



Phoenix Infant Academy  
Together We Soar

Name of Policy	Admissions Policy for academic year 26-27
Scope of Policy	This policy applies to all pupils, members of staff, parents and visitors at Phoenix Infant Academy
Approved by	Principal
Date of Approval	September 2025
Review period	One Year
Review Date	September 2026

GROWING STRONGER TOGETHER



**THAMES LEARNING  
TRUST**

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### 1. Aims

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 pupils who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

### 2. Legislation and statutory requirements

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.

### 3. 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.

**Looked after children** 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

**Previously looked after children** 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.

A child reaches **compulsory school age** on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

#### **4. How to apply**

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.

#### **5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group**

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of 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:

- Parents' 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
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- 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 on the basis of 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.

## **6. Allocation of places**

### **6.1 Admission number**

The school has an agreed admission number of 90 pupils for entry in Reception and an additional 3 EHCP Resource Base pupils.

### **6.2 Oversubscription criteria**

All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plans name the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

In the event that the school receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in order until all places are filled.

1. Highest priority will be given to looked after children and all previously looked after children who apply for a place at the school.
2. Priority will next be given to children on the basis of social or medical need. The school defines social and medical need as a serious medical condition or exceptional sensitive, individual and compelling family circumstances. The school requires appropriate professional reports e.g. from a social worker, police officer, doctor or educational psychologist. The report must demonstrate exact reasons and the impact on the child or family's circumstances as to why this is the only suitable school compared to other schools available. Only exceptional reasons directly relevant to this school will be considered.
3. Priority will next be given to children of staff at the school, in either of the following circumstances:
  - a) The member of staff has been employed at the school for 2 or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, or
  - b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage
4. Priority will next be given to children with siblings at the school. Siblings include step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address. Priority will not be given to children with siblings who are former pupils of the school.

5. Priority will next be given to distance from the school. The address stated on an application must be the current one at the time of application. If an address changes after an application is submitted, the School Admissions Team should be notified immediately.

### **6.3 Tie break**

In the case of 2 or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, the school will use the distance between the school and a child's home as a tie breaker to decide between applicants. Priority will be given to children who live closest to the school. Distance will be measured in a straight line from the child's home address to the school's front gates on Warrington Avenue. A child's home address will be considered to be where he/she is resident for the majority of nights in a normal school week.

Where the distance between 2 children's homes and the school is the same, random allocation will be used to decide between them. This process will be independently verified.

### **6.4 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 pupils to the Fair Access Protocol. We will not refuse admission on these grounds to looked after children, previously looked after children and children with EHC plans listing the school.

### **6.5 Fair Access Protocol**

We participate in Slough Borough Council'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.

### **6.6 SEND Admissions**

We pride ourselves on being an inclusive school. We strongly believe that all pupils, regardless of their specific needs, should be offered inclusive teaching and a broad curriculum to ensure they make progress from their starting point. We provide equal opportunities for all children and general admission procedures apply for children with a Special Educational Need.

If you would like to discuss your child's SEND needs, please contact the school office.

### *Children with an Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHCP):*

Children who have an EHCP follow a different admissions process. Parents should complete a Slough Borough Council parental preference form and return it to them. Please contact the Slough Borough Council SEND Team on 01753 787876 or [sendteam@slough.gov.uk](mailto:sendteam@slough.gov.uk)

We review all associated paperwork to determine whether or not we can meet a child's needs. This also includes liaising with a child's current setting and observing the child (if appropriate).

We strongly advise that parents visit the school, both our Mainstream and Resource Base provision, before applying for a school place to be certain that PIA is the right setting for your child.

### *Admissions for Pupils with Disabilities:*

Unless a child with a disability also has an EHCP, the admission process is considered in the same way as general admissions. It is our aim to accommodate pupils with disabilities and to ensure they are treated equally.

Once we know more information about a child's disability, further considerations and adaptations will be made. For example, working closely with parents and external agencies to ensure the building is accessible. We also differentiate the classroom environment and resources to increase learning opportunities and participation.

## **7. In-year admissions**

Parents can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. Phoenix Infant Academy are part of the local authority's own in-year coordinated admission scheme and as such, parents should contact Slough at the website given below to apply for a place at the school outside of 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.

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by one of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6.3 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Admission authorities (Slough) aim to notify parents of an outcome decision within 10 school days, but must issue a decision within 15 school days.

Applications for in-year admissions should be sent to the following address:

<https://www.slough.gov.uk/school-admissions/year-admissions>

## 8. Appeals

Any applicant not offered a place will have a statutory right of appeal to an independent panel in accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. If your child's application for a place at the school is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals.

If you wish to appeal, please use [this link](#) to complete your appeal online. Please do NOT use ANY other appeal form or send your form to your local authority. It is highly recommended that you download the explanatory booklet about appeals which you should read before you complete the appeal form. [Booklet Link](#)

You should include any evidence or supporting material with your appeal form and you MUST state the grounds of your appeal at the time you lodge your appeal form. Your appeal form will not be accepted unless you give the grounds of your appeal. You may appeal for more than one school.

Please note that the online form will ask you to download two utility bills dated in the last THREE months. If you do not have access to a scanner, please take two photographs using a mobile phone and upload the photographic files. If you wish to contact the clerk – email :

[clerk@educationappeals.com](mailto:clerk@educationappeals.com) The appeals timetable for in year admissions is below:

The timetable for 'in-year' appeals	
Last day for lodging appeal forms	20 School days after the decision letter informing you that you had not been offered a place.
Invitation letter giving details about your hearing will be sent by the Clerk to the Independent Appeal Panel	At least 10 school days before the hearing. This MAY be emailed. All in-year appeals will be heard within 30 school days of the appeal form being lodged.
Closing date for any additional supporting evidence	FIVE school days before your hearing. You are advised that additional paperwork received on the day of the appeal hearing will not be taken into account. Please email files to <a href="mailto:clerk@educationappeals.com">clerk@educationappeals.com</a> Please note that slightly different rules will apply for any summer transfer appeals into Year R.
Letter from the Clerk informing you of the decision of the independent appeal panel	Due to the high number of appeals, an email is sent a few working days after your hearing with the decision of the panel. This is followed up around 10 working days later with a letter outlining the panels' reasons.

## 9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the Board will publicly consult on these changes. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years.