

The Holt School Admissions policy and arrangements for the academic year 2013/2014

The Holt School is an 11–18 girls comprehensive school and this document details the policy to be followed for admissions to The Holt School. Please note that living in or moving to the designated area of the school cannot guarantee a place at the school.

Year 7 Entry

The admissions number for entry in September 2013 is 200.

The school uses the Wokingham Borough Council Admissions Service which publicises the school to parents in the same literature as for other Wokingham schools. The school will participate in the co-ordinated arrangements made by Wokingham Borough Council. Parents/carers wishing to send their children to The Holt School should submit an application to their home Local Authority and follow the guidance of that Local Authority regarding deadlines for submitting the application. This information will be published in Local Authority admission guides.

Applications received after the published deadline (31 October 2012) will be treated as a 'late' application and be considered after the on-time applications have been allocated. If there is good reason i.e. the family has moved to the area after the closing date or the illness of a single parent prevented them submitting an on-time application, the application may be treated as on-time, provided it is received by 1 January 2013. In such instances evidence will be required to be considered by an Admissions Panel.

Children with a statement of special educational needs that names the school in the statement will be allocated a place above all other applicants.

If there are more applicants than places available applications will be prioritised in accordance with the following over-subscription criteria;

- A.
- Looked after children or children who were looked after: 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 function (see definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). Previous "looked after children" include those children under the terms of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (section 46 relating to adoption orders), Children Act 1989, section 8 which defines a "residence order" as an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live and section 14A which defines a "special guardianship order" as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians). Applications received under the Criterion A must be made by the person with parental responsibility for the child (e.g. the child's social worker, acting on behalf of the local authority for a looked after child) and will need to be supported by the following official documentation, as applicable:
- Confirmation by the home local authority that the child is looked after or
 - Confirmation by the local authority that last looked after the child confirming that the child was looked after immediately prior to the issuing of one of the following orders
- I. Adoption order
 - II. Residence order
 - III. Special guardianship order
- B. Children who have a serious medical, physical or psychological condition which makes it essential that they attend this school rather than any other. These reasons must be fully supported by written confirmation from the professional person involved with the family, clearly setting out the reasons why the child needs to attend this school, why it is the only school which can meet the child's needs and the difficulties that would be caused if they had to attend a different school. Further information may be requested by the school. **
- C. Children whose permanent home address is in the designated area of the school and who have a sister or step-sister who have one or more parents in common, or any other child for whom the parent has parental responsibility, living at the same address, who will be at the school when the applicant will enter the school. If the only relevant sibling is, or all relevant siblings are, in Year 11, then it must be the intention of the family that the relevant sibling or one of the relevant siblings is due to continue to study at the school in year 12. *
- D. Children whose permanent home address is in the designated area of the school.
- E. Children who do not live in the designated area and who have a sister or step-sister who have one or more parents in common, or any other child for whom the parent has parental responsibility, living at the same address, who will be at the school when the applicant will enter the school. If the only relevant sibling is, or all relevant siblings are, in Year 11, then it must be the intention of the family that the relevant sibling or one of the relevant siblings is due to continue to study at the school in year 12.
- F. Children whose parents have a preference for single sex education
- G. Any other children.

*Siblings of older children at the school, who resided at an address in the previous designated area of the school on September 1, 2011 and continue to live at that address, will be treated as living in the school's designated area (criterion C). This clause will no longer be applied after June 30, 2018 and parents are requested to declare on their application form if this applies.

**When submitting applications under Criterion B, the supporting evidence should indicate clearly why the pupil concerned should attend The Holt School. The school will need to be satisfied that The Holt School is the only school that can meet a particular child's needs. Further information may be required and you will be requested to provide this information by January 1, 2013. Failure to provide information by this deadline will mean that the application will not meet this criterion.

Where the application of oversubscription criteria would result in splitting children with either the same birth dates or children born in the same academic year from the same family, then places will be offered even if this will result in the school going above its admission number.

Tie –breaker

Living in the designated area does not guarantee a school place as there may be more applications from parents living in the designated area than places available. Where this is the case, the following tiebreaker will be applied to decide which of the applicants can be offered places, and the waiting list order.

Within criteria **C** and **D** above, priority will be given to the applicants whose permanent home address is the shortest combined radial distance to both The Holt and The Forest schools. This combined distance is calculated as (distance from home to The Forest School) **plus** (distance from home to The Holt School), measuring both distances as stated.

Priority will be given within any of the above oversubscription criteria to the applicant whose permanent home address is nearest to the preferred school in terms of radial (straight line) distance. Distances will be measured consistently and will be measured as a straight line between the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) address points for the respective home address and school, using the Easting and Northing for each address point. These are then used to calculate the distance between the two address points using a 'direct distance mathematical routine' within the Capita ONE system used by the council's School Admissions Team into which the LLPG address points are imported. This calculates the distance from the values created through this process using Pythagoras' Theorem by measuring the distance in metres between the Easting and Northing for each end address point then multiplied by 0.000621317 to convert to miles. It should be noted that this calculation may not be exactly the same as that created by a Geographical Information System (GIS) product as the GIS product may build in a formula to allow for the curvature of the earth. This curvature does not begin to affect distance values until the distance is least 10 miles.

Residency Requirements

Applications are processed on the basis of the child's single permanent home address, living with parent(s), or a carer/legal guardian. Evidence is required of a single address in the Borough. Where this is changing, evidence regarding the new address, and disposal of the previous address through a contract for sale or otherwise, will be required. Parents will be asked to declare that the address used will be their place of residence beyond the date of the pupil starting school. The school will reserve its right to carry out further investigation and require additional evidence, and to reject applications or withdraw offers of places if it believes it has grounds to do so. In such cases parents have recourse to putting their application through the independent appeals process.

If a child spends part of the week with parents at different addresses, the home address will be where they usually spend the majority of the school week (Sunday 6pm to Friday, including nights) with a parent. Where a family claims to be resident at more than one address, justification and evidence of the family's circumstances (e.g. legal separation) will be required. The home address will also be considered on the basis of the child benefit payment arrangements if claimed. If a child does not live at their parent(s) address we need to know the reasons for this. The reasons would need to be supported by official documentation.

Temporary addresses cannot be used to obtain school places, e.g. temporary addresses whilst retaining a previous permanent home will not be accepted. Where a parent has two or more properties, evidence will be required showing the rental, or disposal, of the previous property. Reference will be made to Council Tax and school records.

If an applicant is moving house and wishes to use the new address for the allocation of places, evidence will be required that the parent and child has moved and are living in the new home by 1 January 2013. If the move takes place later or information is provided later, the school will only be able to treat the new address for waiting list purposes and consider this information after the initial allocation of places has taken place.

Changes of preference

Parents who wish to amend the application before the closing date will be allowed to do so as long as they put their request in writing to the home authority School Admissions Team or amend their online application by the closing date.

Parents who wish to change their preference to The Holt School after the closing date will not be allowed to do so without a genuine reason for doing so e.g. the family has recently moved to the designated area of the school for which a request was not made previously. Where a change of preference is refused, the child will not be included on the waiting list. If no waiting list is held for the school; the request will be agreed. Requests for a change of preference should be made to the home authority School Admissions Team.

Admissions outside the normal age group

Out-of-age-group admissions will only be agreed where there is consensus that it is in the best interests of the child; the circumstances of each case will be considered individually. Such a consensus would be reached between the parents, schools concerned (the current school and The Holt School) and any relevant professionals asked for their opinion on the case by The Holt School. Where refused parents will be informed of their statutory right to appeal. This right does not apply if they are offered a place in another year group at the school.

Accepting or declining the offer of a place

Parents are required to accept or decline the allocated place using the form sent with the allocation letter. The form must be returned to the local authority within two weeks from the date of the offer letter. If a form is not received, there will be one further written warning and failure to respond may result in the place being withdrawn. Parents are requested to advise the local authority at any stage, if they are not accepting the place for any reason.

Waiting Lists

After 1 March 2013 a 'waiting list' will be administered if the school has more applicants than places available. A child's position on the waiting list is determined by applying the oversubscription criteria as described above. Positions on the waiting list may go up or down due to pupil withdrawals or new or revised applications and no account is taken of the length of time spent on the waiting list. Waiting lists will be maintained until such time as the policy is changed, to fill places that may become available during the school year. Parents will receive periodic requests to see if they wish to remain on the list. Children who are the subject of a direction by the local authority to admit or who are allocated to The Holt School in accordance with an in-year fair access protocol will take precedence over those on the waiting list.

In Year admissions to Years 7-11

Applications for entry to Year 7 after the end of the routine admissions round (ending on 31 August) and applications for entry into Year 8 to Year 11 at any time are processed as in-year applications and applications must be submitted to Wokingham Borough Council according to published co-ordinated admission arrangements and timescales. See www.wokingham.gov.uk/admissions.

The admission number for each year group is 200

Parents wishing to apply for a place at the school should obtain a copy of their common application form from Wokingham Borough Council. This should be completed and returned to Wokingham Borough Council in accordance with its instructions. Wokingham Borough Council has been commissioned to consider applications on behalf of the school in accordance with the school's admissions policy and will notify the parent of the outcome of the application on behalf of the school.

If there are pupils on a waiting list for the year into which the applicant is seeking admission, then the pupil will be placed on that waiting list in a position determined by application of the criteria used in determining initial admissions to Year 7. Pupils will be admitted from the waiting list in order as space becomes available.

If there is no pupil on the waiting list for the year into which the applicant is seeking admission, then the governors will determine whether a place can be offered to the applicant. If at the time of this determination the school has applications from more than one pupil for admission to the same year group, all the applications will be ordered according to the criteria used in determining initial admissions to Year 7 and will be considered in that order.

In reaching a decision on an application for admission to a full year group, the governors will normally refuse a place unless they are statutorily obliged to admit the applicant or the application is covered by Wokingham Borough Council's Fair Access Protocols.

Out-of-age-group admissions in other year groups will only be agreed where there is consensus that it is in the best interests of the child; the circumstances of each case will be considered individually. Such a consensus would be reached between the parents, schools concerned (the current school and The Holt School) and any relevant professionals asked for their opinion on the case by The Holt School.

Accepting or declining the offer of a place

Parents are required to accept or decline the allocated place using the form sent with the allocation letter. The form must be returned to the local authority within two weeks from the date of the offer letter. If a form is not received, there will be one further written warning and failure to respond may result in the place being withdrawn. Parents are requested to advise the local authority at any stage, if they are not accepting the place for any reason.

Unsuccessful applicants will be placed on the waiting list if they confirm that they wish to be.

Appeals

Students refused a place in all years groups of the school, are entitled to appeal to an independent appeals panel. Information about this process will be given in the decision letter sent by the local authority on behalf of the school. Appeals against the decision not to admit a child should be sent on the appropriate appeal form within 20 school days from the date of the letter refusing a place (in the case of year 7) or in line with the appeal timetable published by Wokingham Borough Council. The decisions of the appeals panel are binding on the school.

In the event of an unsuccessful appeal against non-admission to the school, the school will not consider any further application for admission, nor is there any right to a further appeal for admission, within the same academic year (September 1 to August 31) unless there is an exceptional situation resulting in a significant change of circumstance relevant to the applicant.

Sixth form admissions

For admission to the Sixth Form students will be required to pass at least 5 courses successfully at the following levels; A*-C at GCSE, or level 2 BTEC. In addition each course has specific entry requirements as detailed in the school sixth form prospectus.

All students attending the school at the end of Year 11 will be offered places in the Sixth Form provided they meet the academic requirements of the school and they will be offered places on the courses they wish to follow provided that they meet the specified academic requirements for those courses and provided there are spaces available.

Children above compulsory school age and their parents have the right to make a separate school sixth form application. Applications from those not attending the school will be also be accepted and they will be offered places when spaces are available in the school and on the courses they wish to take, provided they have met the specified academic requirements. When applicants can be offered a place at the school but a course they wish to pursue is full, they will be offered an alternative course.

Making an application

Those wishing a place in the school's Sixth Form starting in Year 12 in September 2013 should complete the school's Sixth Form Application form, which will be available from the school at the start of January 2013. Pupils in Year 11 already attending the school will be given a copy of the form.

Meetings may be arranged with students and their parents do discuss the options open to the student and to help the student decide on the suitability for them of particular courses. Such meetings play no part in the allocation of places, which are determined solely by the application of the criteria below.

Late applications

If an application is received after the deadline, this will be considered 'late'. Late applications will be considered after the allocation of places and notified after the main allocation date, unless exceptional circumstances apply. Exceptional circumstances will apply when the application is received before the date parents are notified of places and there is a valid reason that the application could not have been made by the due date, e.g. because of hospitalisation of a parent or a family has just moved into the area. In such instances, evidence will be required.

Criteria for admission

The Academy Trust will admit all applicants for whom there are places available on courses they wish to pursue provided they meet the entry requirements and the specific subject academic requirements. Should there be more applicants than places, then places will be allocated to pupils who fall into the following criteria in order of priority.

Within each criterion applicants will be ordered according to the distance they live from the school measured as a straight line between the Land and Property Gazetteer address points for the home address and the school, using the local authority's computerized mapping system. This is explained in the year 7 policy.

The Academy Trust are required to admit all students with statements of special educational needs that name The Holt School in the statement and meet the specified academic requirements; these students will be admitted first.

Pupils already attending the school at the time of application are prioritised for entry to the sixth form. The following criteria referred to above will be applied to applicants who do not attend the school:

A Looked after children or children who were looked after: 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 function (see definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). Previous "looked after children" include those children under the terms of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (section 46 relating to adoption orders), Children Act 1989, section 8 which defines a "residence order" as an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live and section 14A which defines a "special guardianship order" as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians). Applications received under the Criterion A must be made by the person with parental responsibility for the child (e.g. the child's social worker, acting on behalf of the local authority for a looked after child) and will need to be supported by the following official documentation, as applicable:

Confirmation by the home local authority that the child is looked after or

Confirmation by the local authority that last looked after the child confirming that the child was looked after immediately prior to the issuing of one of the following orders

- I. Adoption order
- II. Residence order
- III. Special guardianship order

B All other applicants meeting the academic requirements.

If there are insufficient spaces on any course for all those students who have expressed an interest and who have the appropriate qualifications, then places will be allocated on the same basis as used for admission to the main school.

Applicants who are unsuccessful at obtaining places on a particular course will be offered a place on an alternative course.

Offers of places to external students will be subject to the school confirming date of birth or right of abode by examination of the birth certificate and/or student's passport, as appropriate.

Parents will be asked to declare that the address used in the application will be their place of residence beyond the date of the student starting at the school; the offer of a place may be withdrawn if false or misleading information is given. Supporting evidence of this declaration may be required in the case of there being more applications than can be accepted.

Out-of-age-group admissions will only be agreed where there is consensus that it is in the best interests of the child; the circumstances of each case will be considered individually. Such a consensus would be reached between the parents, schools concerned (the current school and The Holt School) and any relevant professionals asked for their opinion on the case by The Holt School.

Accepting or declining the offer of a place.

Places are offered on the understanding that there is a commitment to meet the academic requirements of the school and the individual courses. Parents are required to accept or decline the allocated place using the form sent with the allocation letter. The form must be returned to the school within two weeks from the date of the offer letter. If a form is not received, there will be one further written warning and failure to respond may result in the place being withdrawn. Parents are requested to advise the school at any stage if they are not accepting the place for any reason.

Appeals

Anyone whose application is unsuccessful is entitled to appeal to an independent appeals panel. Information about this process can be obtained from the school.

General Contact information

Copies of the sixth form prospectus, application form for sixth form and the school admissions policy are available on the school website or from the school.

Email holtschool@holt.wokingham.sch.uk
Telephone 0118 978 0165

Copies of Wokingham Borough Council documents, parent's guides and common application forms are available on its web site: www.wokingham.gov.uk/admissions.

They can also be obtained from the School Admissions Team, whose contact details are given below. Any queries about Wokingham's admission arrangements should be addressed to the team.

Email schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk
Telephone (0118) 974 6143
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