



## **PUPIL ADMISSIONS POLICY** **2024 - 2025**

### **1. Introduction:**

- A. Ralph Sadleir School is a mixed gender middle school, covering school years 5-8 for children aged 9-13. The school's Published Admission Number (PAN) for the school is 90.
- B. Our school traditionally has a three-form entry cohort in Year 5. However, in recent years, we have been oversubscribed and have extended our intake to four-form entry where possible. Approximately half of our pupils come from the adjoining first school. The rest of our pupils come from a range of settings and our intake usually comes from approximately 15 schools.
- C. Since Puckeridge and the surrounding areas have continued to grow over the years there have always been sufficient places at Ralph Sadleir School for the transfer at the 9+ age group, because we have extended our intake to four-form entry.
- D. We accept applications for pupils joining from primary schools at Year 7.
- E. All the published information for Hertfordshire residents can be found at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk) as well as the Application Form.
- F. Detailed information about the school can be found on the school website [www.ralphsadleir.herts.sch.uk](http://www.ralphsadleir.herts.sch.uk)

### **2. Admission rules for Ralph Sadleir School for the above school year:**

- A. Ralph Sadleir School, as a stand-alone Academy Trust, will continue to act within the Admissions Policy determined by the Local Education Authority for maintained schools within Hertfordshire
- B. Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the governing bodies (or equivalent) of all maintained schools must admit children with an EHC (Education, Health and Care) Plan that names the school. If there are fewer applications than places available at a school all applicants will be admitted. If there are more applications than places available, the criteria outlined below will be used to prioritise applications.

### **3. Oversubscription criteria:**

- A. Rule 1: Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, 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. Previously looked after children are those who were looked after but ceased to be so because of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order<sup>1</sup> or a special guardianship order<sup>2</sup>.

Children who were not looked after immediately before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order, will not be prioritised under this



rule.

Places are allocated to children in public care according to Chapter 7, Section 2 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

These children will be prioritised under rule 1.

Highest priority will also be given to children who were previously looked after, including those looked after outside England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangement order or a special guardianship order.

A "child looked after" 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 (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989)

All children adopted from care who are of compulsory school age are eligible for admission under rule 1.

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under Rule 1.

Children who were not "looked after" immediately before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order, will not be prioritised under rule 1. Applications made for these children, with suitable supporting professional evidence, can be considered under rule 2.

#### <sup>1</sup> Child arrangements order

Under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders which settle the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

<sup>2</sup> Special guardianship order Under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians.

Children previously looked after outside England and subsequently adopted will be prioritised under Rule 1 if the child's previously looked status and adoption is confirmed by Hertfordshire's "Virtual School".

The child's previously looked status will be decided in accordance with the definition outlined in The Children & Social Work Act 2017:

- i. to have been in state care in a place outside England and Wales because he or she would not otherwise have been cared for adequately, and



ii. to have ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted.

A child is in "state care" if he or she is in the care of, or accommodated by –

- (a) a public authority,
- (b) a religious organisation, or
- (c) any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

B. Rule 2: Children for whom it can be demonstrated have a particular medical or social need to go to the school

Rule 2 applications will only be considered at the time of the initial application unless there has been a significant and exceptional change of circumstances within the family since the initial application was submitted.

All schools in Hertfordshire have experience in dealing with children with diverse social and medical needs. However, in a few very exceptional cases, there are reasons why a child has to go to one specific school.

Few applications under Rule 2 are agreed.

All applications are considered individually but a successful application should include the following:

- a) Specific recent professional evidence that justifies why only one school can meet a child's individual needs, and/or
- b) Professional evidence that outlines exceptional family circumstances making clear why only one school can meet the child's needs.
- c) If the requested school is not the nearest school to the child's home address, clear reasons why the nearest school is not appropriate.
- d) For medical cases – a clear explanation of why the child's severity of illness or disability makes attendance at only a specific school essential.

Evidence should make clear why only one school is appropriate. A Rule 2 application will generally not be upheld in cases where more than one school could meet the child's need.

In exceptional cases relating to a disability, where more than one school in the county can meet the child's specific needs, a clear and compelling case can be made for the "nearest" school with the relevant facilities, environment or location. You must clearly explain why attendance at the "nearest" school with these facilities is essential.

Applications under Rule 2 can only be considered when supported by a recent letter from a professional involved with the child or family, for example a doctor, psychologist or police



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officer. The supporting evidence needs to demonstrate why only one named school can meet the social/medical needs of the child.

Applications for children who were not “looked after” immediately before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order may be made under this rule.

A. A panel of directors from Ralph Sadleir School will determine whether the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet the requirements for this rule. The evidence must relate specifically to the school applied for under Rule 2 and must clearly demonstrate why it is the only school that can meet the child’s needs.

B. **Rule 3: Siblings** - Children who have a sibling on the roll of the school at the time of application. This applies to from Year 5 to Year 7 in middle schools.

C. **Rule 4: Nearest School** - Children for whom it is their nearest school or academy. *This includes all schools except those which allocate places on the basis of faith.*

D. **Rule 5: Distance – children who live nearest to the school.** Children not considered under Rule 4 will be considered under this rule.

E. These rules are applied in the order they are noted above. If more children qualify under a particular rule than there are places available, a tie break will be used by applying the next rule to those children.

## 4. Tie Break

A. When there is a need for a tie break where two different addresses are the same distance from a school, in the case of a block of flats for example, the lower door number will be deemed nearest as logically this will be on the ground floor and therefore closer. If there are two identical addresses of separate applicants, the tie break will be random.

B. Every child entered onto the HCC admissions database has an individual random number assigned, between 1 and 1 million, against each preference school. When there is a need for a final tie break the random number is used to allocate the place, with the lowest number given priority.

*\*Please see the 'Explanatory notes and definitions at the end of the document for a full explanation/definition.*

## 5. Continuing Interest

A. After places have been offered, the school’s continuing interest (waiting) list will be maintained by Hertfordshire County Council. A child’s position on the CI list will be determined by the admissions criteria outlined above and a child’s place on the list can change as other children join or leave it.

B. The county council, on behalf of the school’s Board of Directors, will contact parents/carers if a vacancy becomes available and it can be offered to a child. Continuing interest lists will be maintained for every year group until the summer term (date to be confirmed). To retain a CI application after this time, parents must take an In Year Application.



## 6. **In-year Applications**

A. All parents wishing to apply for a school place during the year should refer to the following site where they will find all the published information as well as the In-year Application

B. Form, which is available at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions)

C. In Year Admissions Appeals: The county council will write to you with the outcome of your application and, if you have been unsuccessful, will include registration details to enable you to login and appeal online at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals)

## 7. **Fair Access**

The school participates in the county council's Fair Access protocol and will admit children under this protocol before children on continuing interest. Children can also be admitted above the PAN if necessary.

## 8. **Twins**

If a twin or multiple birth child is allocated the final place available, the school will also offer places to the other twin/multiple birth children.

## 9. **Appeals**

Parents wishing to appeal who applied through Hertfordshire's online system should log in to their online application and click on the link "register an appeal". Out of county residents and paper applicants should call the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request their registration details and log into [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals) and click on the link "log into the appeals system".

## 10. **Timescales**

The admission timescale for 2024/25 Admissions is:

**Deadline for receipt of all applications – Monday 15th January 2024**

**Closing date for late applications – Friday 1st March 2024**

**Allocations offers made – Tuesday 16th April 2024**

**Deadline for receipt of acceptances – Wednesday 1st May 2024**

## 11. **Explanatory Notes and Definitions**

A. Explanatory notes and definitions for the admission arrangements for Ralph Sadleir School are in accordance with explanatory notes and definitions for community and voluntary- controlled schools in Hertfordshire.

B. The following definitions apply to terms used in the admissions criteria:



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Applications under Rule 2 can only be considered when supported by a recent letter from a professional involved with the child or family, for example a doctor, psychologist or police officer. The supporting evidence needs to demonstrate why only one named school can meet the social/medical needs of the child.

Applications for children who were not "looked after" immediately before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order may be made under this rule.

F. A panel of directors from Ralph Sadleir School will determine whether the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet the requirements for this rule. The evidence must relate specifically to the school applied for under Rule 2 and must clearly demonstrate why it is the only school that can meet the child's needs.

## 12. Definition of sibling

A. For applications to schools using Hertfordshire County Council's admission criteria, a sibling is defined as: the sister, brother, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent/carer or partner or a child looked after or previously looked after<sup>1</sup> and in every case living permanently<sup>2</sup> in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of this application.

B. A sibling must be on the roll of the named school at the time the younger child starts or have been offered and accepted a place.

C. If a place is obtained for an older child using fraudulent information, there will be no sibling connection available to subsequent children from that family.

<sup>1</sup> Children previously looked after are those children adopted or with a special guardianship order or child arrangements order. This definition was amended following a determination by the OSA in August 2014.

<sup>2</sup> A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.

## 13. Multiple births

The governors of Ralph Sadleir School will admit over the school's published admission number when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated the last available place.





## 14. Home address

- A. The address provided must be the child's current permanent address at the time of application. "At the time of application" means the closing date for applications. "Permanent" means that the child has lived at that address for at least a year and/or the family own the property or have a tenancy agreement for a minimum of 12 months.
- B. The application can only be processed using one address. If a child lives at more than one address (for example due to a separation) the address used will be the one which the child lives at for the majority of the time. If a child lives at two addresses equally, the address of the parent/carer that claims Child Benefit/Child Tax Credit will be considered as the child's main residence.
- C. If a family is not in receipt of Child Benefit/Tax Credit alternative documentation will be requested.
- D. If a child's residence is in dispute, parents/carers should provide court documentation to evidence the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes.
- E. If two different applications are received for the same child from the same address, e.g. containing different preferences, the application from the parent in receipt of child benefit will be processed if the applications cannot be reconciled.

## 15. Fraudulent applications

- A. The School Governors in conjunction with Hertfordshire County Council, will do as much as possible to prevent applications being made from fraudulent addresses, including referring cases to the Shared Anti-Fraud service for further investigation as necessary.
- B. Address evidence is frequently requested, monitored and checked and school places will be withdrawn when false information is deliberately provided. Hertfordshire County Council will take action in the following circumstances:
- When a child's application address does not match the address of that child at their current school;
  - When a child lives at a different address to the applicant;
  - When the applicant does not have parental responsibility;
  - When a family move shortly after the closing date of applications when one or more of the following applies:
    - The family has moved to a property from which their application was less likely to be successful;
    - The family has returned to an existing property;
    - The family lived in rented accommodation for a short period of time (anything less than a year) over the application period;
    - Official/public records show an alternative address at the time of the application



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When a child starts at the allocated school and their address is different from the address used at the time of application.

C. Parents/carers will need to show that they have relinquished residency ties with their previous property and they, and their child(ren) are permanently residing at the address given on the application form.

## 16. Home to school distance measurement for purposes of admissions

A 'straight line' distance measurement is used in all home to school distance measurements to apply to Ralph Sadleir's arrangements. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the Address Base Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. Address Base Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

## 17. Definition of "nearest school" for primary/junior/middle admissions

The definition of "nearest school" includes all schools and academies except those which allocate places on the basis of faith (membership or practice) before allocating on the basis of distance/location.

## 18. Applications from children\* from overseas

A. All children of compulsory school age (5 to 16 years) in England have a right of access to education. However, where a child is in England for a short period only, for example less than half a term, it may be reasonable to refuse admission to a school.

B. An application for a school place will only be accepted for such children currently overseas if, for In Year applications, proof is provided that the child will be resident in Hertfordshire within two weeks. In Year allocations are made on the assumption that the child will accept the school place and be on roll within that timescale.

C. For the Middle School transfer processes, applications will not normally be accepted from, nor places allocated to, an overseas address. The exception to this (for both In Year and transfer processes) is for children of UK service personnel and crown servants (and from military families who are residents of countries with a Memorandum of Understanding with the UK). In these cases HCC will allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a HCC Unit postal address or quartering area address, for consideration of the application against oversubscription criteria.

D. Applications will also be considered, and places offered in advance for these families, if the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date but does not provide a quartering or unit address because the family will be residing in private accommodation. In these cases, if the family does not already have a permanent private address in Hertfordshire, the military base or alternative "work" address in Hertfordshire will be used for allocation purposes. If the family already has an established alternative private address, that address will be used for admission purposes.



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E. The Governors of Ralph Sadleir School will also consider accepting applications from children\* whose family can evidence intent to return to and/or permanently reside in Hertfordshire prior to the start of the new academic year. These applications, if accepted, will be processed from the overseas address until sufficient evidence is received to show the child is permanently resident in Hertfordshire. Evidence must be submitted at the time of application.

F. Evidence submitted after the date for late applications cannot be taken into account before National Allocation Day. Decisions on these applications will be made by a panel of senior officers at Hertfordshire County Council and communicated with parents within 6 weeks of the closing date for applications.

G. If an applicant owns a property in Hertfordshire but is not living in it, perhaps because they are working abroad at the time of application, the Hertfordshire address will **not** be accepted for the purposes of admission until the child is resident at that address.

H. Other children, than those mentioned above, from overseas do not generally have automatic right of entry to the UK. An application for a school place will not therefore be accepted until they are permanently resident in Hertfordshire. Proof of residency such as an endorsed passport or entry visa will be required with the application, in addition to proof of Hertfordshire address, for example a council tax bill or 12 month rental agreement.

*\*Children who hold full British Citizen passports (not British Dependent Territories or British Overseas passports), or have a UK passport describing them as a British citizen or British subject with the right of abode or are European Economic Area nationals normally have unrestricted entry to the UK.*

## 19. Children Out of Year Group

A. Ralph Sadleir School's policy is for children to be educated within their correct chronological year group, with the curriculum differentiated as necessary to meet the needs of individual children. This is in line with DfE guidance which states that "in general, children should be educated in their normal age group".

B. If parents/carers believe their child(ren) should be educated in a different year group they should, at the time of application, submit supporting evidence from relevant professionals working with the child and family stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age appropriate cohort. DfE guidance makes clear that "it is reasonable for admission authorities to expect parents to provide them with information in support of their request – since without it they are unlikely to be able to make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case".

C. Governors of Ralph Sadleir School through a panel process, will decide whether the application will be accepted on the basis of the information submitted. The panel make decisions based upon the circumstances of each case including the view of parents, the relevant Headteacher(s),

D. the child's social, academic and emotional development and whether the child has



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been previously educated out of year group. There is no guarantee that an application will be accepted on this basis. If the application is not accepted this does not constitute a refusal of a place and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal. Similarly, there is no right of appeal for a place in a specific year group at a school. The internal management and organisation of a school, including the placement of pupils in classes, is a matter for the Headteacher and senior leadership of individual schools.

## 20. Policy Review

The Admissions Policy 2024/25 will be reviewed and ratified on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 by the Board of Directors of Ralph Sadleir School.

Governance	Chair Person / Headteacher	Signature	Date
Senior Leadership Team	Mr. S. Fanthorpe		23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2023
Board of Directors	Mrs. J. Tye		23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2023