



School and College Admissions Policy 2016/17

School Admissions Years 7 - 11

The Governing Body, at the outset, would like to remind parents that SHS SFC is a comprehensive school, welcoming girls regardless of ability or aptitude in Year 7 through to Year 11.

Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements for Secondary School

The school complies with School Admissions legislation requiring Local Authorities (LAs) to co-ordinate admission arrangements in their area. Co-ordinated admission schemes provide a way for ensuring that every parent living in a Local Authority (LA) receives an offer of one, and only one, school place on the same day. We are a member of Cheshire East's scheme.

Schools such as ours act as their own admission authority, applying their own admission criteria as detailed below. However, all parents will only have to fill in one application form and will receive their offer from the LA in whose area they live.

The Cheshire East Common Application Form (CECAF) must be used by all Cheshire East parents applying for a school place, whether inside or outside Cheshire East. Parents should have regard to the contents of information booklets issued by the LA.

Admission Numbers

The published admission number for this school is 210 girls per year. Published admission numbers are established for each school in order to decide whether any age group within a school is full.

In relation to girls of multiple births, exceptionally it may be necessary to offer places over the published admission number. This is to ensure that, as far as possible, siblings (i.e. twins, triplets or children from other multiple births) can attend the same school.

Admission and Age Groups

Applications for admission, and any appeals, are normally considered in relation to the availability of places in a girl's chronological age group, other than in exceptional circumstances.

Admissions of girls residing outside the boundaries of Cheshire East

Girls residing outside the boundary of Cheshire East are offered places on the same basis as those living in Cheshire East, however, applications on their behalf for a place at this school must be made using an application from their home LA which will make the necessary arrangements with Cheshire East LA, e.g. girls resident in Stoke wishing to express a preference for a place at this school, must name Sandbach High School and Sixth Form College on the Stoke LA admissions application form.

Applicants not resident in England must use Cheshire East's Common Application Form. Contact the School Admissions Service, Delamere House (EC), Delamere Street, CREWE, Cheshire CW1 2JZ for further information and advice.

Allocation of Places

As required by law, the LA makes arrangements for parents to express their preference for the school where they wish their daughter to be educated and an opportunity to give reasons for their preference before any places are offered.

All preferences must be in writing and those meeting the criteria for this school will be met except where this would prejudice efficient education or the efficient use of resources, e.g. if the year group in question is full.

The criteria used for prioritising applications if a year group is over-subscribed are as follows:

(i) “Cared for Children and Previously Cared for Children”

A cared for child is a girl who is in the care of a LA or provided with accommodation by that authority – as defined in Section 22 of the Children Act 1989. A girl who was previously cared for but immediately after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order is also included in this category.

(ii) Girls for whom there are particular medical or social reasons, which, in the Governors view, justifies admission to our school. Supporting evidence from a registered professional, such as a medical practitioner, psychologist, social worker or current school, must be provided which sets out the particular reasons why our school is the most suitable school and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. The Governors, if it is considered appropriate, will seek the views of the School Doctor or Educational Psychologist in the event of parents requesting admission on medical or psychological grounds. This criterion cannot be considered if the required documents have not been received. Few applications fall within this category.

(iii) Girls resident within the designated catchment zone of the school.

Girls living in the catchment zones of: Elworth CE Primary, Elworth Hall Primary, Offley Junior, Sandbach Community Primary, Sandbach Heath St John’s CE Primary, Wheelock Primary, Haslington Primary (to include the whole of the Haslington Primary catchment area) and The Dingle Primary and girls living in the parishes of Arclid and Hassall and most of Betchton Parish.

(iv) Siblings – girls with sisters, step sisters or half- sisters already attending Sandbach HSSF or who have ever been on roll. Girls with brothers, step brothers or half-brothers already attending Sandbach School or have ever been on roll there.

(v) Daughters of staff employed where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or the member of staff has been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

(vi) Girls not resident within the local catchment zone but attending a school designated as a partner primary school.

Designated Partner Primary Schools are: Elworth CE Primary, Elworth Hall Primary, Offley Junior, Sandbach Community Primary, Sandbach Heath St John’s CE Primary, Wheelock Primary, Haslington Primary, The Dingle Primary and Rode Heath Primary.

(vii) Girls living nearest to the school as measured using an Ordnance Survey “address-point system” which measures straight line distances in miles from the school to the place of residence.

Proof of address and residency may be required, and Governors retain the right to withdraw any place offered on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

Where parents or carers have shared responsibility for a girl the place of residency will be determined as the address where the girl lives for the majority of the week (eg where the girl wakes up between Monday and Friday). Full details of the arrangements must be included on the application form (or by means of an accompanying note) to enable Governors to decide which address (or, exceptionally, addresses) to use for admission purposes. Where the school can accommodate some, but not all, girls qualifying for one of the preceding criteria, priority will be given to girls having regard to the subsequent criteria.

Admission Appeals

Parents who are not offered a place here have a right of appeal to an Independent Schools Appeals Panel. Appeals must be submitted in writing, but parents have the right to present their case to the Panel in person. The Panel will allow you to be accompanied by a friend or to be represented although government advice is that legal representation should not normally be necessary. We will make the necessary administrative arrangements for hearing appeals. The decisions of Schools Appeal Panels are binding on the school governing body and parents.

Late Applications

Late applications for places will be considered after all applications received by the closing date unless the school considers that there are good reasons for the late application, which must be stated at the time of application, e.g. exceptional medical reasons preventing earlier application, late removal in to the area.

Supporting documentation must be provided to the school for consideration. Late applications will be forwarded by the local authority to the governing body for consideration.

Repeat Applications

Repeat applications will not be considered within the same school year, unless the parents', girl's or the school's circumstances have changed significantly since the original application was made.

Transfer between Schools (In year Admissions)

Governors are prepared to consider requests for transfers between schools other than at normal admission times and parents seeking transfer should approach the Headteacher to find out if there are any places in the appropriate school year. Parents are, however, advised as a first step, to discuss their daughter's progress and problems with the Headteacher of the girl's present school.

If a parent wishes to make a formal application to the school the In Year Admission Form is available on the school website or on request from the school. It should be submitted to the school as soon as possible. The school will then consider the application, applying the over-subscription criteria if necessary.

Waiting Lists

Girls whose applications are unsuccessful will be placed on a waiting list for one month after the start of the academic year, regardless of whether their parents decide to appeal against the decision not to offer a place at the school. Thereafter, parents who wish to remain on the waiting list must reconfirm their interest in writing to the Headteacher.

If a parent decides to appeal against the decision not to offer a place for their daughter at their preferred school the girl's name will automatically be placed on a waiting list in case any further places become available. Parents who decide not to appeal can also ask for their daughter's name to be included on a waiting list if they wish. Placing a girl's name on a waiting list does not affect the right of appeal.

The waiting list will not be held on a 'first come, first served' basis. New applications will be added to the waiting list in criteria order and should places become available, these will be offered in line with the over-subscription criteria outlined above.

Appeal Panels

The Appeals Panels will be appointed by the School and will have three members made up of independent lay persons and people who have an educational background. A clerk to the Panel also attends to see that the appeal is heard properly and to keep a record of the hearing.

Appeal Hearings

Appeals Panel hearings are informal and will be held locally, for example, in Sandbach Library, and they are structured in the following way:

- The Chair of the Appeal Panel introduces the other members and explains what will happen
- The School representative, called a Presenting Officer, puts their case
- You, as parents, and the Panel members can question the Presenting Officer
- You, as parents, put your case
- The Presenting Officer and the Panel can ask you questions
- The Presenting Officer sums up their case
- You, as parents, sum up your case

The Appeal Panel will then ask both parents and the Presenting Officer to leave, before making their decision.

You are encouraged to attend the Panel as it may wish to put questions to you but you are not obliged to do so. Appeals can be considered on the basis of your written information alone.

Powers of Appeal Panels

Panels can uphold all appeals and instruct the school to allocate a place for your child. They can uphold some of the appeals and reject others and they can also reject all the appeals. Once all the appeals have been heard Panels must first decide whether further admissions 'will prejudice the provision of efficient education and/or the efficient use of resources'. Prejudice cannot normally be proved until the year group your daughter will enter is full. This means that the year group has not only reached its admission limit but cannot accept any more girls in that year group without prejudicing the provision of efficient education at the school or the efficient use of resources. The school will provide a statement giving their reasons why they consider that to accept further girls would cause prejudice to the school. If the Panel believes that the school can admit all the girls whose parents have appealed without causing prejudice your appeal will automatically be upheld. The Panel may decide that places can be allocated to some of the appellants before the point is reached when further admissions will cause prejudice. The Panel will decide how many more places can be offered. Any such places may be allocated by the Panel according to the school's admissions criteria and any other factors in the individual case which are compelling reasons for admission, for example if there has been an error in applying the admission criteria when places were allocated.

If the school's case that further admissions will cause prejudice is accepted by the Panel (either as presented or after some further places have been allocated) the Panel will then proceed to the second stage.

This requires panel members to balance your own arguments in support of your daughter's admission against the extent of prejudice to efficient education and the efficient use of resources which would be caused by the admission of further girls. If the Panel believes that your case outweighs the extent of the prejudice your appeal will be upheld, otherwise your appeal will be rejected.

Timescales

Casual appeals are normally heard within 30 school days (excluding school holidays) from the date the completed appeal form is received in school. Block appeals for September intake into Year 7 will be held between April to July each year, if the form is returned within the published time scales. Forms received after the deadline may result in the appeal for your child not being held until September.

You will be given the date and time of the appeal hearing two weeks in advance of the hearing and the school's statement of its case will be sent to you one week in advance. You will normally be notified of the Panel's decision in writing no later than 7 working days of the hearings being completed. Decisions of Appeals Panels are final and binding on both the school and the appellants.

Repeat Appeals

If you are not successful you may apply for another appeal, but your application will not be considered within the same school year unless your own or the school's circumstances have changed significantly and materially since your first appeal (e.g. change of address).

What Happens If You Are Not Happy With The Outcome Of The Appeal?

Decisions of Appeals Panels are final and binding on both the school and the appellants. The only further rights open to you if your appeal is not upheld is to complain to the local government ombudsman if you consider there has been 'mal administration' in the way your appeal was handled or to seek 'judicial review' of the decision through the Courts.

Making your Appeal

You must make your appeal in writing to the school. You must also state the 'grounds' on which your appeal is based. You should consider when preparing your appeal whether to include copies of any supporting documentation. These are some examples of documentation that might support or corroborate statements in your appeal:

- letters or statements from doctors, other health professionals or social workers stating why your child must attend this particular school;
- in circumstances where a change of address is relevant to your appeal, letters or statements from a solicitor (or others) confirming a change of address.

All supporting documentation should be provided at least 7 days before the appeal. If you submit additional information during the appeal, the presenting officer may seek an adjournment from the panel. In certain instances this might require the hearing continuing on another day.

The school will acknowledge receipt of your form as soon as possible and will make the necessary arrangements. A copy of your appeal documentation will also be provided to the presenting officer, who, together with the school, will prepare a written response to your appeal, which will be sent to you no later than seven days before the hearing.

Other sources of help

Parents can seek advice from the Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) in London which is a voluntary body providing an advice service to parents on education matters. www.ace-ed.org.uk

General information regarding appeals can be obtained from the School Admissions Team – see above address.

The Department for Education has a web site that provides a range of information for parents. www.dfe.gov.uk



Sixth Form College

at Sandbach High School

Our Academy, Our Future

College Admissions

Sandbach High School and Sixth Form College (SHSSFC) is committed to developing as wide a range of courses and opportunities as practically possible, whilst avoiding undue replication of those courses already available locally and to liaising with other providers to encourage young people (girls and boys) throughout the local area to take up the opportunities on offer.

Girls and boys may be enrolled in to the Sixth Form as the college is welcoming of female and male students.

The general guideline for the admission of students into the sixth form is that there is an appropriate course of study accessible to the student. Experience suggests that students embarking on A level courses or similar should have normally achieved at least 4 GCSE passes at grade C or above, or equivalent qualifications with a grade B desirable in some subjects. Minimum entry requirements are the same for internal and external applicants.

There is no formal method of application or interview. Students are offered the opportunity to meet with a senior colleague or curriculum leader to discuss their options.

It is not necessary for students already attending SHSSFC to apply formally for places in Year 12 but they should have achieved the expected minimum entry requirements.

The School Admissions Code requires schools that set out to admit external candidates to its sixth form to have a published admission number. The admission number for Year 12 is 100 students. This admission number only refers to students joining the school for the first time and does not include students transferring from earlier year groups.

Students refused a place in the Sixth Form have a right of appeal, whether the student is already attending the school or is an external candidate. For details as to how to appeal, please see appropriate sections in the School Admission Policy Years 7 – 11 above.

This policy will be reviewed annually.