

PROPOSED ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR BIRCHWOOD COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026

1. Introduction

- 1.1 All schools, including academies and free schools, must have admission arrangements that clearly set out how children will be admitted, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications for a place at the school than there are places available.
- 1.2 Birchwood Community Academy Trust is responsible for setting admission arrangements for Birchwood Community High School.
- 1.3 The following statement sets out the admission arrangements for all admissions to the school for academic year 2025-2026.

2. Age of Admission

- 2.1 Parents and carers (parents) of children born on or between 1 September 2014 and 31 August 2015 can apply for a Year 7 place at secondary school for admission in September 2025. The application form is available (see section 13) from 1 September 2024 and the closing date is midnight on 31 October 2024.
- 2.2 Before you complete an application form, you are strongly advised to read the school's prospectus and take note of the school's calendar which sets out details of open evenings and other opportunities for prospective pupils and their parents/carers to visit the school. To access the parent/carer information booklet, the school's calendar and the application form, please refer to Section 13 of this document.

3. Published Admission Numbers (PAN)

- 3.1 The Published Admission Number for entry into Year 7 in September 2025 at the Birchwood Community High School is 200.

4. Oversubscription Criteria

- 4.1 Oversubscription criteria are used to establish an order of priority for allocating places when the number of applications for places exceeds the number of places available.
- 4.2 Children who have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan **will** be admitted to the school named in the statement over and above the published oversubscription criteria.
- 4.3 The proposed oversubscription criteria for admissions to **Birchwood Community High School** are set out below:

- (1) Children who are or have been in the care or interim care of a Local Authority pursuant to sections 31 and 38 of the Children's Act 1989, or children who are accommodated by a local authority pursuant to section 20 of the Children's Act 1989, or children who have previously been in the care of a local authority but have since been adopted alongside 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 (IAPLAC).

- (2) Admission of pupils whose siblings currently attend Birchwood Community High School and who will continue to do so on the date of admission. For the purpose of allocating places, sibling means:
- full sibling living at the same address as the applicant
 - step sibling living at the same address as the applicant
 - half sibling living at the same address as the applicant
 - long term foster sibling living at the same address as the applicant
- (3) Pupils for whom advice from a medical practitioner or psychologist has been provided by the parents (at the time of application) in support of admission to a particular school, which, in the Academy's view, justifies admission to the Academy. The Academy, if it is considered appropriate, will seek the views of the Academy medical officer or educational psychologist in the event of parents requesting admission on medical or psychological grounds.
- (4) Pupils living nearest to the school measured as a direct distance from the child's permanent place of residence to the school measured using a geographical information address point system based on the local and property gazetteer (LLPG). This measures straight line (direct) distances from the address point of the permanent place of residence to the address point of the school.

Where a school reaches its published admission number from pupils within one of the categories listed above those pupils to be admitted from within that category will be those whose permanent place of residence is closest to the school as defined in oversubscription criterion four.

4.4 Children of UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces)

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area, or crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area, by law the admission authority must 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 Unit postal or quartering address.

5. Tie Breaker

- 5.1 A tie breaker must be applied to decide which applicant will be offered the last place at a school when two or more applicants cannot otherwise be separated.
- 5.2 In the event of the direct distances (in miles) being the same for two or more applicants and the last place to be allocated would be to one of these applicants, the measurements would be taken again in kilometres and the place will be offered to the applicant living nearest to the school in kilometres.
- 5.3 In the event that the distances measured in kilometres are the same, a random allocation will be applied.

6. Shared Parental Responsibility

- 6.1 For school admission purposes, the Academy Trust has agreed that when considering application forms from parents with 50/50 shared responsibility for their child, the address given on the application should be the address of the parent who is in receipt of the child benefit and/or child tax credit. Proof may be required.

- 6.2 If the care is not split 50/50, the address used for allocation purposes will be the address where the child sleeps on most nights of the week.

7. National Offer Day

- 7.1 The local authority will send out offer emails and letters on behalf of the School's Academy Trust.
- 7.2 All offers of Year 7 places must be offered on the same National Offer Day which is 1 March or the next working day.

8. Right of Appeal

- 8.1 Under the terms of the 1998 Education Act, parents have the statutory right of appeal against the decision of an admission authority to refuse a place for their child at any school. Such appeals are made to an independent appeals panel via the local authority.

9. Appeals Timetable

- 9.1 The appeals timetable for all admission authorities within Warrington can be viewed or downloaded from Section 13 below.

10. Waiting Lists

- 10.1 In accordance with The Education and Inspection Act 2006, waiting lists for first admission to reception class are held by the local authority for the whole of the Autumn Term of the academic year of admission. Waiting lists must be held strictly in oversubscription criteria order.

11. Requests to Educate a Child Outside of Their Normal Age Group

- 11.1 The Code of Practice (Sections 2.17-2.17B) states that parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group. When considering any request for admission of children outside their normal age group, admission authorities take full account of parent's views but must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.
- 11.2 Parents enquiring about this should have a discussion with the Headteacher of their child's prospective school to allay any concerns parents may have about their child's readiness to start school in the correct year group. At this stage an assessment will be made as to whether an out of cohort admission would be in the child's best interests both socially and academically.
- 11.3 If parents still wish to pursue an out of cohort they must write to the school setting out reasons why in their view, the child would benefit from being educated outside their normal age group.
- 11.4 Prior to making a decision, the academy trust (the trust) must then consider the parents' reasons, the headteacher's views and if appropriate views from the local authority's inclusion team. Where the trust agrees exceptionally to support the request for admission outside their normal age group, the child can be admitted to the relevant age group as appropriate. Where the trust does not support the parental request, the child should continue or be admitted to the year corresponding to the child's normal age group if the school have a place available.

- 11.5 Parents **do not** have the right of appeal against the decision to refuse an out of cohort admission, but they must receive a letter explaining how the Trust reached its decision.
- 11.6 Parents **do** have the right of appeal if the school is unable to offer a place in the 'correct' year group.

12. In-Year Admissions

- 12.1 In-year admissions are those requesting a transfer from one school to another outside of the normal admissions round, for example when a family moves house part way through a school year.
- 12.2 Applications for in-year admissions are administered by the local authority. Generally a child will be admitted to another school if there is a place available with the exception of those children whose circumstances meet the requirements of the Fair Access Protocol. Each local authority must have a fair access protocol agreed with the majority of schools in its area to ensure that unplaced children, who apply outside the normal admissions round, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. The local authority must also ensure that no school, including those with unfilled places, is asked to take a disproportionate number of children who have been excluded from other schools, or who have challenging behaviour. A copy of Warrington's Fair Access Protocol can be viewed downloaded from Section 13 below.
- 12.3 Parents wishing to consider transferring their child from one school to another should read the in-year admissions information booklet for parents before completing a form. The in year admissions information booklet and application form can be downloaded from Section 13 below.

13. Local Authority Admissions Information

- 13.1 Applying for a secondary place <https://www.warrington.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-11/Secondary%20Schools%20Brochure%202024-25%20v1.5.pdf>
- 13.2 Joining Birchwood information <https://www.birchwoodhigh.org/future-students-of-birchwood/>