South Orpington Learning Alliance

Admissions Arrangements from September 2026

Date approved: **Spring 2026**

To be reviewed: **Annually**

Owner: **Chief Executive Officer**

South Orpington Learning Alliance and its schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

Version Control

Version	Author	Dated	Status	Reviewed date/ails
1	JT	Summer 2017	Initial Trust Policy	Spring 2019
2	AK	Spring 2019	Annual policy review	
3	ND	Spring 2020	Annual policy review – PAN numbers revised Page 3	November 2019
4	ND	Autumn 2020	Green Street Green PAN Numbers revised from 32 to 30 (page 3) References to 'Unit' changed to 'Provision' Green Street Green Provision capacity increased from 21 to 24. Changes to Section 4 following feedback from LBB from consultation Detail on definition of proximity (Section 6) following LBB feedback from consultation	Autumn 2020
5	ND	Summer 2021	Change to 'child looked after (CLA)' to reflect the mandatory changes to the School Admissions Code September 2021 – Page 4	August 2021

6	ND	Autumn 2021	No material changes	November 2021
7	ND	Autumn 2022	Addition of OWPS and adjustments to summer born support. Typographical changes. .	December 2022
8	ND	Autumn 2023	.	December 2023
9	ND	Spring 2025		February 2025

Admissions Arrangements (for September 2026)

Introduction

The South Orpington Learning Alliance (SOLA) Multi-Academy Trust consists of the seven schools listed in the table below. The Trust is the admission authority, although it delegates responsibility for the administering of the policy to each Local Governing Body.

This policy details the admissions arrangements for each school and should be read in conjunction with the Primary Admissions Code and other agreed policies of the Local Authority (LA).

All policies and procedures seek to comply with Government requirements, available at: https://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions

Applications should be made in writing to The London Borough of Bromley Admissions or The London Borough of Croydon Admissions using the appropriate forms which are available at www.bromley.gov.uk and www.croydon.gov.uk

School	**Normal age of entry (age just prior to 1st September 2025)**	**Published admission numbers for September 2025**
Chelsfield Primary School	4	15
Green Street Green Primary School	4	60
Darrick Wood Junior School	7	96
The Highway Primary School	4	30
Orchard Way Primary School	4	30
Pratts Bottom Primary School	4	14
Tubbenden Primary School	4	90

Notes

- Where the published admission number is above 30 there will be a limit of 30 pupils in each Reception and Key Stage One class.
- The published admission number is inclusive of students with a statement of special educational needs that are admitted to the MAINSTREAM school pursuant to the school being named in their statement or Education Health Care Plan.
- There are a further 33 school places within the Additionally Resourced Provision at Tubbenden Primary School and 24 such places at Green Street Green Primary School. Pupils are accepted into these places as set out below (note G).

Application Procedure

Application for admission to Reception must be made in accordance with the published Primary Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements for each relevant year and will only be accepted from parent/guardians with proven parental responsibility. Change of parental responsibility, unless in exceptional circumstances such as through a court order, will not be accepted during the coordinated admission process.

Admission Criteria

Should the number of applications exceed the number of places available, places will be allocated using the following criteria listed in order of priority:

1. Children Looked After (Note A, below).
2. Children with, or living with family members who have, acute medical or social need (Note B).
3. (DARRICK WOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL ONLY) Pupils attending Darrick Wood Infant School.
4. Siblings in Mainstream schools (Note C).
5. Children of staff at a SOLA school (Note D).
6. Proximity: children who live nearest to the School when measured in a straight line from the child's home address to the School's front entrance using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system.

Notes to admissions criteria:

A. A child looked after is a child who is:

(a) in the care of a Local Authority, or being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions. These children must still be "looked after" when the child starts school unless (b) applies.

(b) or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order including those who appear to the Trust to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

B. Acute medical or social need. In exceptional circumstances there is discretion to admit children (at the first point of entry for the school) on the grounds of their or their family's acute medical or social need for that particular school and who would not otherwise qualify for admission. The application must be supported by a letter from a hospital consultant, the special support service, social worker or similar professional, setting out the reasons why the school is the only one to meet the child's needs, before an admission decision is made. Applications received without supporting documents will not be considered by the panel. The admission decision will be considered in consultation with teaching and medical professionals. Medical professionals provide advice on applications made under medical conditions and teaching professionals advise on applications made for social or special reasons. Supporting evidence must be provided by the closing date for applications as this criterion is only for admission to Reception and will refer to first preference only.

C. Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case, the child should be living in the same family unit at the same address. The elder sibling must attend the same school named on the application and still be on roll at the school when the younger child starts school.

At Tubbenden Primary and Darrick Wood Junior Schools, where there are Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP), the siblings of children attending the provision will be treated as siblings when applying for places in the mainstream school. Please note however that where such places are accepted then NO assistance towards the transport of the child in the mainstream school can be considered unless the normal rules of the transport policy apply. This DOES NOT apply at Green Street Green Primary School, which also has an ARP - the siblings of children attending this provision will NOT be treated as siblings when applying for places in the mainstream school. This is because the nature of need differs significantly within the ARP at Green Street Green Primary School.

D. Children of staff at a SOLA school. Each school within the Trust may give priority regarding oversubscription criteria to children of staff at the relevant school in either or both of the following circumstances:

(a) Where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application of admission to the school is made and/or

(b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

E. "Home" being where the child normally resides as their only or principal residence. Addresses involved in child minding (professional or relatives) are excluded. Parents will be asked to provide documentary evidence to confirm an address and parental responsibility. It is

expected that the applicant and pupil will still be resident at the same address when the child starts school unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Evidence may be required to confirm the applicant is still living at the application address on National Offer Day and when starting at the offered school. When there is a move during the process, applications have to be reconsidered on the basis of the new home address.

The Local Authority will only accept the permanent home address of the parent/carer who is in receipt of or registered for Child Benefit. Local Authority Admissions will only share information with the parent/carer at the application address if they are named on the online or paper application.

F. *Distance will be measured (in a straight line) from the easting and northing coordinates from the child's home address (including flats), using Ordnance Survey address point data, to the easting and northing coordinates for the School, using the Local Authority's electronic measuring system which relies on Ordnance Survey GIS references..*

G. *Admission to Additionally Resourced Provision is through London Borough Bromley Special Educational Needs Placement Panel. SOLA is bound by the SEN Code of Practice and does not have jurisdiction over allocation of places.*

H. *All Bromley schools, including SOLA schools, comply with the Fair Access Protocol.*

Admission to Darrick Wood Junior School

Children transfer from infant to junior education at the beginning of the school year following their seventh birthday, or the start of Year 3.

Children attending Darrick Wood Infant School do not automatically join Darrick Wood Junior School. Parents of children at Darrick Wood Infant School **must** complete an application form via their home Local Authority, i.e. the Local Authority where they live and pay council tax to.

Parents of children in Year 2 at other schools wanting to apply for a place at Darrick Wood Junior School should apply using the 'in-year' application form, available at: www.bromley.gov.uk

Age of Admission

(Primary Schools only)

In accordance with most schools in the London Borough of Bromley SOLA's policy is to admit children to Reception classes in September each year.

Children offered a place for admission after their 4th birthday in the academic year commencing September 2025 will be expected to join the school by the beginning of the following summer term. Parents can defer admission within the Reception year until the beginning of the term following their child's fifth birthday. This is a decision for the parent to make, taking all factors into account including the advice of educational professionals.

Those parents who decide that their child should defer must inform the Headteacher or Head of School. The place offered for their child will be held open and will not be offered to another child.

Admission to Reception cannot be deferred for children born between 1 April and 31 August into the following September but parents can apply for a place in Year 1. This would be an in-year application, and should be made no earlier than 1st June.

Deferring Admission outside of the normal age group

(Primary Schools only)

In some circumstances, at the request of their parent or carer, a child can be admitted to a SOLA school an academic year later than normal, but still enter at the Reception stage. This is known as deferring admission. Circumstances might include medical, social and educational reasons, and these would be supported by independent professionals.

Deferred entry would normally be granted where the Trust is assured that it would be 'in the best interests' of the child. A meeting would be held in order to understand the reasons for the request, and to consider the implications of deferral.

	No legislation currently exists which would force a school to admit a child out of his/her usual year group. The Admissions Code does not state that schools must offer a place to a child out of year once the admissions criteria have been fulfilled. The process for requesting admission outside of the normal age group is outlined in Appendix 1.
Offers of places in Reception	Offers of places will be made by the Local Authority in April for the whole of the academic year.
Late Applications	Late applications will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures laid down in the co-ordinated admissions scheme.
Waiting Lists	Children who are not offered a place immediately will have the option of remaining on a waiting list. Children on the waiting list will be offered places in order, according to the criteria above. SOLA will maintain a clear, fair and objective waiting list until 31 December 2026 for Reception applicants at which point a further application must be made to the Local Authority. These applications and any further applications after that date should be directed to the Local Authority using their in-year application form. The waiting list will be maintained in the order of the over subscription criteria. However, children directed via the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over any child already on the waiting list and this includes admitting children over the published number. Pupils who are not offered a place will have the statutory right of appeal. Those wishing to appeal should register their intention of doing so by sending a letter, addressed to the Chair of SOLA Trustees, c/o The Trust Hub, The Highway Primary School, within 14 days of being informed that their child has not been allocated a place. SOLA will comply with the timetable and procedures laid down in the Local Authority's Co-ordinated Admissions' Scheme.
In-year Admissions	Parents wishing to apply to a SOLA school outside of the usual point(s) of entry should make an in-year application. All applications should be directed to the Local Authority using their in-year application form. The Local Authority holds all waiting lists for places that may become available throughout the year. Any child not offered a place will be placed on the waiting list. Parents have the statutory right of appeal. Please refer to Appendix 2.
Pupils with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan	Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan are dealt with under a separate process and the Local Governing Body will admit those students with the relevant school named on their plan after this process has been completed.
Nursery Admissions	This policy does not apply to Nursery admissions across the SOLA Trust. For nursery admissions please refer to: https://www.tubbenden.bromley.sch.uk/Nursery/About-Tubbenden-Nursery/
Review	These arrangements will be reviewed and updated every year.
Appendices	Appendix 1: Admission of Summer Born Children outside their Normal Age Range Appendix 2: Guidance on School Appeal Hearings

Appendix 1: Admission of Summer Born Children outside their Normal Age Range

Age of Admission

Admissions policy is to admit children to reception classes twice a year. Children born between 1 September and 28 (or 29) February inclusive are admitted at the beginning of the Autumn term (September) and those born between 1 March and 31 August at the start of the Spring term (January) before their fifth birthday. However, in line with legislation, all children will be permitted to start in Reception in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year. Where entry is deferred in that school year, admission authorities must hold the place for that child and not offer it to another child. Once a place has been offered the parent would not however be able to defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the academic year for which the original application was accepted.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents of summer-born children may seek places outside their normal age group.

Parents wishing to request admission outside of their child's normal age group should complete the form overleaf, and forward it to the school where they would like their child to attend. In addition, if you wish to make such a request for admission to Orchard Way Primary School you should complete the form linked below.

SOLA will then make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. Views of the head teacher of the school concerned must also be taken into account.

The London Borough of Croydon policy on Admission of Summer Born Children outside their Normal Age Range is attached here:

https://www.croydon.gov.uk/schools-and-education/schools/school-admissions/admission-outside-normal-year-group/admission-outside-normal-year-group-request

The Department of Education provides guidance to the parents of Summer Born Children here:
https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-04/Guidance_for_parents_September_2020.pdf

South Orpington Learning Alliance

Request for admission outside a child's normal age group (Summer Born Children)

You must complete this form if you are requesting your child to be admitted outside their normal age group in the reception year outside his/her normal age group for the SOLA Schools listed below:

Chelsfield Primary School	Pratts Bottom Primary School
Green Street Green Primary School	The Highway Primary School
Orchard Way Primary School	Tubbenden Primary School

Please read the guide on 'Admission of Summer Born Children outside their Normal Age Range' which is within the Trust Admissions Arrangements document South Orpington Learning Alliance Multi Academy Trust - MAT Policies (solamat.co.uk) before completing this form.

Section 1: Child's details

Surname/family name	
First name	
Middle name(s)	

Gender Boy ☐ Girl ☐

Date of Birth ___/___/____

Child's home address: This must be the child's permanent home address and where the child benefit eligibility letter is addressed.

Address Line 1	
Address Line 2	
Town/City	
Postcode	

Section 2: Parent/Carer's details

1. Title Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Miss ☐ Ms ☐ Dr ☐ Other ☐

Surname/family name	
First name	

Relationship to child Mother ☐ Father ☐ Step parent ☐ Foster parent ☐ Other ☐

If you have circled other, please explain what your relationship is to the child:

Home tel no.		Daytime	
Mobile tel no.		Email	

Section 3: Reason(s) for requesting admission outside your child's normal age group

When completing the form, the parent/carer must set out the reason(s) why they are seeking a place for their child outside his/her normal age group which must be accompanied with relevant evidence that may include:

- The parent/carer's views;
- Recent information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
- Medical history accompanied with recent medical professional evidence;
- Whether the child may have naturally fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

Please attach all relevant supporting documents and continue on a separate sheet(s) if necessary

Reason(s) for request:

Section 4: Details of the school you are applying for and where you would like to request for your child to be admitted outside his/her normal age group

Name of School	
Address	

Section 5: Declaration and signature of parent/carer

I certify that I have parental responsibility for the child named on this form and that the information is true to the best of my knowledge. I understand and accept that if I have given false or deliberately misleading information on this form and/or any attached supporting papers or withheld any relevant information, the agreement to admit the child outside their normal age group may be withdrawn.

Signature of parent/carer		Date	

Return your fully completed form with all attachments and supporting documentation to:

South Orpington Learning Alliance
The SOLA Trust Hub,
The Highway Primary School,
Orpington.
BR6 9DJ

Email enquiries@solamat.co.uk in the subject field **Request to Defer Entry**

Data protection

Information you provide when applying for a school place will be entered into a computerised database. Your information is protected by the Data Protection Act 1998, which ensures it can only be used for defined purposes and may be passed only to specific people. The defined purposes are:

(i) Administering the admissions process as set out in the Bromley 'Applying for a school place 2018' publication.

(ii) Preventing fraud or other criminal offences or to ensure the safety of a child

The people who may receive the information are:

a) The current school (if any)

b) The school to which the pupil is to be admitted

c) Other admission authorities, in order to ensure they can carry out their role in the coordinated admissions process

d) Any organisation legitimately investigating allegations of fraud, other criminal offences or child protection

e) Independent appeals panels should you decide to appeal the offer of a school place

Appendix 2 - Guidance on School Appeal Hearings

(The School Standards and Framework Act 1998)

The School Admissions Appeals Code is available here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/275897/school_admission_appeals_code_1_february_2012.pdf.

The Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 84) gives parents the right to appeal against decisions regarding the schools their children should attend.

Although parents have the formal right of appeal, they are advised that if they are not satisfied with any decision of Authority schools about the school at which education for their child is to be provided they should, in the first instance, contact the Bromley Admissions Team, Children and Young People Services, Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley BR1 3UH (Telephone 020 8313 4044) to discuss the situation.

With respect to Orchard Way Primary School, parents should instead contact Croydon Admissions Team, Bernard Weatherhill House, 8 Mint Way, Croydon, CR01EA (Telephone 020 8726 6000).

Appeals in respect of Primary Reception Starts must be LODGED BY 31st MAY. Appeals submitted after this date may not be heard during the Summer Term (i.e. before the beginning of the Autumn in September).

The school sets up an independent Appeals Committee to consider appeals. The procedure is specified in the Schools Admissions Appeals Code. Appeals should be made using the designated form which is attached at Annex 2.

The receipt of an appeal form will be acknowledged and at least 14 days before the day scheduled for the hearing, a formal notice of the day and time of the Appeal Committee, which will determine the case, will be sent to the parents by first class post or by email if you have given an email on your form.

Seven days before the hearing the Governors will send appellants a Statement setting out the Admissions Policy and the reasons for the decision regarding the child's education.

The appeals are likely to be heard during the daytime and you are encouraged to attend. It is not considered appropriate to bring any children to the hearing. If it is necessary for you to bring a child with you, you should make arrangements for someone to sit with the child whilst you are in the hearing.

Who may attend the Hearing

Parents/carers can have legal representation at the hearing, but this ought not to be necessary; a hearing is not intended to be a platform for a debate on the law. Members of the Local Authority (Councillors) must not be invited to attend appeal hearings and unless there are exceptional reasons. Children should not be invited to attend and it is not considered appropriate for parents to bring any children to the hearing.

The Order of the Hearing

(a) The admission governing body present their case
(b) Questions to the admission governing body by the parent/carers
(c) Parents/carers present their case
(d) Questions to the parents/carers by the admission governing body

(e) The admission governing body sum up their case
(f) The parents/carers sum up their case

Panel Members may ask questions at any time during the hearing

Panel Members

Panel Members are independent of the school that parent/carers are appealing for and the admission process. Each panel must consist of at least one lay member, who is a person without personal experience in the management or provision of education and at least one person with experience in education who is acquainted with educational conditions in the area, or who are parents of a registered pupil at a school.

Clerk to the Panel

The Clerk is not a member of the Panel and must be independent of the admission authority. The Clerk does not take part in the decision making of the Panel. The role of the Clerk is to:-

- make the necessary administrative arrangements for hearings including the appointment of panel members
- explain the basic procedures to parents/carers and deal with any questions/queries
- ensure that relevant facts are presented
- record the proceedings, oral and written representations, the Panel's decision and reasons

Making a Decision

Following the withdrawal of the admission authority/governing body representative and the parents/carers, the Appeal Panel will consider its decision with the presence of the Clerk.

In all types of appeals the Panel is required to satisfy themselves that the published admissions criteria comply with the requirements of the School Admissions Code.

Parental Preference

The Appeal Panel are required to take into account parental preference and the reason for this preference and also the admission arrangements published by the admissions authority/governing body

Two-Stage process

All school appeals, other than those against decisions made on the grounds of class size prejudice, must follow the two stage process by:

First stage: establish the facts – the panel will consider whether the school's published admission arrangements were correctly applied and decide whether 'prejudice' to efficient education and the efficient use of resources would arise were the child to be admitted. If the Panel decide this is proven, they will then go onto the second stage.

Second stage: balancing the information heard at the hearing – the panel will exercise its discretion, balancing the degree of prejudice to the school against the parents' case for their child being admitted to the preferred school.

Infant class size appeals

Infant classes, where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6, or 7 by the end of the academic year, must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single school teacher.

Appeal Panels have very limited circumstances when they can decide that there is an exception to the infant class size limit. The appeal panel can only offer a place to a child where it is satisfied that either:

- The child would have been offered a place if the admission arrangements had been properly implemented; and/or

- The decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

After the Appeal

The decision of the Appeal Panel will be communicated to all parties by the Clerk to the Panel and is binding on the admission authority/governing body. There is no further right of appeal. Parents who are dissatisfied with the decision may seek a judicial review or have their case investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman. Please note that the Ombudsman cannot overturn an appeal decision but may make recommendations for a suitable remedy.

APPEAL AGAINST SCHOOL ADMISSION DECISION – INFANT/ KEY STAGE 1/KEY STAGE 2

To be completed by the parent/guardian IN BLACK INK AND BLOCK CAPITALS

NAME OF SOLA SCHOOL TO WHICH A PLACE HAS BEEN REFUSED:

CHILD'S SURNAME: _____ FORENAME(S): _____

DATE OF BIRTH: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

Post Code: _____ CONTACT NUMBER: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS (please print carefully): _____

Alternative School(s) suggested by Bromley Admissions: _____

Provisional Place held at: _____

The School for which you are appealing has declared that the class size has reached 30 pupils and that, therefore, the School cannot admit your child. Please note that there are only two circumstances under which an Appeal Panel can uphold an appeal for this School.

If your appeal does not satisfy either of these conditions then it cannot be upheld.

(a) that the child would have been offered a place if the admission arrangements had been properly implemented.

Please note that it is not enough to show that there had been a mistake in implementing the school's admission arrangements. The Panel must be satisfied that, had the arrangements been carried out properly, the child would have been admitted.

If you wish to appeal on these grounds, please explain how you feel the school has failed to implement the admissions criteria or to follow its procedures correctly. Please give as much information as possible and continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

(b) that the decision was not one which a reasonable admission authority would make in the circumstances of the case:

Unreasonable in this sense means irrational - a decision which was 'perverse in the light of the admission arrangements' and which no reasonable Admission Authority, properly aware of its duties, would make. Unless it is such a decision, the appeal must fail.

The circumstances the Panel must consider are, for example, the published admission arrangements, parental preference, the circumstances of the particular child and family and the practical consequences for the school if any of the appeals were to be successful.

If you wish to appeal on these grounds, please give your reasons, giving as much information as possible to explain your case. Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

I wish to appear in person *Yes / No*

I will not be available to appear on/between the following dates

_____

Do you require an interpreter? YES/NO if yes please state which language.…….……..……..

FULL NAMES OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS _____

_____

Please state how correspondence should be addressed i.e. Mr & Mrs; Miss, Ms etc

SIGNATURE(S) _____ *DATE* _____