The Laurels
PRIMARY SCHOOL

# Admissions Policy 2025-2026

**Introduction**
The Laurels Primary School is an academy and part of the Durrington Multi Academy Trust. DMAT, as a trust, is the admissions authority for its schools. For in-year admission the Laurels operationally manages admissions in line with this trust policy.

Should you wish to apply for a place (other than the usual time of entry which takes place in the Reception year) you should complete an application form which is available from both the school and West Sussex County Council.

We recognise children change schools for a variety of reasons from moving home to changes in family circumstances of for other personal reasons.

If you wish to change your child's school, we would advise you to discuss your reasons for moving with a senior member of staff from The Laurels prior to making a decision to apply as any move is likely to disrupt the curriculum content they have begun to study.

**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.

**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.

An **"in-year" admission** is defined as a request made for a place at The Laurels Primary School after the commencement of school for the stated academic year **or** if at the start of the academic year (i.e. for start in September) for entry to a year group other than reception

**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 admission into reception at the standard point of entry:**

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 statefunded schools, in rank order.

Further information on this process can be found at https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/schools-and-colleges/school places/apply/starting-school-places/

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority.

**For in-year admissions**

Both the school and WSCC can provide copies of the standard WSCC admissions application form which should be used for all requests for in-year admissions. Forms are available by emailing office@laurelsprimary.co.uk or by calling the school direct on 01903 830901. Fully completed forms should be returned directly to the school for in-year admissions

**Students with Special Educational Needs who do not have a statement/ Education Health Care Plan**

Students who have identified additional needs (but not a SEN statement or EHCP) should apply through

the normal in-year admission process. Additional information on the facilities and SEN provision within the school is available through our Local Offer on the website.

Any additional questions relating to SEN provision should be emailed into the school office (office@laurelsprimary.co.uk) and a response will be provided where possible.

Where parents/carers believe there are exceptional/compelling circumstances in relation to the application submitted for their child, the reasons should be documented & evidence provided at the same time as the application form.

**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 Laurels Primary School has a PAN (Pupil Admission Number) of 30 students in each year group.
Infant class size legislation**'''** applies to reception, Year 1 and Year 2 limiting class sizes to 30 children.
The overall net capacity of the school being 210 children.
The trust is part of the West Sussex County Council co-ordinated scheme; all dates within that scheme must be adhered to. Proof of residence will be required for all applications.
Children are normally admitted in September in the academic year in which they have their fifth birthday.
If/when more applications are received than places available, the offer of a place will be determined through the application of the oversubscription criteria (see section 8).

**6.2 Over Subscription Criteria**

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

In line with legislation introduced in 1998, our infant classes will have a maximum of 30 children with a single teacher. Additional children may be admitted under limited and exceptional circumstances as outlined in the Admissions Code, 2014.

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.

The school's published admission number will remain at 30 and net capacity at 210.

The rank-order criteria are as follows:

1. Looked or previously looked after children
2. Children who live^ in the borough of Worthing˜ and whom have a brother* or sister* already at the school and who will still be attending when the child starts
3. Children who live^ outside the borough of Worthing˜ and have a brother* or sister* already at the school and who will still be attending when the child starts
4. Children living^ in the borough of Worthing˜
5. Children of staff+ who have been employed by the school for at least two years. 6. Other children who live^ outside the borough of Worthing˜

**Additional information:**

**'''** Infant class size legislation applies to Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 limiting class sizes to 30 children. Where priority is given for a sibling, brothers and sisters may be half or step siblings (by marriage or by cohabitation) or foster siblings but must be living permanently at the same address.

**+** Under the oversubscription criteria, the word staff will mean all staff employed by the school for at least two years. The definition does not include contract or peripatetic staff.

**^**Residence will be determined as the place where the child sleeps for the majority of the school week.
*****Brothers and sisters are defined as including half-siblings, step-siblings and adopted siblings living in the same household on a permanent basis.

**~**The borough of Worthing includes all wards as named in the map to the left *(source Adur-Worthing councils)*

**The borough of Worthing:**

**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 permanent residence^ 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, as measured from the centre point of each building. 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 West Sussex'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.

**7. In Year Admissions**

Parents can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, students who have an Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP), those designated Children Looked After (CLA), or those who qualify for consideration under the fair access protocol will receive priority over those on the waiting list. This does not necessarily mean they will be immediately 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 6.2 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest. Parents will be notified of the outcome of your in-year application in writing within 15 school days.
The school will make reasonable attempts to contact the applicant to which the place is offered. However, if there is no response within 10 days of the date of the offer letter the offer will be withdrawn and place offered to the next ranked student. Details of who to contact to make the necessary arrangements will be in the offer letter.

**8. Appeals**

If we do not offer a child a place at our school, it is because to do so would prejudice the education of other children. A letter will be sent confirming this and will advise of the parent/carer's right to appeal. Appeals panels are independently coordinated on behalf of The Laurels Primary School by WSCC. The Appeal Panel process operates within the framework set out in the School Admission Appeals Code 2012. An appeals panel decision is binding on all parties.

If you wish to appeal, you must complete the school admission appeal form via West Sussex County Council, details noted below

https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/schools-and-colleges/schoolplaces/apply/make-an-admissions-appeal/school-admissions-appeal-form/

You can find details of the school's appeals timetable on the following webpage:

https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/schools-and-colleges/schoolplaces/apply/make-an-admissions-appeal/

Or you can contact Worthing Admissions' Office on 033 301 42903

**9. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the governing body every year.
Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the governing 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.

**Reviewed November 2024**