Springfield Academy

Admissions Policy 2026-2027

Education Village Academy Trust

Values and Ethos

Our values and ethos are inclusive and child centred. Our Trust is founded on the principles of inclusivity, diversity and fairness, and they are fundamental to our delivery of exceptional learning experiences.

EVAT stands for:

- **Excellence** and high standards
  - a can-do culture and no-excuses ethos
- **Values driven** with a deep sense of moral purpose
  - putting children and young people first
  - behaving ethically
- **Ambitious** and aspiration for all
  - irrespective of background or barriers – being truly inclusive
- **Teamwork**
  - we do more, better and faster, together

We are a village. We collaborate, with our learners, their families and our communities, to provide exceptional education so that all the children and young people we serve achieve the best possible outcomes.

Our Ethos is to:

- Create a nurturing and friendly atmosphere and provide an environment where everyone feels valued for who they are
- Bring out the best in every child and young person and meet the full range of their individual needs
- Provide different and unique experiences, challenges and activities
- Show tolerance and respect for each other
- Prepare our children and young people for lifelong learning
- Improve the life chances of every child and young person we serve.

This document, and its associated procedures and protocols, are based on these key principles.

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Springfield Academy
Salters Lane South
Darlington
DL1 2AN

Tel: 01325 254000
Admissions Officer: Mr Richard Gartland

The Board of Directors of The Education Village Academy Trust (EVAT) is the Admissions Authority for Springfield Academy. The Admissions Policy Criteria will be applied on an equal preference basis and works in association with the Coordinated Scheme for Darlington Authority.

Admission number

For Springfield Academy the admission number for our Reception class is 30. The usual admission date for our Reception class is 1st September each year.

The admission number for our Nursery is 26 morning places and 26 afternoon places for 15 hours, weekly provision. **See appendix 1** for Nursery Admission policy and procedure.

The following applies to Reception Class admissions.

Process of application

Applications for places at the Academy will be made in accordance with the co-ordinated admission arrangements of Local Authorities and will be made on the Primary School Application forms provided and administered by the Local Authority. Prospective pupils and their parents/carers are encouraged to visit the Academy before making an application.

Consideration of applications

Where fewer than the admission number are received, the Academy will offer places to all those who have applied.

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admissions number, applications will be considered against the oversubscription criteria set out below. After the admission of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs (EHC Plan) where the Academy is named on the Plan, the criteria will be applied in the order in which they are set out below:

a) Children in Public Care (Looked after Children) or who have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (See Note 1 below);

b) Students whose siblings (see Note 2 below) currently attend the school and who will continue to do so on the date of admission;

c) Students who live nearest the Academy measured from the front door of the home address to the main school gate, by the shortest walking route judged to be safe (lighting at regular intervals and paved/ tarmacked). This will be based on the child's permanent home address (See Note 3 below). To remain consistent, the Academy will measure distance using the Geographical Information System adopted by the Borough Council to measure all distances.

d) Children with very exceptional medical factors directly related to placement at one of the Academies. Applications under this criterion should be supported by written evidence from a doctor (see Note 4 below).

Tie Break

In the event of a tie-break in any oversubscription criteria, distance will be the deciding factor, which may involve an officer walking the route using a pedometer.

Multiple Births

For multiple births where only one place remains, infant classes will be allowed to exceed the statutory limit where the 31st child is a twin or from multiple births. The 'excepted pupil' will be allowed for the time in Key Stage 1 or until the class numbers fall back to current class size limit.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

If a parent seeks a place in a year group outside of their normal age group, they should complete an application form and attach a covering letter along with any accompanying documentation that details the circumstances behind their request, for example if their child has missed a significant amount of time due to ill health or they believe their child to be gifted and talented. This should be forwarded to the School Admissions Team, at the Town Hall, who will consider the request with the Trust. Once a decision has been made the Admission Authority will write to the parent/carer informing them of the decision and setting out reasons for such. Parents of summer born children can also make a request to apply for their child to start school in the next academic year after they reach five and should follow the same process but should start the process in the September of the year prior to the year of entry.

Admissions Oversubscription Criteria

Note 1: Definition of Children in Public Care or previously in state care outside of England

Children who are currently in public care (looked after children) including adopted children who were previously in care who ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became (or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order). A 'looked after' child is a child who is looked after by a LA in accordance with Section 22 of the Children's Act 1989(b) at the time when application for admission to the Academy is made and whom the LA can confirm will still be looked after at the time of admission. 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.

Note 2: Definition of 'sibling'

Siblings (brothers or sisters) are considered to be those children who live at the same address and either:

- have one or both natural parents in common;
- are related by a parent's marriage,
- are adopted or fostered, or;
- their parents are married/co-habiting and children live together in the same household;
- they are children of the same household

Note 3: Home Address

The home address is used for applying the admissions criteria. This means that when you state your school preferences you must give the home address of the child at the time of application, where they mainly reside Monday to Friday. You must not give the address of childminders or other family members who may share in the care of your child.

For parents who may have more than one property, reference should only be made to the property in which they and the child(ren) mainly reside. If the main address has changed temporarily, for example where a parent resides with extended family during a period of sickness or takes up temporary accommodation due to building works/renovation, then the home address remains that at which the parent was resident before the period of temporary residence began. However, if you have sold your property (exchanged contracts) and have moved into temporary accommodation, you will be required to provide evidence of your situation and a decision will be made based upon the evidence provided.

Where there are shared care arrangements, the home address will be where the child lives for the majority of the week Monday to Friday or where a court has determined their home address should be.

Note 4: Children with medical factors directly relating to an Academy admission

If you state a preference for an EVAT Academy and indicate your reason for doing so is 'medical', then you are required to send a supporting letter from a professional practitioner. The supporting evidence should set out the particular reasons why the Academy is the most suitable school and the difficulties it would cause if your child had to travel to another school. Permission from parents must be given to share this information.

Waiting lists

Subject to any provisions regarding waiting lists in the LA's co-ordinated admission scheme, the Academy will operate a waiting list. Where in any year the Academy receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until a month after the admission date. This will be maintained by the Academy and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.

The position of children on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out in this policy. Where places become vacant, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

Arrangements for appeals panels

Parents will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision of the Academy. The Appeal Panel will be independent of the Academy. Guidance about the appeals process is available from Mrs J French at the Education Village Academy Trust (Tel. 254000), who will answer any enquiries parents/carers may have about the process. Appeals must be made in writing, and letters addressed in the first instance to the Chair of the Directors Board at the Trust at the following address:

The Education Village
Salters Lane South
Darlington
DL1 2AN

Arrangements for admitting students to other year groups, including to replace any students who have left the Academy

Subject to any provisions in the LA's co-ordinated admission arrangements relating to applications submitted for years other than the normal year of entry, the Academy will consider all such applications and, if the year group applied for has a place available, admit the child. If more applications are received than there are places available, the oversubscription criteria shall apply. Parents whose application is turned down are entitled to appeal.

Policy for In-Year Applications

Families who move into the area who require a place(s) at a Darlington school must contact the Schools Admissions Section at the Town Hall. Parent/carers will be sent an In-year Application Form (IYAF) and be directed to the Council's website for a copy of the Guide for Parents. Should a place be available at the school requested by a parent, a meeting with the Head of School (or his/her representative) must take place before a start date is agreed. The In-year application form should be accompanied by a copy of the birth certificate and/or passport. The Schools Admissions Team in agreement with the parent/carers and the Head of School of the Academy, will arrange this meeting. Should however a parent/carer request a place at a school that has no places available, then they will be informed about the appeals process and the availability of alternative school places.

Appendix 1

Admissions Policy

Springfield Nursery

Our Aims
To ensure access and entitlement to the benefits of high-quality child centred nursery education on a fair and equitable basis.
To establish an admissions policy governed by clearly defined criteria that may be articulated to parents and other professionals.

Admission number
There are 52 spaces in nursery based on 2 sessions per day: 26 on the morning and 26 on the afternoon. The government funds children for 15 hours per week. Dependent upon parent circumstances, the government also funds some children for 30 hours per week.

Process of application
Applications for places at the nursery and will be made on the nursery application form provided and administered by Springfield Academy. Prospective children and their parents/carers are encouraged to visit the nursery before making an application.

The Nursery "Consideration" List
A consideration list will be kept by the school of names, addresses, D.O.B., telephone number and date registered of children who are interested.

No child will be placed on the consideration list until they have reached their second birthday.

The consideration list will not operate places on a "first come, first served" basis. The length of time, children are on the consideration list, in no way influences the decisions about places.

Parents will be sent an application form accompanied by an information letter.

Nursery Intake
The nursery class has a major intake in September of children who will be 4 years old during that academic year.

The September intake will be staggered over the first 2 to 3 weeks of term.

Any spare places will be allocated during the year, as they become available, providing that the child has already passed his/her third birthday.

Allocation of preferred sessions

Parents will be asked to give a preference with regards to the session options when they apply for a place. Account will be taken of any preference for session options expressed by parents, but preferences will be allocated subject to availability and are not guaranteed. If the preferred session is unavailable, the child will be offered an alternative session.

Decisions on Places

Decisions will be made by the Nursery Admissions Panel on behalf of the Academy Trust's Board of Trustees. Decisions to offer a place will be based on the criteria and procedures laid out in this admission policy. Being offered a place does not guarantee first preference with regards to session options.

Decisions will be final and there is no right of appeal.

The offer of a nursery place DOES NOT in any way mean automatic entitlement to admission to Springfield Academy.

Parents who accept a place will be expected to commit to taking up the place for the rest of the academic year.

Consideration of applications

Children will be offered a place in the nursery, for the following term, after they have reached their third birthday according to the criteria in the following order of priority.

Where fewer than the admission number are received, we will offer places to all those who have applied.

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admissions number, we will follow the EVAT Admissions criteria and applications will be considered against the oversubscription criteria set out below. After the admission of pupils with an EHC plan where the Academy is named on the statement, the criteria will be applied in the order in which they are set out below:

a) Children in Public Care (Looked after Children) or who have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (See Note 1 on page6);

b) Children whose siblings (see Note 2 on page 6) currently attend the school and who will continue to do so on the date of admission;

c) Children who live nearest the Academy measured from the front door of the home address to the main school gate, by the shortest walking route judged to be safe (lighting at regular intervals and paved/ tarmacked). This will be based on the child's permanent home address (See Note 3 on page 6). To remain consistent the Academy will measure distance using the Geographical Information System adopted by the Borough Council to measure all distance.

d) Children with very exceptional medical factors directly related to placement at one of the Academies. Applications under this criterion should be supported by written evidence from a doctor (see Note 4 on page 7).

Within the above criteria, each application is always considered very carefully on its individual needs.

Attendance and Loss of Nursery Place

If attendance and punctuality is poor or erratic the nursery teacher will talk to parents and remind them that for the child to benefit fully from nursery education, attendance needs to be regular and punctual due to the great demand for places. This conversation should be recorded and dated in the child's folder.

If after a period of two weeks attendance and punctuality remain poor, a letter will be sent to the parents inviting them to meet with the Head of School.

If, following the meeting, there is no sustained improvement in attendance within an agreed period, then the child may lose their place. Parents will be notified of the loss of place in writing.

Leavers during the Year

If a child is withdrawn by their parents from nursery during the school year, parents must give the school a minimum of 4 weeks' notice if possible. The place of a child who has been withdrawn cannot be held open for a trial period and will be automatically made available to allocate to a child on the waiting list. If parents later wish their child to return to the nursery, then they will have to re-apply for a place on the waiting list and the application will be considered according to the criteria along with all the other applications, unless there are special circumstances. The fact that a child has previously been in the nursery class, or any other nursery class, will in no way influence the decision on being offered a place.

Transfer from Nursery into Reception

All parents and carers must be made aware that a place in the nursery does not guarantee a place in the school and that they must still go through the correct Darlington admissions procedure.

The Nursery staff will liaise closely with colleagues in Reception classes to plan for a smooth transition to their chosen or allocated school. Nursery staff will send on reports and other agreed records to the school admitting the pupil as appropriate.

Nursery Admissions Oversubscription Criteria

The criteria used where applications for places are oversubscribed is set out on pages 10 and 11 (a-d).