohabiting partner, who lives and sleeps with the staff member at their home address for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Friday during term time.

Applications in this category must be accompanied by a completed Children of Staff Supplementary Information Form, to be received by the application deadline. The same parent must complete both this form and the application form giving their own details.

Part A must be completed by the parent, Part B must be completed, signed and stamped by the parent's HR Manager. The form is available to download on the Academy's website, or in hard copy from the Academy's main office.

## 6.1.5 All other children

This category will include all children who do not fall into any of the oversubscription categories above.

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- 6.2 Where there are more applications than places remaining in any of the oversubscription categories, the order in which places will be allocated will be determined by the distance between the child's home address (as defined by this policy) and the Academy, with those living nearest receiving highest priority.
- 6.3 Distance will be measured using London Borough of Croydon's computerised geographic information system (GIS) in a straight line from the child's home address to the designated entrance of the Academy, using geographical reference points by the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG).
- 6.4 Where the child lives in a multi-dwelling building (for example, an apartment block), distance will be measured from same point in the building so that the distance will be the same for all children living there.
- 6.5 Where two or more children live an equal distance from the Academy (including where they live in the same multi-dwelling building), the order in which places are allocated will be determined by random allocation supervised by someone who is independent of the Academy.

## 7 Child's Home Address

- 7.1 The child's home address is the residential (not business) address of their parent (as defined in this policy) at which they live and sleep for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Thursday night during term time. It will usually be the address at which they are registered with their GP, hospital, dentist and/or optician, and/or where Child Benefit/Child Tax Credit (if



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eligible) is claimed, at the time of application.

- 7.2 Where any uncertainty arises in respect of the child's home address, the Academy reserves the right to seek documentary evidence to determine which address meets the definition stated above. For the avoidance of doubt, it is the address which meets this definition that will be used to process the application, which may not be the address given by the parent.
- 7.3 Where the child/child's family is/are not living in the area of the Academy at the time the application is submitted, the application will still be accepted and processed. However, the address used will be the child's current address unless the application is supported by documentary evidence of the future new address which will meet the definition set out above (for example, a signed tenancy agreement, formal mortgage offer, HMLR title deed/document, etc.).

## **8 Children of UK Service Personnel/Crown Servants**

- 8.1 Applications for the admission of children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting, or Crown servants returning from overseas, will be accepted and processed in advance of the family's arrival in the area, as long as the application is accompanied by an official letter giving a relocation date.
- 8.2 The address at which the child will live will be used to apply the oversubscription criteria, provided parents provide some evidence of the intended address (for example, a signed tenancy agreement, mortgage offer, HMLR title deed/document, official letter confirming exchange of contracts, etc.). Alternatively, where requested by parents, a Unit or quartering address will be used for this purpose.

## **9 Statutory Maximum Infant Class Sizes**

- 9.1 The statutory maximum infant class size for Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2 is 30 pupils per teacher.
- 9.2 However, certain categories of children may still be admitted where this would result in a class size exceeding the statutory maximum. These categories are set out in regulations and summarised at Paragraph 2.15 of the Code. Where this happens, the additional pupils are 'excepted pupils' who do not count towards the class size until it falls back to 30, when they will no longer be regarded as 'excepted pupils'.

## **10 Twins, Triplets and Siblings of a Higher Multiple Birth (Reception Year to Year 6 Only)**

- 10.1 In Reception Year, where at least one child achieves an offer of a place at the Academy within the PAN in the normal way, but their twin, triplet(s) or sibling(s) of a higher multiple birth do not achieve an offer of a place, the Academy will admit their twin, triplet(s) or sibling(s) of a higher multiple birth to avoid them having to attend different schools, even where this means exceeding the PAN. These additional children will be 'excepted pupils' as set out above.



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- 10.2 In Years 1 and 2, where at least one child can be accommodated without prejudicing the efficient education of others or use of resources, and without breaching the statutory maximum infant class size, their twins, triplet(s) and sibling(s) of a higher multiple birth will also be offered a place to avoid them having to attend different schools. These additional children will be 'excepted pupils' as set out above.
- 10.3 In Years 3 to 6, where at least one child can be accommodated without prejudicing the efficient education of others or use of resources, their twins, triplet(s) and sibling(s) of a higher multiple birth will also be offered a place to avoid them having to attend different schools. These additional children are not 'excepted pupils' because the statutory maximum infant class size does not apply to these year groups.
- 11 Application Procedure for Admission to Reception Year in September (including Late Applications)**
- 11.1 Applications for admission to Reception Year in September are known as applications made 'in the normal admission round'.
- 11.2 Applications in the normal admission round are coordinated by the Local Authority for all schools in its area. This includes **late applications** (i.e. applications received before the first day of term September, but not made in time to enable the Local Authority to offer a place on National Offer Day).
- 11.3 Applications in the normal admission round must be made **directly to the child's home Local Authority** by completing and submitting a Common Application Form (CAF), which is available to download/complete online via the child's home Local Authority's website, by the application deadline. Parents must state a preference for the Academy in the CAF.
- 11.4 Parents should carefully consider the oversubscription criteria stated above to determine whether other documentation must be submitted in support of the application. This documentation must be submitted to **the child's home Local Authority, to arrive by the application deadline**. If not, there will be a significant risk that the child will be placed in a lower oversubscription category because they were not identified as qualifying for a higher one.
- 11.5 The application deadline for admission to Reception year in the normal admission round is **Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025**.
- 11.6 National Offer Day for admission to Reception Year in the normal admission round is **Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025**.
- 12 **Late applications**** (as defined above) will be processed by the Local Authority after all on-time applications have been processed, which will unfortunately reduce the chances of the child being offered a place. Parents are therefore strongly advised to submit their applications on time.



## **13 In-Year Admission Applications**

- 13.1 An in-year admission application is one for admission to Reception Year submitted after the first day of term in September, or for admission to any other year group. This is also known as admission 'outside the normal admission round'.
- 13.2 Parents should note that the PAN set for Reception Year only applies for the duration of the school year of entry (i.e. to applications both in and outside of the normal admission round to Reception Year only). Such applications may be refused where there are no places remaining with the PAN set for that intake.
- 13.3 Where applications are made for admission to any year group other than Reception Year, the child will be admitted to the Academy **unless admitting an additional child would prejudice the efficient provision of education, and/or the efficient use of resources.**
- 13.4 Where there are multiple applicants for a year group other than Reception Year, and the Academy has determined that only a lower number of additional children can be admitted without prejudicing the efficient provision of education, and/or the efficient use of resources, the Academy will apply the oversubscription criteria to determine which of the children are offered a place.
- 13.5 The admission arrangements that will apply will be those determined for Reception Year that school year.
- 13.6 Applications for in-year admission must be made directly to **Academy** by completing and submitting an In-Year Primary School Admission Form. This form and further guidance on the process is available on the Academy website, which can be accessed here.
- 13.7 Parents should carefully consider the oversubscription criteria stated above to determine whether other documentation should be submitted in support of the application, should the oversubscription criteria need to be applied. This documentation should be submitted at the same time as the application. If it isn't, there will be a significant risk that the child will be placed in a lower oversubscription category because they were not identified as qualifying for a higher one.
- 13.8 It is hoped that parents will be notified in writing of the outcome of applications for in-year application within 10 school days of receipt of the application. In any event, parents will be notified of the outcome in writing within 15 school days of receipt of the application.
- 13.9 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 school.
- 13.10 Where the application is refused, parents will be provided with the reasons why the admission of their child would prejudice the efficient education of others, and/or the efficient use of resources, so that they can properly consider whether to exercise their right to appeal (as set out further below).



## **14 Waiting List**

- 14.1 The Academy operates a waiting list for Reception Year for the first term of the school year only. All waiting lists will be cleared on the first day of term in January, and parents seeking a place after this date or in any other year group must submit an in-year application for admission which will be processed in accordance with the procedure set out above.
- 14.2 The waiting list is ranked strictly in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out in this policy, and not by reference to the date that the child's name was added to the list. This means that a child's name can go down as well as up the waiting list as more names are added.
- 14.3 Children placed at the Academy under the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol will take priority over children on the waiting list.

## **15 Statutory Right of Appeal**

- 15.1 Parents have a statutory right of appeal against the refusal of a place at the Academy. This applies to all year groups.
- 15.2 Full details of the statutory right of appeal will be set out in the formal letter notifying parents of the refusal of a place, including the deadline for lodging an appeal.
- 15.3 The Academy will also publish an appeals timetable for appeals against the refusal of a place in the normal admission round (i.e. to Reception Year in September) alongside this policy on or before 28 February in the year in which offers are made.

## **16 Deferred Entry and Part-Time Attendance in Reception Year**

- 16.1 All 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 (CSA) until one of three prescribed dates following their fifth birthday as follows:

<b>Born on or between:</b>	<b>Prescribed date the child reaches CSA:</b>
1 September and 31 December	31 December
1 January and 31 March	31 March
1 April and 31 August	31 August (a whole school year later)

- 16.2 Parents have an absolute right to decide that their child will not start school until they reach CSA, which is known as 'deferred entry' (or 'delayed entry' in the case of 'summer born children' - see below). The Academy has no discretion to refuse to allow this.
- 16.3 Where parents choose to defer entry until later in the school year, the Academy will hold their place in Reception Year for them, rather than giving it to another child, for a maximum of two terms (i.e. until the Easter end of term holiday). Places cannot be deferred or retained beyond this point.
- 16.4 Parents also have an absolute right to decide that their child will attend school part-time until they reach CSA. In this case, the right can be exercised throughout the school year (i.e. all





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three terms), and it can also be combined with the right to defer. For example, a child born on 5 February could defer starting school until the first day of term after the Christmas and New Year break, and then attend part-time until the Easter break.

- 16.5 Where parents want to defer their child's entry and/or choose for them to attend school part-time, they should apply for a place in the normal way and, once they have accepted the offer of a place, notify the Academy of their decision, preferably in writing. There is no need to give reasons.

## **17 Delayed Entry for Summer Born Children**

- 17.1 Children born between 1 April and 31 August (known as 'summer born children') do not reach CSA until 31 August and are therefore not legally required to start school until one school year after they became entitled to a full-time place in Reception Year.
- 17.2 Parents of summer born children can defer their child's place for one or two terms and/or choose for their child to attend part-time throughout the school year, as set out above. However, they cannot defer their child's place for a whole school year and still retain it. If they do not want their child to start school at all until the following year, they will need to refuse the offer of a place and apply for admission again the next year.
- 17.3 However, where a summer born child is admitted one school year later than usual, the default position is that this would be to Year 1 with their normal age group. This means a) they will have missed Reception Year entirely, and b) they will only achieve an offer of a place if there is one available in Year 1, which is uncommon.
- 17.4 Parents can, however, make a request for their child to be admitted one year later than usual, outside their normal age group, to Reception Year. The procedure for making these requests is set out below, however parents should note that, unlike with deferred/delayed entry and part-time attendance, there is no absolute right for a child to be admitted outside their normal age group - this is at the discretion of the admission authority for the school involved.
- 17.5 Parents are strongly encouraged to make their requests in a timely manner, preferably well ahead of any application deadlines, so that they can obtain a decision in principle which will enable them to make informed decisions when they subsequently apply for admission.

## **18 Requests for Admission Outside Normal Age Group**

- 18.1 Parents have a right to request that their child is admitted to a year group other than their normal year group at the Academy. This may be to a year group below or above, and there may be a variety of reasons for making this request. For example, the child might be gifted, suffer from long-term or serious illness, or have been educated overseas and/or used to studying at a different level (these are examples only, not an exhaustive list).
- 18.2 However, parents do not have a right to decide that their child **will** be admitted outside their normal age group. Such requests must be considered by the Academy's Admission Committee, in order to decide whether or not to agree the request **in principle**, or refuse the request, taking into account the factors set out below.



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- 18.3 Requests for admission outside normal age group are not applications for admission, which must still be made in the usual way. Parents are strongly encouraged to make their requests in a timely manner, preferably well ahead of any application deadlines, so that they can obtain a decision in principle which will enable them to make informed decisions when they subsequently apply for admission. A separate request must be made to the Admission Authority for each school being considered.
- 18.4 The Admission Committee will make decisions 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 Headteacher of the Academy and, where provided, the Headteacher of any current or previous school. This is not an exhaustive list, and parents may put forward any matters for the Admission Committee to consider.
- 18.5 Parents should make their requests by completing a Request for Admission Outside Normal Age Group Form and submitting it with any supporting documents to the London Borough of Croydon. This form is available to download on the Harris Primary Academy Benson website [here](#).
- 18.6 In all cases, the Admission Committee will notify parents of the outcome of their request formally in writing, explaining its reasons in sufficient detail for parents to understand why it came to that decision. Where the request is agreed in principle, this letter should accompany the application for admission subsequently made for a place at the Academy.
- 18.7 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 Academy's published Complaints Policy if they do not believe the request was dealt with by the Admission Committee properly. Parents do, of course, have a statutory right of appeal if they also applied for admission and a place was refused in the child's normal year group as well.

## **19 Review and determination of the Academy's admission arrangements**

- 19.1 The term 'admission arrangements' means *"The overall procedure, practices and oversubscription criteria used in deciding the allocation of school places including any device or means used to determine whether a school place is to be offered"*. The admission arrangements therefore include not only this policy, but all other admission related documents and any other published information about the Academy's admission processes.
- 19.2 Under the Code, the Admission Authority for a school must formally determine the admission arrangements for the next intake at that school **every year on or before 28 February**.
- 19.3 Where no changes (other than changing dates/deadlines) are proposed, there is no need to go to consultation. However, where changes are proposed (other than a proposed increase in PAN), the Admission Authority must carry out a 6 week statutory consultation in accordance with the Code between 1 October and 31 January ahead of determination of the admission arrangements.
- 19.4 Where no changes have been proposed in the intervening period, the Admission Authority



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must in any event consult on the admission arrangements every 7 years.

- 19.5 Once determined on or before 28 February, the Academy's admission arrangements for that intake must be published, and cannot be varied except in very limited circumstances to correct a mistake or give effect to a decision of a Schools Adjudicator. Any other variations will require Secretary of State consent, which will only be granted where there has been a 'major change in circumstances'.