Woodbrook Vale School
Policy Document

Admissions Policy

For entry in August 2027 and in-year from August 2027

Date approved by Trustees: **June 2026**

Review Date: **Autumn 2027**

Headteacher's Signature: ……..……. Date: June 2026

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Chair of Trustee's Signature: ……. Date: June 2026

Print name: Gavin Brown

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Admissions Policy

For entry in August 2027 and in-year from August 2027 (Year 7)

The admission authority for Woodbrook Vale School is Woodbrook Vale Academy Trust. The Academy Trust is also responsible for arranging an independent appeal against refusal of a place at the school. Woodbrook Vale School manages its own in-year admissions for all year groups (see 'In Year admissions' section)

Purpose of this policy

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that places at Woodbrook Vale are allocated and offered in an open and fair way.

Applying for a place

A parent can apply for a place for their child at any state-funded school in any area. Parents apply to the local authority in which they live for a place at Woodbrook Vale and any other preferred schools. (For Woodbrook Vale this is usually Leicestershire). **The annual closing date is 31 October for a place the following academic year**.

The decision

The Published Admission Number (PAN) for entry in August is **160 students**. Woodbrook Vale will admit this number of students if sufficient applications are received. All applicants will be admitted if these numbers or fewer apply.

If Woodbrook Vale is undersubscribed, any parent that applies will be offered a place. If oversubscribed, oversubscription criteria will apply unless the application meets the requirements of the Fair Access Protocol.

Children with an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

The Special Educational Needs Service can request that the school offer a place to a student with SEND who has nominated Woodbrook Vale School. In this instance, a place would usually be offered regardless of whether the school is full.

Oversubscription criteria

When there are more applications for Woodbrook Vale than there are places available, the following criteria will be used to allocate places (in the order listed):

1. A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order. 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 services functions (see the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). This extends to those in care outside of England.

2. Children living in the Woodbrook Vale catchment area with a sibling attending Woodbrook Vale in Year 7, 8, 9, or 10 at the time of application. Sibling is defined in these arrangements as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers or sisters.

3. Children in the Woodbrook Vale Catchment Area.

4. Children with a sibling attending Woodbrook Vale in Year 7, 8, 9, or 10 at the time of application. Sibling is defined in these arrangements as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers or sisters.

5. Children currently attending a feeder primary school. The designated feeder schools are:

- Holywell Primary School
- Mountfields Lodge Primary School
- Outwoods Edge Primary School
- The Beacon Academy

6. Children of staff, where the member of staff has been employed at Woodbrook Vale on a permanent contract for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to Woodbrook Vale is made.

7. Children who live nearest to Woodbrook Vale 'as the crow flies' as measured in a straight line from the centre point of the property to the school's main designated front gate using the Google Maps "Measure Distance" feature. Blocks of flats will be treated as equidistant from the school. Registered Office: Woodbrook Vale School, Grasmere Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 2ST Company Registration No: 7671486.

Note: for confirmation of catchment and distance from the school, a single home address where the child normally lives will be used. Where parents claim equal or dual residency, they must prioritise one address over the other. In the event the parents do not agree on the child's home address by the closing date for applications, this will be taken as the address where the child resides for the majority of the school week, or where residency is split equally, it will be the address where the child is registered with the doctor.

Note: For multiple births, all the children of that multiple birth (e.g. twins, triplets etc) will be admitted where possible.

Tie Break Arrangements

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, children will be put in priority order by using a combination of the highest criteria and distance. Distances are measured in a straight line from the centre point of the property to the school's main designated front gate, using a computerised mapping system (Google Mapping API). Random allocation, through the drawing of lots overseen by an independent person, will be used in a tie-break to decide who has highest priority for admission if the distance between two children's homes and Woodbrook Vale is the same.

Some admission authorities use other criteria when allocating places. For the purposes of clarity, Woodbrook Vale does not allocate places on the basis of faith, ability or aptitude. Woodbrook Vale may need to ask for proof of the following when applying the oversubscription criteria: Address, Child's date of birth, a copy of an adoption order, residence order or special guardianship order and a letter from the local authority that last looked after the child confirming that he or she was looked after immediately prior to that order being made. All preferences are collated. Parents then receive an offer from the local authority at the highest preference school at which a place is available on 1 March or the first working day thereafter in the year in which the child will be admitted.

Right to appeal

Parents, and in some circumstances children, have the right to appeal against Woodbrook Vale's decision to refuse admission.

Woodbrook Vale will set out the reasons for the decision, confirm that there is a right of appeal (see separate timetable for appeals) and explain the process for hearing such appeals. An independent appeals panel will be established to hear the appeal. The panel will decide whether to uphold or dismiss the appeal. Where a panel upholds the appeal, Woodbrook Vale is required to admit the child.

When a parent is informed of a decision to refuse their child a place at the school, correspondence will include:

- The reason why admission was refused.
- Information about the right to appeal.
- The deadline for lodging an appeal.
- The contact details for making an appeal.

Parents will be informed that, if they wish to appeal, they must set out their grounds for appeal in writing.

Withdrawing an offer or a place

Woodbrook Vale will withdraw an offer if:

- It has been offered in error.
- A parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time (the parent will be notified that the offer may be withdrawn and given an opportunity to respond and explain).
- It is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

Woodbrook Vale will not withdraw a place once a child has started at Woodbrook Vale, except where that place was fraudulently obtained.

Waiting list
If Woodbrook Vale is oversubscribed, the school will maintain a clear, fair and objective waiting list. Priority will continue to be based upon the oversubscription criteria. A waiting list for Year 7 entries will be maintained until the end of December of the year of application for main round applications.

Priority will not be given to children based on the date their application was received or when their name was added to the list. The waiting list is updated and ranked according to oversubscription criteria when any applications are withdrawn or added.

Parents of gifted and talented children, those with special educational needs 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. Woodbrook Vale will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case, informing parents of their statutory right to appeal. This right does not apply if they are offered a place in another year group at Woodbrook Vale.

Children of UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces)
For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting to this area, Woodbrook Vale will:

- Allocate a place in advance, if accompanied by an official government letter which declares a relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address for considering the application against the oversubscription criteria.
- Ensure that arrangements support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children.

Children from overseas
Woodbrook Vale will treat applications for children coming from overseas in accordance with Home Office rules within the relevant statutory framework.

In-year applications
Woodbrook Vale School manages its own in-year (mid-term) applications. On receipt of an in-year application the school will:

- Allocate a place if one is available.
- If a place is not available, add the child to the waiting list and consider the application against the oversubscription criteria within 10 school days.
- Inform parents of their right to appeal against the refusal of a place (see separate timetable for appeals).
- Liaise with the local authority regarding both the application, and its outcome, to allow the local authority to keep up to date figures on the availability of places in the area.

Before making an application, parents/carers should contact the school office to enquire if places are available and arrange a visit to the school. In year (mid-term) applications must be made via the form on the school's website. The school will aim to notify parents of the outcome of their application in writing within 10 school days. Parents/carers must respond to the offer within 20 school days of the letter to make starting arrangements. If no response is received within those 20 school days then a reminder letter will be sent explaining that the place may be withdrawn if they do not respond to the offer. Parents/carers will be afforded a further 10 school days to take up the place before the offer is withdrawn.

Children with challenging behaviour

- Woodbrook Vale will not refuse to admit children in the normal admission round on the basis of their poor behaviour elsewhere except where the child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools.
- Woodbrook Vale will participate in the Fair Access Protocol in order to ensure that unplaced children are allocated a school place quickly. However, there is no duty for Woodbrook Vale or other admission authorities to comply with parental preference when allocating places through the Fair Access Protocol.
- Where the governing board does not wish to admit a child with challenging behaviour outside the normal admissions round, even though places are available, it will refer the

case to the Loughborough & North Charnwood Inclusion Partnership (LNCIP) under the Fair Access Protocol. A fair access referral is only appropriate when the school is able to demonstrate a high proportion of children with challenging behaviour are already on roll.

- Woodbrook Vale will not refuse to admit a child thought to be potentially disruptive, or likely to exhibit challenging behaviour, on the grounds that the child is first to be assessed for special educational needs.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Children are admitted to the school in accordance with the admission criteria. We do not discriminate for or against children with special educational needs or disabilities and ask parents to fully inform the school of the nature of any known educational, physical, medical or social needs when expressing a preference for their child to attend this school. This information will ensure that the child's entry to the school is as smooth as possible and help inform the level of provision the school can make to meet the individual needs of the child.

Human Rights Act 1998

The Human Rights Act 1998 confers a right of access to education. This right does not however extend to securing a place at a particular school. Woodbrook Vale will consider parents' reasons for expressing a preference when making admission decisions, though this may not necessarily result in the allocation of a place. These reasons might include, for example, the parents' rights to ensure that their child's education conforms to their own religious or philosophical convictions (as far as is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure). Any preferences and reasons will be collected using the designated space on the relevant application form.

For applications for the start of Year 7, the local authority form is used. For 'in-year' (mid-term) applications, the Woodbrook Vale online admissions form is used.

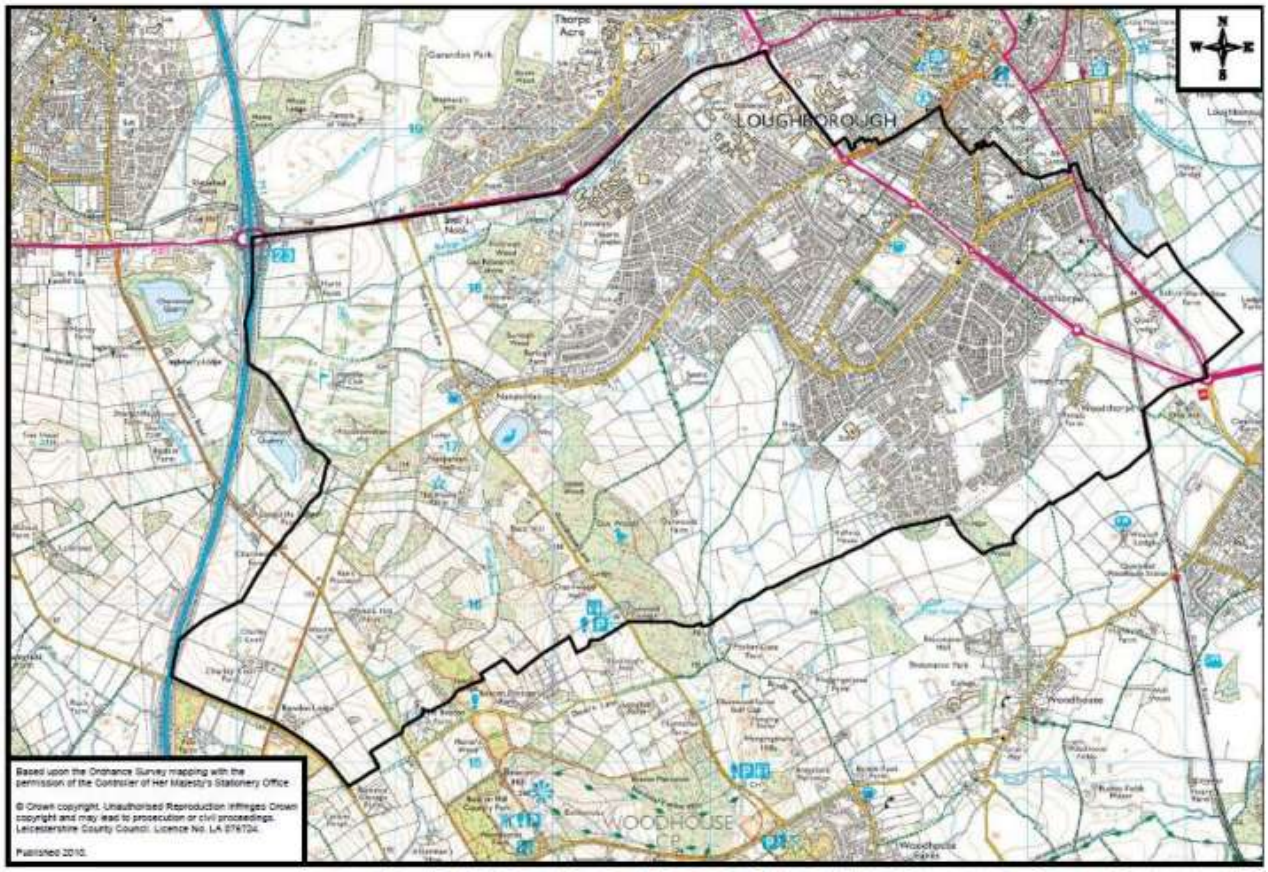
The Admissions Timeline (applies to all years)

31 October	Closing date for applications to the local authority.
28 February	Publication of Woodbrook Vale appeals timetable on website.
1 March	National offer day for secondary school places.
April and May	Appeals process and outcomes.
August	New intake starts at school.

Anyone who considers that Woodbrook Vale's arrangements are unlawful can make an objection to the Schools' Adjudicator. Objections must be referred to the Adjudicator by **30 June** in the determination year. Further information on how to make an objection can be obtained from the Office of the Schools' Adjudicator:

https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-schools-adjudicator

Appendix 1 - Woodbrook Vale catchment area map



Appendix 2 - School Admissions Appeals timetable

School Admission Appeals timetable (normal round for Year 7 entry)

Timeline	Action
20 school days	Decision letter issued by local authority on offer day
	Appeal letter submitted by parents/carers within 20 school days of notification of unsuccessful application
40 school days	Parents/carers to submit any additional evidence in support of the appeal to the Appeals Clerk (parents notified of the deadline for receipt of evidence by Appeals Clerk)
	Parents/carers notified of date of appeal hearing at least 10 days before the date of the hearing
	Appeal heard within 40 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals
	Decision letter issued by the Appeals Clerk within 5 school days of the hearing

School Admission Appeals timetable (mid-term/in-year applications)

Timeline	Action
20 school days	Decision letter issued by the school to parents/carers
	Appeal letter received by the school within 20 school days of notification of unsuccessful application
30 school days	Parents/carers to submit any additional evidence in support of the appeal to the Appeals Clerk (parents notified of the deadline for receipt of evidence by Appeals Clerk)
	Parents/carers notified of date of appeal hearing at least 10 days before the date of the hearing
	Appeal heard within the normal round of appeals for 'on-time' Year 7 appeals if possible or within 30 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals
	Decision letter issued by the Appeals Clerk within 5 school days of the hearing

Appendix 3 – Admission criteria guidance notes

Admission Criteria and Tie-Break Procedures for Over-Subscription

Guidance notes.

When the admission authority apply over subscription criteria, they have to fill each of the criteria in order before moving to the next full stop.

If there are too many children, for example, within the No 3 *Child within the Catchment Area* criterion, the Admission Authority would not get to the next Criterion in the list.

So, the 4th criterion, *a child with a sibling in Woodbrook Vale at the time of application who do not live in the catchment area,* would not be considered.

However, within the 3rd criterion, if there were more applications than spaces available, to determine who would have a place would take account of children in the Woodbrook Vale catchment area then the next combination of criteria that would be appropriate would be the 7th Criterion - *Distance*.

The highest criterion plus distance will be used where there are more applications than places available within a single criterion, for example where there are 160 places and 165 catchment applications are submitted, the 165 children that are in catchment will then be ranked by distance, with the closest 160 being offered the places.