



Rugby Free

Secondary School



Admissions Policy 2026-27

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Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Definitions	3
3. How to Apply – Normal Admissions Round (Primary to Secondary)	4
4. Requests for admission outside the normal age group	4
5. How to Apply - In Year Admissions	5
6. PAN and Oversubscription Criteria	5
Notes	6
7. Tie Breaker	7
8. Waiting List	7
9. Appeals Procedure	7
10. Challenging behaviour	8
11. Withdrawing an Offer or Waiting List Place	8
12. Fair Access Protocol	8
13. Consultation	8

1. Introduction

Rugby Free Secondary School is an 11-19 secondary school established via the free school's programme. It aims to provide a high-quality education for local students and prepare them for higher education or employment in a safe, welcoming and stimulating environment. It is a co-educational school open to children of all abilities from all backgrounds. The curriculum is broad and balanced with all students studying a wide range of subjects. Our inclusive admissions process will always be open, transparent and fair, will meet the requirements of the national Schools Admissions Code, the Appeals Code and admissions legislation.

This policy aims to:

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

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

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

As an academy, 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](#).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

2. Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is 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 (Year 6 students applying for a Year 7 space).

Children in Care are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:

- In the care of a local authority; or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

Children Previously in Care are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002; or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order; or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order.

This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

3. How to Apply – Normal Admissions Round (Primary to Secondary)

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). You can use this form to express your preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order.

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

The local authority oversees all applications for Year 7 places up until the end of the Autumn Term. For any applications after this time, please see the In-Year Applications section four.

4. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group. To apply for a place outside of your child's normal age group please read the 'Guidance notes relating to the education of children outside of their chronological year group' which can be found here [Warwickshire County Council School Admissions - Deferred Entry](#) for further information.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Is the pupil's development significantly below the expected level for their age range?
- Has the pupil experienced problems which have resulted in being out of education for a substantial period of time?
- Has the pupil previously been educated in a different year group from the normal one for their age up until that point?
- Is the pupil remarkably gifted and talented?
- Was the pupil born prematurely and would they have been admitted into the year 'below' if delivered on their due date?
- Is the pupil delayed emotionally and therefore cannot make adequate relationships with their peer group?
- Does the proposed action respond to the educational needs of the pupil based on available evidence?
- Has the proposal the strong support of all parties with a legitimate interest in the pupil's education, including the pupil?
- Has it been clearly demonstrated that the educational progress which could reasonably be expected of the pupil cannot be achieved by remaining with his or her normal age group by making reasonable adjustments?
- Parents' views
- The Headteacher's views

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered based on the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group.

5. How to Apply - 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 EHC plans 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.

For in year admissions, parents /carers must apply via the Rugby Free Secondary School In Year Admissions Application Form which can be found here: [RFSS Admissions](#).

If it is not possible to offer a place, the waiting list procedures described above will apply. For appeals against the decision not to offer an In Year place, please follow the procedure outlined here: [Warwickshire County Council Appeals](#)

Parents will be notified of the outcome of their in-year application in writing within 15 school days.

Applications for In Year admissions will be accepted up until 30th May. Any applications after this time will be for admission into the next academic year.

6. PAN and Oversubscription Criteria

The published admission number is 180 places in each year of entry into Year 7 from September 2016 when the school opened, except for the Year 7 intake for September 2023 for which the school took on an additional 30 students at the request of the Local Authority. Details of admission to the Sixth Form in Year 12 will be made available separately on our website: [RFSS Sixth Form Admissions](#)

In accordance with the law, children with an Education Health and Care Plan will be admitted to the school where the Local Authority has specifically named Rugby Free Secondary School as the most appropriate placement. In the event of there being greater demand than there are places available to the school, places will be offered using the following oversubscription criteria in keeping with the Admissions Code:

1. **Children in Care or Children Previously in Care** This category includes children in the care of the Local Authority as defined under section 22 of the Children Act 1989 or children who have previously been looked after and immediately after being looked

after became subject to adoption, residence or a special guardianship order. Applications made under this criterion must be accompanied by details of circumstance and professionally supported evidence.

2. Children with a sibling at the school at the time of admission. The term 'sibling' includes an adopted, half or stepchild permanently living in the same family unit or a foster child permanently living in the same family unit whose place has been arranged by the social service department of the Local Authority.
3. Where the prospective student is the child of a permanent member of staff at Triumph Learning Trust, who has been employed for a period of more than one academic year at the time when the application is made.
4. Children attending a Warwickshire Triumph Learning Trust feeder school.
5. Proximity to the school. This will be measured in a straight line from the Address Point of the child's home (OS Address Point) to the Address Point of the school site using GIS software. A priority area map for schools in Warwickshire can be found [here](#).

Notes

1. A child in care is a child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by that authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989. An adopted child is defined by section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. A residence order is defined by section 8 of the Children Act 1989. A special guardianship order is defined by section 14A of the Children Act 1989.

2. Proximity of the child's home to the school, with those living nearer being accorded the higher priority within the oversubscription criterion, will also serve to differentiate between students in criteria 2 and 3 if there are more applicants than available places under each criterion. Where applicants are allocated the same criterion, priority is given in order of distance between the child's home and the school applied for (shortest distance = highest priority). Transport assistance will not be approved on the sole basis that the school offered is the priority area school and will only be provided in accordance with Warwickshire County Council home to school transport policy. This may mean that the nearest appropriate school for transport purposes may be a school in a different priority area.

Proximity to the school will be measured in a straight-line measurement. The definition of a home address is where the child normally resides/sleeps when they attend school. Addresses involved in child minding (professional or with relatives) are excluded. Applicants will be prioritised by distance (starting with the nearest). For calculating distances, GIS software will be used.

3. Blocks of flats are treated as one address. In blocks of flats, where applicants have identical distance measurements, priority amongst them will be determined at random by an independent person of good standing drawing lots in a supervised

process, see below (Tie Breaker).

4. For families living on boats, distance will be measured from the authorised mooring point. If the family is itinerant, the mooring point will be that used on the closing date for the receipt of applications.
5. Where parental responsibilities are equally shared, the home or residential address will be considered to be with the parent/carer with whom the child spends the majority of time and nights Monday to Friday. This will normally be expected to be with the parent/carer that receives any Child Benefit. This address must be used for all preferences.
6. Children residing in the same household as part of an extended family, such as cousins, will not be treated as siblings. Proof of the sibling relationship will be required.
7. In cases of multiple births where there is only one place available, and the next child on the list is a twin, triplet, or other example of multiple birth, we would admit both twins (and all the children in the case of other multiple births) even if this meant exceeding the agreed PAN for that year group.

7. Tie Breaker

For in Year applications after the Autumn Term of Year 7, in the event that two or more children live at the same distance from the school, the tie breaker will be random allocation.

The draw will be carried out by two members of staff who are not involved in the admissions process within Rugby Free Secondary School. The draw will be independently verified, observed, recorded and countersigned by the CEO.

Any further offers made at a later time from the waiting list will be freshly drawn in the same manner.

8. Waiting List

Unsuccessful applicants will be included on the school's waiting list ranked in order of priority under the published oversubscription criteria, without regard to the date that the application was received. Please note a child's position on the waiting list can go down as well as up. For example, if a new application is received which meets higher priority selection criteria, the waiting list may need to be revised. The offer of a place does not depend on the length of time on the waiting list. Waiting lists will be held for one school year after the year of entry, unless parents specifically request to have their child's name remain on the list, at which point they will be asked to resubmit their application form.

9. Appeals Procedure

If your child is not offered a place but is placed on a waiting list, appeals should be made to the Warwickshire School Appeals using the online form which can be found here:

<https://apps.warwickshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals>

10. 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. We may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, i.e. where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that isn't the normal point of entry, only in such a case that we have good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour that may adversely affect the provision we can offer. In this case, we will refer these students to the Fair Access Protocol. We will not refuse admission on these grounds to children in care, children previously in care and children with EHC plans listing the school.

11. Withdrawing an Offer or Waiting List Place

RFSS have the right to withdraw an offer or place on the Waiting List for the following reasons:

- Failure to provide accurate and correct information on the application form especially that which unfairly alters their eligibility according to the admissions criteria. This includes but is not restricted to the following:
 - False home address
 - Non-disclosure of previous suspensions and exclusions or other significant challenging behaviour as outlined in section 9
 - Claiming to have a sibling
- If the child has previously been on or is currently on an Offsite Direction at RFSS from their home school
- If their place at the school would compromise the safeguarding of other members of the RFSS school community

12. Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Warwickshire'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.

13. Consultation

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Trust Board every year. Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admissions number, the Trust board will publicly consult on these changes with the Local Authority and with other schools within the Local Authority. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements every 7 years.