

Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School

Published Admission Arrangements for 2023-24

Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School is the admitting authority for the school, and determined the admission arrangements for entry in the 2023/24 academic year. The last consultation on the admission arrangements by Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School was for the 2020/21 academic year and these rules were formally agreed by Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School at the Governors' Meeting on 6th March 2019. There have been no objections to the Office of the School's Adjudicator.

Parents are advised to visit the HCC website at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions to access all the published information regarding how to make an application. The closing date for Secondary Applications is October 31st 2022.

The school has a published admission number of **150**. The school participates in the Hertfordshire Local Authority co-ordinated scheme for Admissions and all deadlines within that should be adhered to by applicants.

Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the governing bodies of all maintained schools to admit a child with an Education Health & Care Plan that names the school. These children will be admitted within the school's Pupil Admission Number (PAN) but before any child prioritised under the school's oversubscription criteria. If there are fewer applications than places available, all applicants will be offered a place. If there are more applications than places available, the criteria outlined below will be used to allocate places.

Rule 1: Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, including those 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 or became subject to a child arrangements order¹ or a special guardianship order².

Rule 2 Medical or Social: Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school

A panel of governors will determine whether the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet the requirements for this rule. The evidence must relate specifically to the school applied for under Rule 2 and must clearly demonstrate why it is the **ONLY** school that can meet the child's needs. Supporting professional evidence/advice **MUST** be included, eg a letter from a doctor, for this application to be considered.

Rule 3 Sibling: Children who have a sibling at the school at the time of application, unless the sibling is in the last year of the normal age-range of the school, ie in Year 13.

Rule 4 Children of Staff: Girls who have either a) a parent employed by the school as a member of staff on a permanent contract for a continuous period of two or more years at the date of application or b) a parent who has been recruited to a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage.

Children who live in the priority area

Places will be allocated to each parish/unparished area or town in proportion to the number of applications made. In the event of there being more applications than places available to a particular parish/unparished area or town, places will be allocated as follows:-

Rule 5 Those for whom it is their nearest Hertfordshire maintained school or academy that is non-faith and non-partially selective and makes provision for children of the relevant gender, (if more children qualify under rule 5 than places, the tiebreak would be those that live closest to the school).

Rule 6 Any remaining places available to a parish/unparished area or town. Places will be allocated on a random basis.

Children who live outside the priority area

Rule 7 Places will be allocated on a random basis.

Notes

- Random allocations will be administered by HCC as follows:

Every child entered onto the HCC admissions database has an individual random number assigned between 1 and 1 million, against each preference school. When there is a need for a final tie break the random number is used to allocate the place, with the lowest number given priority.

- Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.
- These rules are applied in the order they are printed above. If more children qualify under Rules 1, 2, 3 and 4 than there are places available, a tie-break will be used by applying the next rule to those children.

Continuing Interest (Waiting Lists)

After places have been offered, Hertfordshire County Council will maintain a continuing interest (waiting) list for all community and voluntary controlled schools. A child's position on a continuing interest (CI) list will be determined by the admission criteria outlined above and a child's place on the list can change as other children join or leave it. The county council will contact parents/carers if a vacancy becomes available and it can be offered to a child. Continuing interest lists will be maintained for every year group until the summer term (date to be specified and confirmed to parents at the time of allocation). To remain on the CI (waiting) list after this time, parents must confirm they are still interested in a place by completing an In Year application form.

The priority areas for Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School are based on the following towns/parishes/unparished areas:

Hatfield, North Mymms, Welwyn, Welwyn Garden City, Woolmer Green, Potters Bar, Knebworth, Codicote.

Appeals

Parents wishing to appeal who applied through Hertfordshire's online system should log in to their online application and click on the link "register an appeal". Out of county residents and paper applicants should call the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request their registration details and log into www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals and click on the link "log into the appeals system".

In Year Admissions

The school will remain part of the county council's coordinated In Year admissions scheme. In year applications should be made online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions

A paper application form can be requested from the Customer Service Centre, 0300 123 4043.

Places will first be allocated in accordance with rules 1 - 2 above and then as follows:

Rule 3: Children who have a sibling at the school at the time of application

Rule 4: Children of staff

Rule 5: Children who live in the priority area for whom it is their nearest Hertfordshire maintained school or academy that is non-faith, non-partially selective and makes provision for children of the relevant gender.

If more children qualify under rule 5 than places are available, the tiebreak would be those that live closest to the school.

Rule 6: Children in the priority area on a random basis.

Rule 7: Children outside the priority area on a random basis.

The County Council will write to you with the outcome of your application and, if you have been unsuccessful, will include registration details to enable you to login and appeal online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals

Fair Access

The school participates in the county council's Fair Access protocol and will admit children under this protocol before children on continuing interest. Under the Fair Access protocol, it is possible that if necessary, children can be admitted above the PAN.

Sixth Form arrangements

The school will admit external students to its Sixth Form. The current PAN for external students is 30 but this is under constant review and is determined by the number of internal candidates choosing to continue into Sixth Form. Minimum entry requirements are:

Course	General Entry Criteria
3 A Levels	APS of 4.5 or above (including GCSE English Language or Literature and Maths at grade 4 and subject based criteria)
2 A Levels and 1 Vocational Course	APS of 4 or above (including GCSE English Language or Literature at grade 4 and subject based criteria)
1 A Level and 2 Vocational Courses	APS 3.8 or above (including GCSE English Language or Literature at grade 4 and subject based criteria)
Vocational Courses	APS 3.7 or above (including GCSE English Language or Literature at grade 4 and subject based criteria)

Specific A Level courses have additional criteria that need to be met by students wishing to enrol. These additional criteria can be found in the Welwyn & Hatfield Sixth Form Consortium prospectus which will be released for admission in 2023 nearer the time, along with the updated application form – available on <https://www.welwynhatfieldconsortium.org.uk/> or on the school's website.

Students who do not achieve a 9 – 4 grade in English and/or Maths will be required to attend retake lessons and resit the exam(s).

Students who wish to take more than 3 A Levels must have approval from the Head of Sixth Form before submitting an application.

If the Sixth Form is oversubscribed, priority will first be given to:

- Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, including those 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 or became subject to a child arrangements order¹ or a special guardianship order²
- Children who have a sibling at the school at the time of application, unless the sibling is in the last year of the normal age-range of the school, ie in Year 13
- Children of staff
- Distance - a home to school distance measurement will be used with priority given to those nearest the school. In the event that two final applicants live the same distance from the school then random allocation will be used and overseen by an independent witness.

All unsuccessful Sixth Form applicants have the right to appeal and the school must admit any student who is admitted through the appeal process. Appeals will be heard by an independent appeals panel. This panel will be formed as required and composed of 3-5 independent panel members who are not Governors.

Definitions and Explanatory notes

The following definitions apply to terms used in the admissions criteria:

Children in public care (children looked after):

Places are allocated to children in public care according to Chapter 7, Section 2 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

These children will be prioritised under rule 1.

Highest priority will also be given to children who were previously looked after, including those looked after outside England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangement order or a special guardianship order.

A “child looked after” 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 services functions (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989)

All children adopted from care who are of compulsory school age are eligible for admission under rule 1.

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under Rule 1.

Children who were not “looked after” immediately before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order, will not be prioritised under rule 1. Applications made for these children, with suitable supporting professional evidence, can be considered under rule 2.

¹ Child arrangements order Under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders which settle the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

² Special guardianship order Under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian or guardians.

Children previously looked after abroad and subsequently adopted will be prioritised under Rule 1 if the child’s previously looked after status and adoption is confirmed by Hertfordshire’s “Virtual School”.

The child’s previously looked after status will be decided in accordance with the definition outlined in The Children & Social Work Act 2017:

- i. to have been in state care in a place outside England and Wales because he or she would not otherwise have been cared for adequately, and
- ii. to have ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted.

A child is in “state care” if he or she is in the care of, or accommodated by –

- (a) a public authority,
- (b) a religious organisation, or

(c) any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

Rule 2: Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school:

Rule 2: Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school Rule 2 applications will only be considered at the time of the initial application, unless there has been a significant and exceptional change of circumstances within the family since the initial application was submitted.

All schools in Hertfordshire have experience in dealing with children with diverse social and medical needs. However, in a few very exceptional cases, there are reasons why a child has to go to one specific school.

Few applications under Rule 2 are agreed.

All applications are considered individually but a successful application should include the following:

- a) Specific recent professional evidence that justifies why only one school can meet a child's individual needs, and/or
- b) Professional evidence that outlines exceptional family circumstances making clear why only one school can meet the child's needs.
- c) If the requested school is not the nearest school to the child's home address, clear reasons why the nearest school is not appropriate.
- d) For medical cases – a clear explanation of why the child's severity of illness or disability makes attendance at only a specific school essential.

Evidence should make clear why only one school is appropriate. A Rule 2 application will generally not be upheld in cases where more than one school could meet the child's need.

In exceptional cases relating to a disability, where more than one school in the county can meet the child's specific needs, a clear and compelling case can be made for the "nearest" school with the relevant facilities, environment or location. You must clearly explain why attendance at the "nearest" school with these facilities is essential.

Applications under Rule 2 can only be considered when supported by a recent letter from a professional involved with the child or family, for example a doctor, psychologist or police officer. The supporting evidence needs to demonstrate why only one named school can meet the social/medical needs of the child.

Applications for children who were not "looked after" immediately before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order may be made under this rule.!

Definition of Parent:

This means the parent who has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act 1989, or the person in the household who is defined as a parent for the purposes of Section 576 of the Education Act 1996. This could include a person who is not a biological parent but who has responsibility for the child (such as a child's guardians, or adoptive parent) but will not usually include other relatives such as grandparents, aunts, uncles etc. unless they have all the rights, duties, powers and responsibilities and authority, which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and their property. This will include the children of a member of staff's partner as

long as they have been living at the same address as the member of staff for a period of at least two years.

Definition of sibling:

A sibling is defined as: the sister, brother, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent/carer or partner or a child looked after or previously looked after* and in every case living permanently** in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of this application.

A sibling must be on the roll of the named school at the time the younger child starts.

If a place is obtained for an older child using fraudulent information, there will be no sibling connection available to subsequent children from that family.

*Children previously looked after are those children adopted or with a special guardianship order or child arrangements order. This definition was amended following a determination by the OSA in August 2014.

**A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.

Multiple births:

The school will admit over the published admission number when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated a place at a school.

Home address:

The address provided must be the child's current permanent address at the time of application

- At the time of application" means the closing date for applications
- "Permanent" means that the child has lived at that address for at least a year

Where a family has not lived at an address for a year, they **must** be able to demonstrate that they own the property or have a tenancy agreement for a minimum of 12* months **and** the child must be resident in the property at the time of application.

The application can only be processed using one address. If a child lives at more than one address (for example due to a separation) the address used will be the one where the child lives for the majority of the time. If a child lives at two addresses equally, parents/carers should make a single joint application naming one address.

If a child's permanent residence is disputed, parents/carers should provide court documentation to evidence the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes. If two applications are received, with different addresses and/or different preferences, neither will be processed until the address issue is reconciled.

It is for a child's home Local Authority to determine address. If two applications, with different addresses are received from the same Local Authority, it will be for that Local Authority to determine permanent address. If two applications are received from two different Local Authorities, the above process will be used.

If two different applications are received for the same child from the same address, e.g., containing different preferences, parents/carers will be invited to submit a joint application or provide court documentation to evidence the preferences that should be used for the admission process. Until the preference issue is reconciled neither application will be processed.

For the transfer application rounds, if the initial differing applications (one or both) were received “on-time”, an amended joint application will also be considered “on-time” if received before the “late deadline”. If the amended joint application is received after the late date, it will be treated as “late”. The late deadlines for the 2023/24 transfer application process are 2nd December 2022 for secondary and upper applications and 1st February for reception, junior and middle applications. If these dates change, amendments will be published on the admissions web pages at the start of the 2023/24 application process in September 2022.

* If , because of the nature of the agreement, it is not possible to provide a 12-month tenancy agreement, alternative proof of address will be requested and verified as necessary with the Shared Anti-Fraud Service.

Fraudulent applications:

The school, in liaison with Hertfordshire County Council, will do as much as possible to prevent applications being made from fraudulent addresses. Address evidence is frequently requested, monitored and checked and school places will be withdrawn when false information is deliberately provided.

Action will be taken in the following circumstances:

- When a child’s application address does not match the address of that child at their current school;
- When a child lives at a different address to the applicant
- When the applicant does not have parental responsibility

When a family move shortly after the closing date of applications when one or more of the following applies:

- The family has moved to a property from which their application was less likely to be successful
- The family has returned to an existing property
- The family lived in rented accommodation for a short period of time (anything less than a year) over the application period
- Council tax information shows a different residence at the time of application
- When a child starts at the allocated school and their address is different from the address used at the time of application

Home to school distance measurement for purposes of admissions:

A ‘straight line’ distance measurement is used for all home to school distance measurements for admission allocation purposes. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child’s house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

Definition of Nearest School for secondary/upper admissions:

The “nearest school” definition for rule 5 is “the nearest Hertfordshire maintained school or academy that is non-faith, co-educational, and non-partially selective” (note – non-partially selective means that the school does not offer any places based on academic ability).

Children Out of Year Group

DfE guidance states that “in general, children should be educated in their normal age group”. If parents/carers believe their child(ren) should be educated in a different year group they should, at the time of application, submit supporting evidence from relevant professionals working with the child and family stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age appropriate cohort. DfE guidance makes clear that “it is reasonable for admission authorities to expect parents to provide them with information in support of their request – since without it they are unlikely to be able to make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case”. A Governors’ panel will decide whether the application will be accepted on the basis of the information submitted. The panel will make decisions based upon the circumstances of each case including the view of parents, the Headteacher, the child's social, academic and emotional development and whether the child has been previously educated out of year group. There is no guarantee that an application will be accepted on this basis. If the application is not accepted this does not constitute a refusal of a place and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal. Similarly there is no right of appeal for a place in a specific year group at a school. The internal management and organisation of a school, including the placement of pupils in classes, is a matter for the Headteacher and senior leadership of individual schools. The governing body is ultimately responsible for making this decision for applications made to the school.

Children will be admitted to the school in Year 7 at the age of 11 irrespective of physical or academic ability or age 12 if they are summer born children where a family chose to delay their entry to Reception by an academic year.