



LIGHTHOUSE
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST



Sunshine Academy Admissions Policy

(Proposed Admission Arrangements 2028-2029)

Document Provenance	
Effective from (determination date)	28 February 2027 <i>(for admissions from September 2028)</i>
Determined by:	Lighthouse Multi Academy Trust Board of Trustees <i>(Admission Authority)</i>
Determination frequency:	Determined annually in accordance with the School Admissions Code (2021)
Next determination due by:	28 February 2028

Version Control and Determination Record					
<i>This table records the formal determination of these admission arrangements and any authorised post-determination variations made in accordance with paragraphs 3.1–3.4 of the School Admissions Code (2021).</i>					
Version	Date	Type of Change	Authority / Approval Route	Summary of Change	Effective Date
1.0	28/02/27	Determined arrangements	Lighthouse Board of Trustees	Determined Admission Arrangements for 2028–2029 including a Reception Published Admission Number (PAN) of 30.	01/09/2028

Consultation Notice

These proposed admission arrangements for the 2028–2029 academic year are published for consultation in accordance with the School Admissions Code (2021).

The consultation period will run from **2 November 2026 to 14 December 2026**. Comments can be submitted using the following QR code:



Contents

	Page
1. Aims	2
2. Legislation and statutory requirements	2
3. Definitions	2
4. How to apply for a place in Reception	3
5. Application timetable	3
6. Allocation of places	4
7. Requests for admission outside the normal age group	6
8. In-year admissions	7
9. Appeals	7

1. Aims

Thank you for your interest in applying for a place at Sunshine Academy. This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at the school
- Set out the school's arrangements for allocating places
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- [School Admissions Code 2021](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

The school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Lighthouse MAT is a multi-academy trust and is the admissions authority for all its schools, including Sunshine Academy. Lighthouse MAT, in accordance with its funding agreement, is responsible for the admissions policy of each academy and co-ordinates with the relevant Local Authority for the administration of admissions applications. For Sunshine Academy the relevant Local Authority is Walsall Council.

This policy is not relevant to the process for naming the school on a child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). There is a separate process for selecting or changing the school named on an EHCP which is outside of the admissions process. Please contact your home Local Authority for further details.

3. Definitions

For definitions not covered in this section, the academy follows those set out in the School Admissions Code (2021).

Normal admissions round	The period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools are in). The Local Authority's timetable will be used for all normal round applications each year (exact dates within the months may vary from year to year).
Looked-after children	Children who, at the time of application, are: • in the care of a local authority, or • being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions (as defined in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).
Previously looked-after children	Children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were: • adopted (under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 or Adoption Act 1976) • became subject to a child arrangements order (section 8 Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 Children and Families Act 2014), or a special guardianship order (section 14A Children Act 1989). This includes children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside England and ceased to be in such state care as a result of being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside

	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.
Compulsory school age	A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day (31 August, 31 December or 31 March) following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day).
Parent	Any person who is a parent of the child, or who has parental responsibility for the child, or who has care of the child (as defined in section 576 of the Education Act 1996).
Sibling	A brother or sister, half-brother or half-sister (sharing one common parent), step-brother or step-sister living at the same address, and adopted or fostered children living at the same address.
Home address	The child's genuine principal place of residence at the time of allocation, i.e. where the child (and their parent(s)/carer(s)) are normally and regularly living. Where a child lives with parents who share responsibility and the child lives with each parent for part of the week, the home address will be the address at which the child lives for the majority of the school week. Parents may be required to provide documentary evidence; at least one item must demonstrate where the child lives. • Where a child lives with friends or relatives (other than where formal guardianship or residence orders apply), that address will not normally be considered the child's home address for allocation purposes.

4. How to apply for a place in Reception

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the application form provided by your home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools are in).

Where a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) is required, this can be downloaded from the admissions page of the school website. Details of where to return the completed form and the deadline for submission are provided on the form itself. The oversubscription criteria within this policy set out which categories of applicants are required to complete a Supplementary Information Form.

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority.

Please note, pupils already attending our Nursery will not transfer automatically into Reception. A separate application must be made for a place in Reception.

Nursery Admissions

Applications for a place at Little Rays Nursery should be made directly to Sunshine Academy using the nursery application form available from the academy office.

Sunshine Academy operates a 30-place nursery, subject to demand and operational requirements.

Children are eligible to attend nursery following their third birthday, subject to the availability of places. Eligible families may also access 30 hours funded childcare in accordance with Government guidance.

Parents and carers are encouraged to register their interest in a nursery place as early as possible to assist the academy with future planning. Registration of interest does not guarantee that a place will be available when a child becomes eligible for admission.

The academy operates a staggered intake during the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms.

Attendance at Little Rays Nursery does not guarantee admission to Reception at Sunshine Academy. A separate application for a Reception place must be made through the Local Authority's coordinated admissions process.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, nursery places will be

allocated in the following order of priority:

1. Children who are due to transfer to Reception in the following academic year.
2. Looked-after children and previously looked-after children.
3. Children who have a sibling attending Sunshine Academy at the time of admission.
4. Children for whom attendance at Sunshine Academy is essential on exceptional medical or social grounds, supported by appropriate professional evidence.
5. Children whose names have been placed on the nursery waiting list.
6. Children living closest to the academy, measured in a straight line from the child's home address to the academy.

Where applications cannot be separated using the criteria above, priority will be given to the child living closest to the academy.

If there are more eligible applicants than places available, unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list and considered for any vacancies that arise.

Prior to admission, parents and carers will be required to:

- Complete all admission documentation.
- Provide evidence of the child's date of birth.
- Provide any additional information reasonably requested by the academy.

Parents and carers will be informed in writing of the outcome of their application.

5.Application timetable

Reception Application for entry September 2028	
1 September 2027	Application period opens: Parents apply using the Common Application Form (CAF) provided by their home Local Authority. The CAF must be submitted to the home LA, even if preferences include schools in other areas.
October 2027	Assessment for aptitude places (where applicable): Where the school allocates a proportion of places by aptitude (e.g. music or sport), assessment tests are held before the closing date. Parents are notified of outcomes before 15 January 2027 so they can make informed preferences on the CAF. (See Section 6 for details.)
15 January 2028	Closing date for applications: National deadline. Applications received after this date are late (considered after all on-time applications unless there are exceptional reasons).

28 February 2028	Publication of appeals timetable: The school publishes the appeals timetable for the 2028/29 round on its website (deadlines, notice periods, hearing windows) in line with the School Admission Appeals Code (2022).
16 April 2028	National Offer Day: Home Local Authorities notify parents of outcomes (or next working day if 16 April falls on a weekend).
By early May 2028 (Exact date to be set by each LA)	Deadline for parents to respond to offers: Parents accept/decline; they may request to be added to waiting lists for higher preferences.
May 2028 – July 2028	Appeals: Heard in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code (2022).
16 April 2028 – 31 December 2028	Waiting list maintained: Reception waiting lists are maintained and re-ranked using the oversubscription criteria. (After 31 December, the list closes or moves to the in-year process, per local arrangements.)

6. Allocation of places

Published admission number (PAN)

The Published Admission Number (PAN) for Reception at Sunshine Academy for the 2028–2029 academic year is 30 pupils.

Oversubscription criteria:

All children whose Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) names the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

In the event that the school receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in order, until all places are filled. For definitions, please refer to section 3.

- **PRIORITY 1:** Highest priority will be given to looked-after children and all previously looked-after children who apply for a place at the school.
- **PRIORITY 2:** Priority will next be given to children who will have siblings on the roll of the school at the point of the new pupil joining the school.
- **PRIORITY 3:** Priority will next be given to children of staff employed by Lighthouse MAT at the school, in either of the following circumstances:
 - a) The member of staff has been employed at the school for 2 or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made.
 - b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

For the purposes of this criterion, 'employed at the school' means that the employee's principal place of work is the school to which they are applying for a place for their child.

- **PRIORITY 4:** Priority will next be given to children living nearest to the school. Distance will be measured in accordance with the methodology used by the Local Authority in which the school is situated for determining home-to-school distances for admission purposes. Details of how the Local Authority measures distance can be found on the relevant Local Authority's website. The Trust does not determine or verify distance measurements independently of the Local Authority.

Tie break

Where two or more applications cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, priority will be given to the child living nearest to the school, measured in accordance with the distance methodology used by the relevant Local Authority.

Where there is a tie within the distance criterion itself (for example, two or more children living at the same distance from the school), random allocation will be used to decide between them. This process will be independently verified.

Waiting list

Where the school is oversubscribed, a waiting list will be maintained in accordance with the requirements of the School Admissions Code (2021).

For applications made in the normal admissions round, the waiting list will be managed by the school's Local Authority from National Offer Day until 31 December of the same year.

From 1 January onwards, and for all in-year admissions, the waiting list will be maintained by the school or the Local Authority, depending on local arrangements, in line with the in-year admissions process.

Each child added to the waiting list will be ranked again according to the school's published oversubscription criteria. Priority will not be given based on the date an application was received, or the length of time a child's name has been on the list.

If a place becomes available, it will be offered to the child ranked highest according to the oversubscription criteria at that time.

Children who are looked after, previously looked after, or allocated a place in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those on the waiting list.

If parents decline an offer and later wish to re-join the waiting list, the child's name will be added as a new entry and the list re-ranked accordingly.

Waiting lists are maintained for the current academic year only. Parents who wish their child to remain on the list for the following academic year must re-apply.

Children below compulsory school age

Where children below compulsory school age are offered a place at the school, they will be entitled to attend the school full-time in the September following their fourth birthday.

Parents can request to defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the application was made. Where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Walsall Council's Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible and before anyone is considered from the waiting list. Eligibility for the Fair Access Protocol does not limit a parent's right to make an in-year application to the school for their child. Any application will be processed in accordance with the usual in-year admission procedures.

Challenging behaviour

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry.

An exception applies only in the limited circumstances set out in paragraph 3.8 of the School Admissions Code (2021) and section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998- specifically, where a child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools.

We may also refuse admission for an in-year applicant (i.e. outside the normal point of entry) in certain cases where the criteria set out in paragraphs 3.10 to 3.13 of the School Admissions Code (2021) apply.

Children of UK service personnel and crown servants

Families of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, will be allocated a place in advance of the family arriving in the area, provided a place is available and the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date.

We will use the address at which the child will live when applying our oversubscription criteria, provided the parents provide some evidence of their intended address. Alternatively, the unit or quartering address will be used as the child's home address when considering the application against the oversubscription criteria, where this is requested by a parent.

Withdrawing an offer of a place

We will not withdraw an offer unless it has been offered in error, a parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

Where a parent has not responded to the offer, we will give them a further opportunity to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not respond.

If an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, we will consider the application afresh and a right of appeal will be offered if an offer is refused.

We will not withdraw an offer of a place once a child has started at our school except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In these circumstances, we will consider the length of time that the child has been at the school before deciding whether to withdraw the place.

7. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group. Such requests should be made in writing to the school before the closing date for applications for their child's chronological year group in the normal admissions round.

Lighthouse MAT, as the admission authority, will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code (2021), this will include taking account of:

- The parents' views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- Whether they have previously been educated outside their normal age group
- Whether they may have naturally fallen into a lower age group if not for premature birth
- The headteacher's views

Parents should also apply for a school place for their child's normal (chronological) age group at the same time, in case the request is not agreed.

Lighthouse MAT, will confirm its decision in writing before the closing date for applications for the child's chronological year group. If the request is agreed, parents will be advised to apply in the following admissions round for the agreed year group.

Parents do not have the right to appeal against a decision to refuse a request for admission outside the normal age group. However, they may appeal against the refusal of a place in the normal age group once offers are made.

8. In-year admissions

Parents can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) name the school will be admitted. Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for, your child will be offered a place.

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by one of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Applications for in-year admissions should be made to the school directly.

9. Appeals

If the admission authority does not offer a child a place at this school/academy, it is because to do so would prejudice the efficient education of other children or the efficient use of resources, due to the school/academy being at or over its published admission number or physical capacity.

Where a place is refused, parents and carers have the right to appeal against this decision for statutory school-age admissions. Appeals will be heard by an independent appeal panel in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code (2022). An independent appeal panel will be appointed by the Local Authority or the admission authority, as appropriate. The appeal panel will consist of at least three members:

- One or more lay members (persons without personal experience in the management of any school or the provision of education, other than as a school governor or volunteer)
- One or more members with experience in education or who are familiar with educational conditions in the local area

All panel members will be independent of the school/academy, the Trust, and the Local Governing Body.

A trained independent clerk will attend all appeal hearings to ensure that the process is fair and conducted in accordance with statutory requirements.

The decision of the independent appeal panel is binding on all parties.

Decision letters will normally be issued within five school days of the hearing, wherever possible.

For more information about how to appeal, please visit the Local Authority admissions website: <https://go.walsall.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools-in-walsall/school-admissions/appeal-an-admissions-decision>