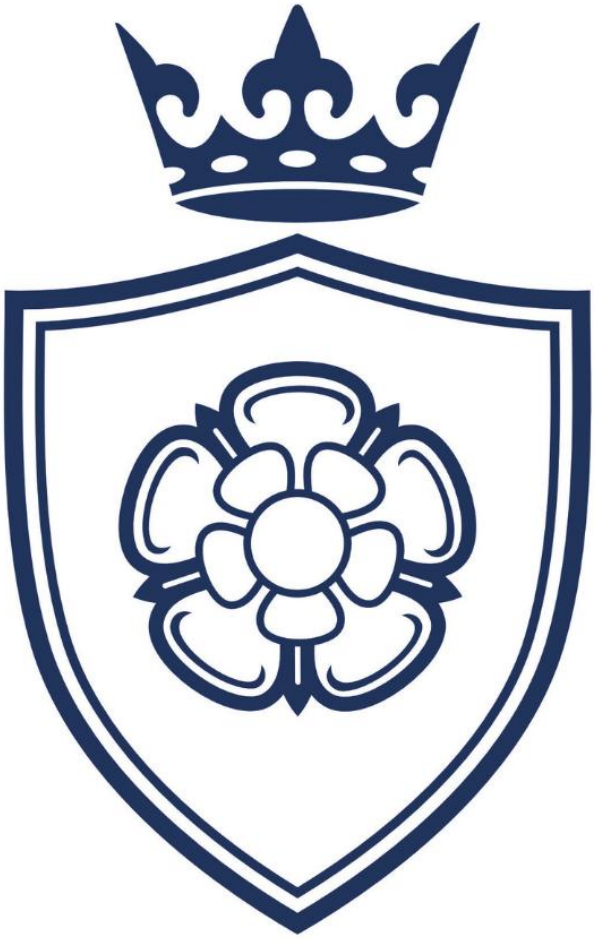
Mercia
Northridge School



Admission policy 2028-29

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

Unless there are legislative or regulatory changes in the interim, this policy will be reviewed every 7 years. Should no substantive changes be required at that point, the policy will move to the next review cycle.

Admission Policy

Academic Year 2028-29

1. Introduction

1.1. This policy sets the admission arrangements for Mercia Northridge School, part of the Mercia Learning Trust. The policy complies with the requirements for the School Admissions Code (2021), the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, and other relevant legislation.

1.2. Mercia Northridge School is a non-selective secondary school serving the local community in north Sheffield. Our intake reflects a comprehensive mix of socio-economic backgrounds and cultures, and we take great pride in offering a rich curriculum that is broad, balanced and inclusive.

1.3. Families are encouraged to consider Mercia Northridge School carefully before applying, ensuring that the school's values, expectations and culture align with their aspirations for their child.

2. Application Process

2.1. As an academy school, Mercia Northridge School is its own admission authority. The Local Authority (Sheffield City Council) coordinates admissions for Year 7 on behalf of the school. Parents/carers must apply for a place through the Local Authority Admissions system.

5th Floor South, Howden House, Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SH
Tel: 0114 273 5790
Email: ed-admissions@sheffield.gov.uk

2.2. Closing dates for expressing preference online is mid-October and paper forms up to the national closing date of 31 October (please check the Local Authority Admission pack or website for the appropriate dates). The indicated Admission Number of Mercia Northridge School is 150 per year group which is the number of places available in Year 7.

2.3. Mercia Northridge School had determined its Admission arrangements for 2028-29 in accordance with Regulation 17 of the School Admission Regulation 2012. Any objection for these arrangements to be made to the Schools Adjudicator.

2.4. Sheffield Local Authority is also responsible for coordinating in-year applications on behalf of Mercia Learning Trust.

3. Special Educational Needs

3.1. Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires that the Trust Board of all mainstream academy schools admit a child with a Educational Health Care Plan that names their school. This is not an oversubscription criterion, school are required to admit a child in these circumstances whether they have places or not. Mercia Northridge School complies fully with this requirement.

4. Oversubscription Criteria

4.1. In the event of oversubscription, the following categories will be prioritised for places at Mercia Northridge School, operated on the school's behalf by the Sheffield Local Authority:

4.1.1. **Priority 1** - Children in Public Care (Looked After Children) & Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)

4.1.1.1. All Admission Authorities MUST prioritise the admission of "Relevant Looked After Children" within their admission criteria. A "Relevant Looked After Child" is defined as "a child who is looked after by a local authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989(b) and who (i) is looked after at the time an application for admission to a school is made and (ii) in relation to whom the local authority has confirmed that the child will still be looked after at the time when the child will be admitted to the school. The Admission Code of Practice extend this category to also include PLAC i.e. 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". The definition of previously looked after children included children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

4.1.2. **Priority 2 -** Children in catchment with siblings at the school (11-16 Year 7-11)

4.1.2.1. Children who normally reside with a parent or person with parental responsibility in the defined catchment area and who will have a sibling at Mercia Northridge School on the day of admission will be considered next. The definition of a sibling for these purposes is given below. This means that all catchment/sibling application are prioritised before catchment applicants irrespective of distance. The normal distance tie-braker will apply within each category.

4.1.2.2. A sibling is a child who permanently or usually lives at the same address as:

4.1.2.3. A brother and/or sister

4.1.2.4. A stepbrother and/or stepsister (to include half brother/sister)

4.1.2.5. And in both cases will be attending Mercia Northridge School at the point of entry.

4.1.3. **Priority 3** - Up to 3 children of school staff, including teaching and associate staff (non-teaching staff), who have been in post for at least two years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstratable skill shortage. If the post is to fill a skill shortage, the 2 year minimum service will not apply.

4.1.3.1. Children of staff applications must apply to the Local Authority as normal and complete a supplementary information form to confirm that they fall into this category. The Authority will then send any applications in this category to our Trust for validation.

4.1.3.2. If more than 3 applicants meet this criterion, places will be allocated by applying random allocation. The random allocation process will be carried out by the Local Authority who are independent to the Mercia Learning Trust. See section 5.2.

4.1.4. **Priority 4-** Other children living within the catchment area.

4.1.4.1. Children who normally reside with a parent or person with parental responsibility in the defined catchment area but will not have a sibling at Mercia Northridge School at the point of admission will be considered next.

4.1.5. **Priority 5** - Siblings

4.1.5.1. A non-catchment sibling is a child who permanently or usually lives at the same address as:

4.1.5.1.1. A brother and/or sister

4.1.5.1.2. A stepbrother and/or stepsister (to include half brother/sister)

4.1.5.1.3. And in both cases will be attending Mercia Northridge School at the point of entry.

4.1.6. **Priority 6** - Designated Feeder School

4.1.6.1. Applications for a Year 7 Place at Mercia Northridge School whose children attend a designated feeder primary school but do not fit into any of the above categories 1 to 5 above will be considered next.

4.1.6.2. Parents are advised in the Sheffield Guide for Parents "that if they choose to send their children to a non-catchment primary school, they have a lower priority for entry to the linked secondary school and that there is no guarantee of a place there.

4.1.7. **Priority 7 -** All other applicants

4.1.7.1. Any applicant who does not fall into one of the above categories will be considered next.

5. Tie Breakers

5.1. For any admission category that is oversubscribed there are two stages of further consideration:

5.1.1. Where exceptional medical, social or special educational needs are demonstrated and supported by a professional, an application may be prioritised by the Admission Committee (AC) but only within its admission category. It is the parent's responsibility to provide supporting evidence. The applicant must supply sufficient supporting evidence from relevant professionals at the time of the original application, for the Academy to consider whether an individual case constitutes exceptional circumstances to be prioritised. In any event, the evidence must support the view that the child must attend the school applied for and that they could not have their needs met at any other school. Applications will only be submitted to the Admission Committee for further consideration if they are accompanied by supporting evidence. Further information about the Admission Committee can be found in the Local Authority Composite Prospectus, “A Guide for Parents”.

5.1.2. In circumstances where exceptional circumstances are not demonstrated, the final tie-breaker will be the distance from the home address to the school building. This is a straight line measurement from the house to a specific point at the school building. Where the remaining place could be made for a number of children living equidistant from the school the determination of the single offered will be made by random allocation.

5.2. For priority 3:

5.2.1. If there are more than 3 applicants, places will be allocated using random allocation. The random allocation process will be carried out by the Local Authority who are independent to our trust.

6. Twins and Multiple Births

6.1. In circumstances where there is one place remaining and the next eligible children are twins or multiple birth, the Local Authority may make an exception and allocate above the admission number. The Authority cannot guarantee that other siblings of multiple birth families will automatically follow if one is offered a place through normal arrangements. Children living equal distances from the School In circumstances where two or more children live at addresses that are equidistant from the school the place will be allocated through the process of Random Allocation.

7. Appeals

7.1. Appeals for entry to Year 7 will be administrated by the Local Authority on behalf of the Academy and in line with the statutory Appeal Code of Practice. Appeals will be heard virtually. Parents will be advised of the exact closing date for appeals applications and appeal procedures when they receive notification of the outcome of their application on 1 March. Appeal Application Forms can be obtained from the Local Authority or downloaded from their website.

7.2. You will be notified of the date and time of your appeal in writing by the City Council. Schedules will be determined after the closing date for receiving appeals. Year 7 appeals for those submitted on time are normally concluded before the Spring Bank half term at the end of May or in the first two weeks of June.

7.3. Please note that the appeal panel is independent of the Academy and the Local Authority and its decision is legally binding on both the Academy and on parents. For any further advice on the appeals process please contact the Admissions Team.

8. Waiting Lists

8.1. The Authority will establish a waiting list for Mercia Northridge School, where the number of applications for Mercia Northridge School has exceeded the number of places available. Your child will automatically be placed on a waiting list for Mercia Northridge School where they have been refused a place at a school ranked higher.

8.2. Waiting lists for Mercia Northridge School will be maintained until the 31 December.

8.3. Priority on the waiting list is determined according to the oversubscription criteria for Mercia Northridge School not by the length of time on the list or date of application. Your child's position on the waiting list can go down as well as up because of how pupils are prioritised on the list.

8.4. A place normally becomes available at Mercia Northridge School only when the number of pupils allocated falls below the published admission number. Should a place become available at Mercia Northridge School, it will be automatically allocated in writing to the child at the top of the list. The previous school allocated by the Local Authority will automatically be withdrawn.

8.5. If you no longer wish to remain on a list, please contact the Admissions Team. If you would like your child to be placed on a waiting list of a school that you ranked lower than the one you have been allocated, you must request this in writing to the Admissions Team.

8.6. A place on the waiting list does not guarantee that your child will secure a place at Mercia Northridge School, nor does it mean that you should not continue to try and secure a school place elsewhere.

9. Change of Address

9.1. If you change address or are planning to move, the Admissions Team will need to see proof of your new address. A house move may change your catchment area and affect the status of your application. If you are considering a change of address, you should contact the Admissions Team to be advised of the possible change to your application and to determine what proof is required.

10. Entry Outside the Normal Year Group

10.1. On rare occasions parents may seek entry into secondary school for their child earlier/later than the normal date. In such cases parents should make their request in writing to Secondary Admissions giving full reasons.

11. In Year Application

11.1. Parents wishing to apply for a place in year groups other than Year 7 should complete a transfer form available from your child's current school or from the Council website if you are new to or returning to Sheffield.

12. Admissions Team Contact Details

12.1. Any enquiries should be referred to the Local Authority's Admissions Team:

5th Floor South, Howden House, Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SH
Tel: 0114 273 5790
Email: ed-admissions@sheffield.gov.uk