HCAT Admission Arrangements

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Version Number	Version Description	Date of Revision
1	Original	March 2024
2	Rebranded	May 2024
3	Updated with new dates and admission of Upperwood to HCAT	March 2025
4	Updated with admission of 5 new Schools to HCAT	Sept 2025

HCAT Admission Arrangements

1. Introduction

The Trust Board is the admissions authority for HCAT Schools, and these admission arrangements only apply to this Academy Trust.

Admission to HCAT Schools are into the Relevant Year Group which is:

Reception Year group in our Primary Schools;
Year 7 in our Secondary School

Schools are required to admit children up to their admission number in the Relevant year group.

Attendance at a nursery unit attached to the school does not guarantee a place at that school.

The Academy does not operate a defined community (catchment area) or feeder primary schools for allocating places in secondary schools.

2. Date of admission to primary schools

Although the law does not require children to be admitted to school until the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday, (compulsory school age), the School Admissions Code makes provision for all children to be admitted to school in the September following their 4th birthday.

Parents will be able to access this entitlement through one of the following options.
Option 1
Full-time in the Reception Year from 1 September following the child's 4th birthday.
Option 2
Part-time in the Reception Year from 1 September following the child's fourth birthday.
Option 3
Part-time in an early years setting.

3. Deferred entry to primary school

Where a place is offered at a school, a parent who accepts that school place can defer entry to that school until the term after the child's fifth birthday.

There may be Spring and Summer Term admissions as a result of parents who have deferred their child's entry.

The deferred place at that school will be held for that child and will not be available to be offered to another child.

The deferred place must be taken up during the same school year for which the offer of the place was made and accepted.

Entry to a school cannot be deferred to:

a) the next academic year; or

b) beyond the beginning of the term following the child's fifth birthday.

4. Summer Born Children

Parents of summer born children, (those born from 1 April to 31 August) can request that their child delays entry to Reception year group for a year.

The child would then be admitted into Reception Year group in the following year when other children in they age range are beginning Year 1.

Parents must write to the Admissions Team requesting this and provide any information in support of their request.

A decision is taken by the Admission Authority based on the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child.

5. Admission of children outside of their normal age group

Parents of gifted and talented children, or those who have experienced problems or missed part of a year, for example due to ill health, can seek places outside their normal age group.

A determination on the exceptional circumstances will be made by the relevant Governing Body based on the information provided by the parent.

The right of appeal does not apply if the child is offered a place in another year group at the school.

6. Oversubscription criteria

Where the number of applications for the Academy received during the normal admissions round exceeds the admission number, or an admission limit set higher than the admission number, then admission will be determined in accordance with the following priority of admission criteria:

Children who have a Statement of Special Educational Need which names the Academy are required to be admitted.

First, Looked After Children and previously Looked After children;

Second, to children with brothers and/or sisters attending the Academy on the proposed date of admission;

Third, Children of staff in either of the following circumstances:

(i) where the member of staff has been directly employed by the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to school is made: OR

(ii) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

Fourth, to children living nearest the Academy; the distance to be measured by a straight line between the centre point of the child's ordinary place of residence and the main entrance to the Academy building.

The child's ordinary place of residence will be deemed to be a residential property at which the person or persons with parental responsibility for the child resides at the closing date for receiving applications for admission to school.

Where parental responsibility is held by more than one person and those persons reside in separate properties, the child's ordinary place of residence will be deemed to be that property at which the child resides for the greater part of the week including weekends.

Where responsibility for a child is shared evenly, the address where the child is registered at the Doctor's, is the address that will be used for admissions purposes.

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 care function s at the time of making an application to the school.

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).

For the sibling criterion to be applicable one of the following conditions must exist:

a) brother and/or sister to be permanently resident at the same address;

b) stepbrother and/or stepsister to be permanently resident at the same address (to include half brothers/sisters).

7. Expressing a preference for admission to the Relevant Year Group

For admission to the Reception Year Group or Year 7 parents will be invited to express three preferences for those schools/academies at which they wish their child to receive education, in accordance with the co-ordinated scheme.

The offer of a place to a parent will be communicated to the parent on the offer day of 16th April 2026 for primary schools and 02nd March 2026 for secondary schools.

NB: Where any date specified in these arrangements falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or any day which is a recognised bank holiday, any action which is stated to be undertaken on that day will occur on the next working day.

8. Late applications

All applications received after the closing date will be treated in accordance with Barnsley LA's Coordinated Scheme for admission to school.

9. Waiting Lists

A waiting lists will be established for the Academy where the number of applications has exceeded the places available in the relevant year group.

Names of children will automatically be placed on the waiting list where they have not been offered a place where that school is ranked above that at which a place has been offered to the parent.

The waiting list will be established on the offer day and be maintained up to the end of the Autumn Term in the admission year.

The waiting list is determined according to the Trust Board's priority of admission oversubscription criteria.

Following the offer day should an application be received for a school where the pupil has a higher priority, as determined by the admissions criteria for a place at the school, they will be placed on the waiting list above those with a lower priority.

10. False Information

Where the Authority has made a single offer of a place at a school on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent, which has effectively denied a place to a child with a stronger claim to a place at the school, the Governing Body will request that the Local Authority withdraw the offer of a place.

Where a child starts attending the school on the basis of fraudulent or intentionally misleading information the place may be withdrawn depending on the length of time that the child has been at the school. Where a place or an offer has been withdrawn the application will be re-considered and an independent appeal offered where the child is not re-admitted to the school.

Where it is established that the place was obtained on the basis of fraudulent or intentionally misleading application and the child continues to attend the school, the sibling criterion will cease to apply in the event of the parent making an application to the same school on behalf of a younger child in the family.

11. Appeals against the Trust Board's decision not to offer a school place

Any parent whose child is not offered a place at the Academy has the right to an independent appeal.

The right of an independent appeal applies to all preferences expressed for the Academy.

Parents who intend to make an appeal must submit a Notice of Appeal to the Local Authority within 20 school days of receiving the offer letter.

Normally appeal hearings will be held within 40 school days of the closing date for receiving the notice of appeal.

For twice excluded pupils see section 14.

12. Applications for admission schools outside of the normal admission round

Where applications are received for admission to the Academy following the offer day they will be dealt with as follows:

a) admission where the year group is below the admission number (or higher admission limit where one has been set).

The parent will be offered a place

b) admission where the year group is above the admission number (or higher admission limit where one has been set).

(i) where the Governing Body determines that there would not be prejudice to the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources by the admission the parent will be offered a place.

(ii) where the Governing Body determines that there would be prejudice to the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources by the admission the parent will not be offered a place.

The prejudice referred to under b(ii) may arise by reason of measures required to be taken in order to ensure compliance with the duty imposed on the Local Authority to comply with the statutory limit on infant class sizes.

Where a parent is not offered a place at a school outside of the normal admission round they have the right to an independent appeal.

13. Distance Criterion – Tie Break

Where the offer of the remaining place in the relevant year group could be made to the parent of eligible multiple siblings, resident at the same address, it will be for the parent to determine for which sibling the single offer of the school place will be made.

Where the offer of the remaining place in the relevant year group could be made for a number of eligible children resident equi-distant from the school the determination of the single offer will be by Random Allocation.

The Random Allocation will:

(i) be independently supervised;

(ii) take place on a date and at a time notified in advance to the participating parents so that they can attend as witnesses.

14. Parental Responsibilities and Disputes

Parents/carers who hold parental responsibility have the right to make the application for school. However, only one application can be made so a decision must be taken as to which parent/carer will complete the application.

The school preferences must be agreed by all parties, if they do not agree all application(s) will be withdrawn and may cause the application to be late which may disadvantage the child if the school(s) applied for are oversubscribed.

If parents/carers are not in agreement of the application to school, the application will not be processed until written consent is given by both parties or a court order has determined the school preferences.

Appendix 1 - Admission Number

Birdwell Primary School	30
Darton Primary School	45
Horizon Community College	390
Hoyland Common Primary School	60
Hoylandswaine Primary School	15
Mapplewell Primary School	45
Milefield Primary School	45
Queens Road Primary School	30
Summer Lane Primary School	30
The Mill Primary School	30
Upperwood Primary School	45
Ward Green Primary School	60
West Meadows Primary School	30
Worsbrough Common Primary School	60

Appendix 2 - Timetable for admission to primary schools

Closing date for receiving applications	31 October 2026 for Secondary applications 15 January 2027 for Primary applications
Offer day	1 March 2027 – Secondary Offer Day 16 April 2027 – Primary Offer Day
Appeals completed	End of Summer Term 2027

NB: Where any date specified in these arrangements falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or any day which is a recognised bank holiday, any action which is stated to be undertaken on that day will occur on the next working day.