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Admissions Policy Sir Harry Smith Community College 2026

Updated 3rd February 2025

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This policy is to be reviewed:	Annually
The next review date is:	February 2026
Review is the responsibility of:	Trust Board

Review History

Review ratified:	April 2019, February 2020
Review ratified:	12 th July 2021, May 2022
Review ratified:	10 th Oct 2022, 6 th Feb 2023, 5 th Feb 2024, 3 rd Feb 2025

Authorised by: Full Trust Board

Admissions Policy

The Board of Trustees of Aspire Learning Trust is the admission authority for Sir Harry Smith Community College. This means that the Board sets and applies the admissions policy for the school. The Board have appointed the Local Authority to provide an admissions and appeals service for the school.

Catchment area

Children living in the areas served by the following primary schools: Coates Primary School, Park Lane Primary School, New Road Primary School, Alderman Jacobs Primary School, Heritage Park Primary School and Duke of Bedford Primary School.

Policy and numbers

Students will be admitted into Year 7 without reference to ability or aptitude. In 2026, the published admission number will be 240.

Admissions criteria to be applied if places are over-subscribed

All preferences are treated equally. Where applications for admissions exceed the number of places available, the following criteria will be applied, in the order set out below, to decide which children to admit: NB. Children who have a statement of special educational needs that names the College will be admitted. Those children with a statement of special educational needs that does not name the College will be referred to Student Assessment to determine an appropriate place.

Priority will be given to children with a statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan which names the College. This will be in addition to any specific arrangements to specialist provision.

1. Children in Care – ‘Looked After Children’ and children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).
2. Children 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.
3. Children living in the catchment area and attend one of the schools listed above and who have a sibling at the College at the time of admission. Parents may contact the LA if they are uncertain whether or not they reside in the catchment area
4. Children living in the catchment area of the Primary schools listed above and who have a sibling at the College at the time of admission. Parents may contact the LA if they are uncertain whether or not they reside in the catchment area².
5. Children living in the designated catchment areas and attend one of the schools listed above.
6. Children living in the designated catchment areas
7. Children of staff
8. Children who live outside the catchment area, who attend primary schools within it and who have a sibling at the College at the time of admission.
9. Children who live outside the catchment area who have a sibling at the College at the time of admission.
10. Children who live outside the catchment area who attend the primary schools within the catchment area.

11. Children living nearest the College as measured by the shortest straight line distance, from the centre of the home address to the College using the Local Authority's measuring system.

In cases of equal merit, priority will go to children living nearest the College according to the shortest distance. This is measured as a straight line from the reference point of the home to the main pupil entrance at the College.

1. The home address is defined as the address of the adult with parental responsibility with whom the child normally lives and which applies at the time of application. Applications based on future addresses can only be considered up to 6 teaching weeks before the child is expected to take up the place and upon confirmation of a minimum of six-month tenancy agreement or exchange of contracts.
2. A map showing the catchment area and/or further information can be obtained from the College.
3. A sibling is defined as Sibling is defined as a brother or a 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 must be living in the same family unit at the same address. Every effort will be made to ensure that twins and those from multiple births can be admitted together.

¹ A looked after child is a child who is in the care of a local authority in England, or is being provided with accommodation by a local authority in England in the exercise of their social services functions.

² A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

How to apply for a place in Year 7

The application process for admissions into Year 7 is co-ordinated by Cambridgeshire Local Authority (LA), which acts on behalf of the Governing Body to offer places at the College. Parents should submit a Common Application Form, available from their child's primary school or from the LA Admissions Team, no later than the national closing date. Offer letters will be issued by the LA. Applications can also be made online. For details please contact the LA Admissions Team on 01223 699200 or admissions@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

How places are offered

For admission into Year 7 September 2026, the LA, on behalf of the Governing Body, will offer places to 240 children. This is the Published Admission Number (PAN) for that year group. In the event that more than 240 applications are received, the oversubscription criteria will be applied to determine priority for places. (See section 2).

How to apply for places after the start of term or for places in Years 8, 9, 10 and 11

To apply for a place after the start of term, or for a place in Years 8, 9, 10, and 11 in-year applications, please contact Cambridgeshire Local Authority (LA) Admissions Team, as above. All parents are advised to read the Local Authority booklet for parents on secondary admissions.

Where it is not possible to offer a place immediately, the child's details will be held on a reserve list by the LA Admissions Team for a period of one term following the term of application. All in-year applications will be co-ordinated by the LA Admissions Team.

Parents wishing to visit the College prior to submitting an application are welcome to do so. However, this is not always possible to organise at short notice and visits are usually conducted in small groups. Visits are not interviews and do not affect any decision regarding the availability of a place.

Appeals

Appeal requests are required to be submitted to the Local Authority Appeals Team. Once the appeal form has been received, the Local Authority will arrange for an Independent Appeal Panel to hear the appeal. You will be given 10 school days' notice of the date, time and location of the appeal hearing. An 'Appeal Pack' will be collated and shared with all parties, in advance of the appeal hearing.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/appeals-a-guide-for-parents.pdf>

Admissions to Year 12

Applications from external applicants for admissions to Year 12 in Sir Harry Smith Community College should request a Post-16 Application Form and send it directly to the College. Students who attend Sir Harry Smith Community College should complete a Post-16 Internal Application Form and submit it to the College. Alternatively, applications can be made electronically via UCAS Progress.

Entry requirements

The entry requirements for both internal and external applicants are the same. The entry requirements will vary according to the level of courses chosen and the specific subjects chosen. Full details of entry requirements to specific courses can be found in the Sixth Form Prospectus and on the College website (www.sirharrysmith.cambs.sch.uk)

1. For students taking A2 courses we require seven GCSE in grades 4 - 9, including English and Maths. Students should also have a minimum of a grade 6 in the subjects they wish to study, if applicable. A Grade 6 at GCSE is preferable for studying a subject at A Level, but we will consider students who achieve a Grade 5 in the subject, depending on circumstances.

We will also consider students based on their individual circumstances.

Both internal and external applicants will be expected to attend a guidance meeting to advise on appropriate course selections.

Please note that the availability of places in certain curriculum subjects may determine if the oversubscription criteria detailed below are applied.

In addition, the College cannot guarantee to run courses in specific subjects if the uptake is too low for a viable cohort.

Oversubscription Criteria

Those who have a statement of special educational needs that names the College will be admitted. Where required the oversubscription criteria below will be applied. Priority will be given in the following order: Students in care, also looked after students (LAC), and students who were looked after, but ceased to be so by reason of adoption, a resident order or special guardianship order.

1. Students who attend Sir Harry Smith Community College;
2. Students with a sibling at the College at the time of admission;
3. Students in schools without Years 12 & 13;
4. Students in schools not offering the courses requested.

Oversubscription in a category:

Priority will be given to students living nearest the College as measured by a straight line. The distance, for admissions purposes, is measured using the straight line distance from the reference point of the home to the main pupil entrance to the College. These distances can be produced by the LA Admissions team for the College. For families who live outside the area covered by the Cambridgeshire mapping system, distances are determined using a combination of local maps and on-line resources.

Parents and students have a right to appeal against any decision refusing a Sixth Form place in a College with a Sixth Form. Appeals must be heard by an independent panel within 40 College days of the appeal being lodged.