

Ocker Hill Academy



Aim High ● Aim Higher

Admissions

Arrangements

2025 - 2026

Reviewed February 2024

To be reviewed in line with Ocker Hill Academy Policy Guidelines

Ocker Hill Academy – Admission Arrangements 2025-26

Introduction

The Board of Trustees of Ocker Hill Academy applies the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend this Academy. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 introduced a new framework for school/academy admissions as of September 2000. This document conforms to the regulations that are set out in that Act and also further explained in the statutory School Admissions Code of Practice and the Statutory Appeals Code of Practice.

Aims and objectives

We are an inclusive Academy that welcomes children from all backgrounds and abilities.

All applications will be treated on merit and in a sensitive manner.

The only restriction we place on entry is that of number. If the number of children applying for entry exceeds the places available, we enforce the procedure set out below in order to determine whether a child is accepted or not. It is our wish to allow parents the right to have a place at the academy/school of their choice. However, this is not always possible, due to the excess demand on the places available.

The level of ability of a child or any special needs that s/he may have plays no part in the Admissions Policy of this Academy.

How parents can apply for their child to be admitted to Ocker Hill Academy

We are an Academy which determines the admission arrangements in agreement with Sandwell LA. The Academy is therefore the 'Admissions Authority'. The regulations for entry to Ocker Hill Academy are published each year and can be found on the Academy website.

The Academy publishes an admissions procedure each year, which gives information about how parents can apply for a place at Ocker Hill Academy. Parents have a right to express a preference for the school/academy of their choice and they should do so on the application form. Expressing a preference

does not, in itself, guarantee a place at this Academy. Application forms can be found on line from the Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council School Admissions Team and should be completed by the date stipulated. The Sandwell MBC Admissions Team notifies parents about the Academy place as soon as all the applications have been considered. This is for all Year 3 children at the start of the academic year. For in-year applications, admissions forms can be obtained from the Academy website and Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council School Admissions Team.

Children enter Ocker Hill Academy in the academic year they become seven. There is one admissions date per year, early in September (i.e. at the start of the academic year). Therefore, parents who would like their child to be admitted to this Academy during the year their child is seven should ensure that they complete the necessary online application form by the given date in January of that year.

Admissions are managed through the Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council Admissions Team.

For more information about the admissions processes, including key dates, please visit www.sandwell.gov.uk.

Admissions priorities for places in oversubscribed situations

Ocker Hill Academy is a non-selective Academy for local children with a year group PAN of 64.

If the academy is oversubscribed, priority will be given to students with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) (previously known as a Statement of Special Educational Needs), where the Academy is named. The remaining places will then be offered in the following order of priority:

- Children who are in public care and children who were previously in public care but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order).
- Children who have particular medical needs; Applications submitted under this criterion must be accompanied by a medical declaration form (ASU75M) signed by the child's general practitioner or consultant confirming the condition, detailing the child's needs and specifying why, in their opinion, the preferred academy is the only or most appropriate to meet the child's needs. All applications under this criterion will be assessed by the Academy to decide whether the child's needs can be met most appropriately by the preferred academy.

- Children who have a sibling who already attends the Academy or the feeder infant school (Ocker Hill Infant School) and who will continue to do so at the date of admission.
- Children being on roll at the linked infant school (Ocker Hill Infant School) at the time of admission.
- Children who live closest to the Academy, prioritised by distance measured in a straight line from the child's home to the main entrance of the Academy.

Late applications for places will only be considered alongside received by the closing date under the following circumstances:

- When the applicant has bought, rented or leased a house or flat and has moved into Sandwell after the closing date, but before the allocation of places has been made.
- When the applicant has moved home within Sandwell to an address more than 3 miles from their previous address but closer to the Academy after the closing date but before the allocation of places has been made.
- When a child who is in public care (looked after) and child who was previously in public care but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order) moves in to Sandwell after the closing date but before the allocation of places has been made.
- When a sibling has commenced at the Academy after the closing date but before the allocation of places has been made.
- When the applicant is a single parent and was prevented from submitting their application on time due to long term illness of more than 6 weeks duration from the date on which application forms became available.

If your application is received after the closing date and not covered by one of the circumstances above, then it will be processed after consideration of all on time and accepted late applications.

Waiting Lists

Places will be offered initially to applicants whose forms have been received by the closing date or whose application has been considered as being made on time.

Any preferences which cannot be met following the application of the admission priorities will be put on a waiting list which will be ranked in accordance with the published admission priorities.

Waiting lists will be maintained until the end of the autumn term proceeding the year of entry and will then be discarded.

Places will only be offered from the waiting list if the number of confirmed offers (including those offered as a result of independent appeals) is less than the published admission number.

Further applications in the same academic year.

The academy will only consider more than one application in the same academic year if one or more of the following significant changes apply:

- The child becomes looked after by the local authority;
- The child has a medical condition which was not present when the previous application was considered;
- The child's sibling has been admitted to the Academy, or the linked infant school (Ocker Hill Infant School), for which the application has been made and was not there at the time of the last application;
- The applicant has changed address since the previous application was considered and the applicant now lives closer to the Academy;
- A vacancy arises in the relevant year group.

Changing or adding new preferences

Once a parent/carer has submitted an application they will be able to amend it online before the closing date. However, if the closing date has passed it will not be possible unless they meet the criteria to be considered as a late application.

Twins and multiple births

Special conditions will apply if one child from a set of twins or other multiple births does not gain admission to the Academy through the admissions criteria. The Academy will exceed the admission number to prevent separation of twins or children from multiple births.

Tie Breaker

If two or more applicants tie for last place during the allocation process the final place shall be decided by the following process:

- the final place shall be decided by allocating each applicant to a random number generator which will then determine the successful applicant.
This process will be independently overseen by Sandwell Local Authority

Definitions used in admissions administration:

Sibling (Brother and Sister)

The definition of a sibling is:

A brother or sister sharing the same parents and living at the same address;

A half-brother or half-sister, where two children share one common parent and living at the same address;

A step brother or step sister, where two children are related by a parents marriage and living at the same address;

Adopted or fostered children living at the same address;

Children of unmarried parents living at the same address.

It does not include:

Cousins or other family relationships;

Brothers or sisters who, at 1 September in the year of entry will not be registered at the Academy.

Children in Public Care

A child in public care means 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 (see section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time application is made.

An adoption order is an order under section 46 of the Adoptions and Children Act 2002.

A child arrangement order (previously residence order) is an order settling the arrangements made as to the person with whom the child is to live under section 8 of the Children Act 1989.

Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a special guardianship order as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s).

Home address

The home address of a child is the address at which a parent with parental responsibility lives. It may also be the address at which a child resides (and sleeps) for the majority of the academy week (Sunday to Thursday night). In the event of a query on the home address we will require two examples from the following list:

- Council tax
- Tenancy agreement
- Solicitor's letter confirming completion of purchase
- Statutory Declaration from a solicitor.

Armed Forces Children

Ocker Hill Academy understands that families of UK Service personnel often have to move at short notice within the UK and from abroad. If this applies to you then please send your application along with an official letter declaring a relocation date into Sandwell Local Authority, they will then be able to arrange a place in advance of the relocation. Please contact the Admission Team on 0121 569 6765 for further information.

Admission appeals

If we do not offer a child a place at this Academy, it is because to do so would prejudice the education of other children by allowing the numbers of children in the Academy to increase too much. Parents/carers who are not offered a place for their child are entitled to appeal to an independent committee under the provisions of the School Standards and Framework Act, 1998. Further information is available from the academy or Sandwell Admissions Team.

If parents wish to appeal against a decision to refuse entry, they can do so by applying to the Sandwell Admissions Team. An Independent Appeals Panel

then meets to consider all appeals by parents who have been refused a place at our Academy and who wish to appeal against this decision. An Appeal Panel's decision is binding for all parties concerned. If the Appeals Panel decides that we should admit a child to our Academy, then we will accept this and continue to do all we can to provide the best education for all the children at our Academy. (Details of appeal arrangements are set out in the Code of Practice on School Admissions Appeals, which came into force in February 2012.)

The standard number

The standard number is the number of children the Academy can accommodate. The standard number for our Academy is 256. We keep this number under review and the governors will apply to change the number if circumstances allow.

Included in the 256 places that the Academy offers for mainstream education, Ocker Hill Academy has a 10 place Focus Provision Unit (Academy Specialist Development Centre) for children aged between 7 and 11 who are diagnosed with Autism. Admissions to the Focus Provision are also dealt with via Sandwell MBC Admissions Team and will follow the same protocol.

Review

This document will be reviewed in line with Ocker Hill Academy Policy Guidelines along with the Admissions Authority in the light of any changed circumstances in Ocker Hill Academy or the local area.