Stewart Fleming Primary School Admissions Policy 2026-27

Written: March 2026

To be reviewed: March 2027

Principle Academy Vision

The Pioneer Academy promotes and achieves excellence by ensuring the very best care and guidance for every child within our family of schools. It recognises the importance of outstanding learning and teaching by actively encouraging creativity and innovation, whilst having consistent standards of behaviour and attendance. Treating everyone as equal, whilst celebrating diversity, is a non-negotiable; protecting all through safeguarding, health and safety and welfare is paramount.

School Vision

Every Day at Stewart Fleming is an extraordinary school day. Our unwavering commitment in delivering an inspiring and inclusive curriculum develops independent learners. We endeavour to nurture inquisitive minds to enable them to become the best that they can be.

Statement of intent

At Stewart Fleming Primary School, we welcome all pupils, and places at the school are offered in an open and fair way. Our admissions process is delivered in line with the Equality Act 2010, the School Admissions Code, the School Admission Appeals Code, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

The number of places available is determined by the capacity of the school, and is called the 'agreed admissions number'. Our published admissions number (PAN) is 90 across the school.

The table below sets out who the admission authority is and other responsible bodies in our school.

Type of school	Who is the admission authority?	Who deals with complaints about arrangements?	Who is responsible for arranging/providing for an appeal against refusal of a place at the school?
Academy	Academy trust	Schools Adjudicator	Academy trust

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998

- DfE (2014) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2012) 'School Admission Appeals Code'

Roles and responsibilities

The admission authority is responsible for:
- Acting in accordance with the relevant legislation and guidance when carrying out the overall admission of pupils into the school.
- Outlining the school's admissions arrangements and publishing them on the academy website.
- Clearly communicating any reasons for rejecting the admission of a pupil, as well as the parent's right to appeal and the appeal process.
- Implementing any advice or recommendations given by the Schools Adjudicator without undue delay.
- Determining the admission arrangements on an annual basis and publicly consulting stakeholders on any proposed changes to the admission arrangements.
- Setting clear, fair and effective oversubscription criteria which do not discriminate against any pupil.
- Communicating oversubscription criteria clearly to parents.
- Notifying the LA of any in-year admissions and their outcomes.

The Schools Adjudicator is responsible for:
- Acting in line with the relevant legislation and guidance pertaining to admissions.
- Receiving concerns and objections regarding the admission of pupils and making recommendations to the admission authority as a result of these concerns and objections.
- Approving variations to determined admissions arrangements where there has been a major change in circumstances or law.

The appeals clerk is responsible for:
- Having an in-depth knowledge of the relevant appeals codes and other relevant law.
- Providing an independent and impartial service for admission appeals.
- Making the necessary administrative arrangements for hearings.
- Notifying all parties of the order of proceedings in advance of an appeals hearing.
- Responding to queries from appellants in advance of an appeals hearing or identifying who will be appropriate to respond.
- Being an independent source of advice on procedure and admissions law.
- Keeping accurate records of proceedings and providing written notification of the appeals panel's decisions.

Admissions

Determining a PAN

The number of places available is determined by the capacity of the school.

The PAN for new Reception pupils is 90.

The admission authority will notify the LA of their intention to increase the school's PAN and reference the changes on the school's website.

If the admission authority can accept more pupils than the PAN, it will notify the LA in good time so that the LA can deliver their coordination responsibilities effectively.

Oversubscription criteria
In the event of there being an oversubscription of applicants to the school, the following oversubscription criteria for each relevant age group will be applied:

Admission Criteria
Where applications are oversubscribed places will be offered in line with the admission criteria outlined below:

(i) Looked After Children (Children in Public Care) (see note 1)

(ii) Siblings – children who have a brother or sister attending at the beginning of their first term (see note 2)

(iii) Children of staff of the academy – priority may be given to children of the staff 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 which the application for 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.

(iv) Proximity, as measured in a straight line from the front door of the home to the front door of the school (see note 3 and 4)

Note 1: 'children looked after (CLA) ' definition:
a) CLA 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 "CLA" 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, child arrangements, or special guardianship order (90) 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.

Note 2: 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 still be on roll at the school when the younger child starts school.

Note 3: "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.

Note 4: Distance will be measured (in a straight line) from the front door of the child's home address (including flats) to the school reception, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.

If your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health and Care Plan, you can apply under a separate process. Please seek further advice from the Special Educational Needs Group on 020 8313 4164.

The school will accept pupils who name the school in their EHC plan. If it is unclear whether a child meets the oversubscription criteria, the admission authority may request proof of address.

If there is a 'tie-breaker' between oversubscribed pupils, the school will follow a fair, clear and effective procedure by allocating the place to the pupil who lives closest to school.

When formulating their admission arrangements, the admission authority will not carry out the following:

- Place any conditions on the consideration of any application other than those in the oversubscription criteria published in their admission arrangements

- Take into account any previous schools attended, unless it is a feeder school
- Give priority to children whose parents rank preferred schools in their application
- Give priority to children based on any practical or financial support their parents give to the school or associated parties (including any affiliated religious organisation)
- Give priority to children according to the occupational, marital, financial or educational status of parents applying – apart from where these factors determine a child whose parents work at school
- Take account of reports from previous schools about children's past behaviour, attendance, attitude or achievement, or that of any other children in the family
- Discriminate against any protected characteristic
- Give priority based on a child's or their parents' past or present hobbies or activities
- Name fee-paying independent schools as feeder schools
- Interview children or parents
- Request financial contributions as part of the admissions process
- Request photographs of children – apart from for proof of identity when sitting selection tests

Catchment areas
The point within the school grounds from which the school will measure any distance or radii is the door of the school reception. This point will be used to determine the school's catchment area. This should be measured using the child's primary address.

The school will accept pupils from outside the catchment area – oversubscription criteria will apply where applicable.

Siblings and children of staff
For the purpose of this policy, "sibling" is defined as any brother or sister related by blood or marriage and any fostered or adopted siblings.

Where oversubscribed, the school will give priority to children whose siblings are currently at the school at the beginning of their first term.

For the purpose of this policy, "children of staff" refers to any children of staff who have been employed by the school for two or more years at the time at which the application was made, and where the member of staff has been recruited to fill a vacant post where there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

Equal opportunities
The school will not establish admissions criteria that excludes individuals with a particular protected characteristic.

The admissions criteria will not exclude a greater proportion of pupils with particular protected characteristics, unless the school can justify how this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

The admissions criteria will not discriminate against disabled applicants, unless the school can justify how this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim

Admissions procedures
The school will offer open events and school visits to all potential applicants, irrespective of any protected characteristics. Where necessary, the school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants or disabled parents.

The school may assess its ability to cater to the applicant's needs by:
- Inviting the applicant to attend the school for a set period of time
- Visiting the applicant's current education provision

Consultation and determination
The admission authority will consult on any proposed changes to the admissions arrangements.

Consultation will last for a minimum of six weeks and will take place between 1 October and 31 January in the determination year.

The admission authority will consult on admissions arrangements at least once every seven years, even if no changes have been made in that time.

The admission authority will consult with the following:
- Parents of all pupils
- Stakeholders
- Other admission authorities within the relevant area
- The LA who are not the admission authority

The admission authority will publish a copy of the full proposed admission arrangements and the contact details of the individual responsible for admissions liaison on the school website.

A copy of the proposed admission arrangements will be made available upon request.

Admission arrangements will be determined by 28th February in the determination year on an annual basis, even when no changes to the arrangements have been made.

Finalised admission arrangements will be published on the school website.

A copy of the finalised admission arrangements will be sent to the Local Authority (LA) for entry by 15th March in the determination year.

Any objections to the admission arrangements will be directed to the Adjudicator by 15th May in the determination year.

Applications and offers
Parents will be provided with a common application form (CAF) where they will note their six preferred schools in rank order – the schools do not have to be located in the LA area where the parents live.

Parents will provide LAs with the following information within the CAF:
- Their name and their child's name and date of birth
- Theirs and their child's address and proof of residence

The CAF will be submitted to the parents' LA.

Parents are not guaranteed to have their preferences met.

The admission authority will request supplementary information for the purpose of processing applications where necessary.

The admission authority will not request any of the following:

- Any personal details, including information on criminal convictions or financial status
- The first language of the parent or child
- Details about the parents' or child's disability, medical or SEND requirements
- Any parental agreement to follow the ethos of the school in a practical way
- For the child to complete any part of the form or for both parents to provide signatures

Once a place has been offered, the admission authority may ask for the child's birth certificate as proof of birth date.

For Previously looked after child (PLAC) and CLA, the admission authority will request a copy of the adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order, and a letter from the LA confirming that the child was looked after immediately prior to the order being made.

A clear, fair and objective waiting list will be provided until 31st December of each year. Priority will not be given to pupils based on the date they were placed on the list. LAC and PLAC will take priority over the waiting list.

An offer will only be withdrawn if it has been made in error, a parent has not responded within 20 working days, or if the offer was made via a fraudulent or misleading application.

All offers will be made on National Offer Day, i.e. 16th April or the next working day.

The LA will maintain a waiting list for oversubscribed schools on behalf of the admission authority.

The admission authority will make clear in the admissions arrangements the process for requesting admission outside of the normal age group for the admissions round.

The Head Teacher will assist the admission authority with deciding on which year group a child will enter. Once a decision has been reached, the child's parents will be informed in writing along with an explanation of how the decision was reached and any reasons why.

Pupils not of usual school age will not be given less of a priority where the school is over subscribed.

Applications for children coming from overseas will be treated in accordance with EU law or Home Office rules.

For children of UK service professionals, the following procedure will be adhered to:
- A place will be allocated to the child in advance of the family arriving in the area named in the application form.
- The application must be accompanied with an official letter confirming the relocation date and the service unit's postal address or quartering area address when considering the application against the oversubscription criteria.
- The application will not be refused on the grounds of the child not currently living in the area, nor will places be uniquely reserved.

The arrangements for service children will be in line with the government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children.

Admissions appeals

If parents wish to appeal, they must make the appeal in writing.

Constitution of appeals panels
The admission authority and the appeals panel will act in accordance with all relevant legislation and guidance.

The judicial function of the appeals panel will be transparent, accessible, independent and impartial, and will operate in accordance with the principles of natural justice.

A clerk will be appointed to the appeals panel who is independent of the school and the education functions of the LA.

The appeals panel will comprise a chair and at least two other panel members. The panel will also include at least one lay person and a person who has experience in education.

The chair of the appeals panel is responsible for the conduct of the hearing, including introducing parties, explaining individual roles and how the hearing will be conducted, and ensuring that parties have sufficient opportunity to state their case and ask questions.

Panel members will be independent from the school and will remain independent for the duration of their service.

The clerk is responsible for assigning members of the appeals panel; however, they will not assign the following disqualified persons:

- A member of the LA which is the admission authority or in whose area the school is located
- A member or former member of the governing board of the school
- An employee at the LA or governing board of the school, other than a teacher or TA
- Any person who has, or at any time has had, any connection with the admission authority, school or LA who may not act impartially
- Any person who has not attended training required by the admission authority arranging the appeals panel

There will be three members of the panel available at all times during the appeals process. If any member has to temporarily withdraw, the hearing will be postponed until the panel member returns. If the panel member is unable to return, they will be replaced, and the appeals will be reheard.

Appropriate training will be given, funded by the admission authority, to all panel members and clerks before they take part in a panel hearing. As a minimum, this training will include:

- The law relating to admissions.
- The panel's duties under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010.
- Procedural fairness and natural justice.
- The roles of specific panel members, e.g. the chair.

Members of the appeals panel will receive travel and subsistence allowances where applicable, and will be compensated for any loss of earnings or expenses.
The appeals panel must not have a vested interest in the outcome of the hearing.

The admission authority will indemnify the members of the appeals panel against any legal costs and expenses they incur in connection with any decision taken in good faith whist acting as a member of the appeals panel.

Appeals hearings
The admission authority will publish an appeals timetable on their website by 28th February each year. The timetable will comply with section three of the 'School admission appeals code'.

Appeals will be lodged and heard for the **normal admissions round** within 40 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals.

For **late applications**, appeals will be heard between 30-40 school days of the appeal being lodged.

For **in year** admissions, appeals will be heard within 30 days of the appeal being lodged.

Admission authorities will provide appellants with written notification of the date and all final arrangements of the appeal hearing, including a deadline for the submission of any further evidence that was not sent in the original appeal.

The admission authority will comply with any request for information to help parents prepare their case for the appeals hearing.

All evidence relating to the appeal hearing will be passed on to the clerk, including the admission process, reasons for the decision and how the admission would cause prejudice to the education provision of the school.

The clerk will send all the papers required for the hearing to both parties and the members of the panel seven days before the hearing.

The presenting officer will be responsible for relaying to the attendees the decision not to admit the child, and answer questions where necessary.

Appellants may attend in person or be represented by another individual. Where appellants cannot attend, a decision will be made based on the written evidence.

Appeal hearings must be private and held in an accessible location. The order of the appeals will be:
- Case for the admission authority.
- Questioning by the appellant(s) and panel.
- Case for the appellant(s).
- Questioning by the admission authority and panel.
- Summing up by the admission authority.
- Summing up by the appellant(s).

Multiple appeals will be heard, either individually or in groups, by the same appeals panel where appropriate.

Notes of the hearing will be made and kept securely by the admission authority for a minimum of two years. These notes are, in most cases, exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Reaching a decision
When reaching a decision, the admission authority will have due regard to section three of the 'School admission appeals code'.

Appeals decisions will either be upheld or dismissed – there will be no conditional decisions made, in line with section 94(6) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

The final decision will be decided by a simple majority. If votes are split equally, the chair will make the casting vote.

The final decision and accompanying reasons will be communicated in writing to the appellant, admission authority and the LA.

The decision letter will be signed by the clerk or chair of the appeals panel and sent no later than five school days after the decision has been made.

If a child has been refused admissions due to any SEND, this will be considered by the First-tier Tribunal (SEND) and not the appeals panel.

The admission authority will have due regard for the two-stage process outlined in the 'School admission appeals code' when negotiating appeals regarding infant class sizes.

Complaints

Appellants do not have the right to more than one appeal in respect of the school for the same academic year unless, in exceptional circumstances, the admission authority has accepted a second application from the appellant due to a material change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school but still refused admission.

Appellants can apply for a place at the school for a different academic year.

If appellants have an issue with the appeal process, they can complain to the Secretary of State.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the school board on an annual basis.

Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all staff and other interested parties.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2028.