



SPARKEN HILL
ACADEMY

Admissions Criteria 2025-2026

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**SPARKEN HILL
ACADEMY**

STANDARD RECEPTION CRITERIA – Sparken Hill Academy 2025-26

1. Procedure For Admitting Pupils To Sparken Hill Academy

- Sparken Hill Academy provides for the needs of children within the 3 to 11 age range.
- All references to 'academy' in this document refer to Sparken Hill Academy. The Academy's Published Admission Number (PAN) for 2025/ 2026 is 75.
- Pupils will be admitted at the age of 4+ without reference to ability or aptitude using the criteria set out in this policy. Admission to our Academy is not dependent on any 'voluntary' contribution.
- **Sparken Hill Academy Trust is the Admissions Authority for Sparken Hill Academy.**

2. Determined Admission Arrangements

- Applications must be made through your home local authority on the Common Application form. For Nottinghamshire residents, this can be found on the NCC website www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/learning/schools/admissions and applications should be completed by the closing date for applications as stated in the Nottinghamshire Coordinated scheme. The offer of a place will be made by the Local Authority to all parents on the 'offer day' set out in the coordinated scheme.
- All children who are allocated a place will be admitted on the first day of the autumn term. Parents have the legal right to defer beyond this point and in such cases these arrangements need to be agreed with the school on an individual basis. Parents may also request that their child takes up the place part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. Attendance in our Early Years (Foundation 1) at the Academy does not automatically guarantee a Reception (Foundation 2) place. The Academy operates a Waiting List for its intake year group in partnership with Nottinghamshire LA. This is kept and prioritised following the oversubscription criteria until the end of the autumn term.
- Children with an Education Health and Care Plan that names the Academy will be admitted.

Admission number for primary provision (age 5)

- The Academy has the following agreed admission number:

- 75 for pupils in Year R (Reception)
- All children are entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday.

Parents offered a place in reception for their child have a right to defer the date their child is admitted, or to take the place up part-time, until the child reaches compulsory school age. Places cannot be deferred beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made.

Children reach compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their 5th birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 August, 31 December and 31 March.

3. Process of Application

- Arrangements for applications for places at Sparken Hill Academy will be made in accordance with the Nottinghamshire LA's co-ordinated admission arrangements; parents resident in Nottinghamshire can apply online at:

<https://notts.cloud.servelec-synergy.com/SynergyWeb/Enquiries/Citizen/citizen.aspx/admissions-signin>

- Parents resident in other areas must apply through their home Local Authority.
- The Academy will use the Nottinghamshire LA's timetable for applications to Sparken Hill Academy each year (exact dates within the months may vary from year to year).

4. Consideration of applications

- Sparken Hill Academy will consider all applications for places at the Academy.
 - Where fewer than the published admission number(s) for the relevant year groups are received, Sparken Hill Academy will offer places to all those who have applied.
 - Any applications received after the closing date will be accepted but considered only after those received by the closing date.

5. Procedures where Sparken Hill Academy is oversubscribed

- Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admission number in any age group, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below.

6. Admission to Reception (statutory age 5) – oversubscription criteria

Sparken Hill Academy will first accept all pupils with a statutory right to a place through an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming the Academy. After the admission of these pupils, criteria will be applied for the remaining places in the order in which they are set out below:

1. **Looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those children 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.**
2. Children who live in the catchment area at the closing date for applications and who, at the time of admission, will have a sibling* attending the school
3. Other children who live in the catchment area at the closing date for applications
4. Children who live outside the catchment area and who, at the time of admission, will have a sibling* attending the school
5. Other children who live outside the catchment area

In the event of oversubscription, within any of the above criterion, preference will be given to children who live nearest to the Academy as the crow flies*.

In the event that two or more distances are exactly the same, the Academy will use a method of random allocation by lot, drawn by an independent person outside of the Academy.

* see definitions

7. Admission of children outside their normal age group

- Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.
- Parents of a summer-born child, that is, those children born from 1 April to 31

August, may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group, for example, to Reception rather than Year One.

- To request a delayed entry parents are required to make an application for their child's admission to their normal age group at the usual time in accordance with this policy and at the same time to submit a request to Sparken Hill Academy for the attention of the Chair of Governors at the registered address for admission out of the normal age group.
- Further information about the process will be provided to parents upon their request for admission outside of normal age group or by contacting the School.
- Decisions will be made by Sparken Hill Academy as the admissions authority on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.
- This will take into account parents' views, information about the child's academic, social and emotional development, where relevant their medical history and any views of a medical professional, whether they have previously been educated outside of their normal age group and whether they may have fallen in to a lower age group if the child was not born prematurely.
- The views of the Principal of the Academy must be taken in to account.
- Decisions made by Sparken Hill Academy will be clearly set out.
- When informing a parent of the decision on which year group the child should be admitted to, the reason(s) will be given.
- Where Sparken Hill Academy agrees to the parent's request for their child to be admitted to a year out of their normal age group, **it will be necessary for the parent(s) to re-apply for a place at the appropriate time, and as a consequence the child will be admitted to a relevant age group (the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school).**
- Sparken Hill Academy, in partnership with the local authority, will process the application as part of the main admissions round unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible and on the basis of determined admission arrangements only including the priority criteria when this applies.
- One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another. Upon transfer, it will be a matter for that admission authority. Decisions will be made by Sparken Hill Academy regarding the parental request for admission out of normal age group in time for parents to make an informed decision about whether their child will start school before compulsory school age.
- An application will not be given a lower priority on the basis that the child is being admitted out of their normal age group.
- Parents' statutory right to appeal against or refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied does not apply if they are offered a place at the academy, but it is not their preferred age group.

* The term 'summer born' is used to refer to children born from 1 April to 31 August.

8. Operation of Waiting Lists

- As required by the Schools Admissions Code, Sparken Hill Academy will maintain a waiting list for Reception year **until the end of the autumn term**. Applications for inclusion on a waiting list will be ranked according to our oversubscription criteria as described in paragraph 7 above.
- For in-year applications, where the Academy receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate for unsuccessful applicants. Waiting lists 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 a waiting list for the relevant year group following an unsuccessful application.
- Paragraph 2.15 of The School Admissions Code 2021 states that each added child to a school's waiting list will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria.

9. Arrangements for in-year Admissions

- The Nottinghamshire Local Authority will co-ordinate admissions for in-year applications and for applications for year groups other than the normal point(s) of entry; further details are on our website at www.sparkenhillacademy.com
- 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.
- The Notts application form for in-year applications can be found at <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/education/school-admissions/changing-school>
- If more applications are received than there are places available, the oversubscription criteria in paragraph 7 for the relevant age group shall apply. Parents whose application is refused shall be entitled to appeal.
- The LA will be kept informed of the number of vacant spaces within Year Groups (within 2 school days of a request)
- In year applications shall be prioritized for a decision – the school shall endeavor to conclude a request within 15 school days.

10. Right of Appeal

- There will be a right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel for unsuccessful applicants relating to admissions at age 5 (statutory school age) or above. The deadline for lodging appeals allows appellants at least 20 school days from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful to prepare and lodge their written appeal.
- If refused admission you should contact the Academy at the address below to lodge an appeal:

Sparken Hill Academy,
Sparken Hill, Worksop,
Notts, S80 1AW

Please mark your envelope 'Admissions Appeals'.

11. Fair Access

- Sparken Hill Academy participates in Nottinghamshire County Council's Fair Access protocol. All schools, including Voluntary Aided Schools, Trust Schools and Academies must participate in the protocol.

The purpose of the Fair Access Protocol is to ensure that vulnerable children are offered a school place as quickly as possible and to evenly spread children with additional needs across all schools in the county. The protocol only applies to mid-term applications; it does not operate when children transfer from primary school to secondary school.

12. Repeat Applications:

If your application for admission has been refused, we will not consider another application in the same school year unless there have been significant and material changes in your circumstances, or those of the Academy.

13. Fraudulent or Misleading Applications

- As an Admission Authority, we have the right to investigate any concerns we may have about an application and to withdraw the offer of a place if we consider there is evidence that a fraudulent claim has been made or misleading information provided, for example a false address was given which denied a place to a child with a stronger claim. We reserve the right to check any address and other information provided so we can apply the oversubscription criteria accurately and fairly.

14. Tie Break

If the distance criterion is not sufficient to distinguish between two applicants for the last remaining place then a lottery will be conducted by an independent person outside of the Academy.

15. Definitions

Parent

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines 'parent' to include:

- natural parents, whether they are married or not; and
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or a young person. Having parental responsibility means assuming all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority that a parent of a child has by law. People other than a child's natural parent can acquire parental responsibility.

'Looked After' children and previously 'Looked After' children

In accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989, a 'Looked After child' is defined as:

- a child who is in the care of an English Local Authority (PLAC)
- children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care **outside** of England (IAPLAC) and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted at the time an application for admission to the Academy is made (amendment in Schools Admissions Code 2021)
- a child who is being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions in accordance with section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of making an application to the Academy.
- Previously Looked After by English local authorities Children (PLAC) are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted¹ (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order). This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 and Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.
- Child arrangements orders are defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

Definition of siblings and the position of twins

Sibling:

- Sibling is defined as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, half-brothers or half-sisters, legally adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters.
- Where one child of a multiple birth can be admitted, the other child/children will also be admitted.
- *An adoption order is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. A 'child arrangements order' is an order under Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014 determining (a) with whom the child is to live, spend time or otherwise have contact and (b) when a child is to live, spend time or otherwise have contact with any person. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians)*

- **Definition of the distance to an intending pupil's home**

Within each of the criteria, priority will be given to children who live nearest to the school as the crow flies (by straight line). Distances are measured from the main administrative point at the school campus to an address point (using eastings and northings as defined by Ordnance Survey) to the child's home using the local authority's computerised distance measuring software.

Where two dwellings with the same front entrance are located on different floors of the same building, a lower floor will be regarded as being closer to the Academy than any above it.

Where two or more dwellings with the same front entrance are located on the same floor of the same building, the closest dwelling to the front door, counting clockwise, will be regarded as being closer to the Academy than any subsequent dwelling counted clockwise.

- **Home address**

The child's place of residence is taken to be the parental home, other than in the case of children fostered by a Local Authority, where either the parental address or the foster parent(s) address may be used.

Where a child spends part of the week in different homes, their place of residence will be taken to be their parent or parents' address. If a child's parents live at separate addresses, the address where the child permanently spends at least three 'school' nights (i.e. Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday) will be taken to be the place of residence.

Addresses of other relatives or friends will not be considered as the place of residence, even if the child stays there for all or part of the week. Evidence that a child's place of residence is permanent may also be sought.

The evidence should prove that a child lived at the address at the time of the application and will continue to live there after the time of admission. Informal arrangements between parents will not be taken into consideration. The designated officer may also seek proof of residence from the courts regarding parental responsibilities in this matter.

In all cases all those with parental responsibility must be in agreement with the preferences made.

In cases of applications from families of Service and Crown Personnel, the address at which the child lives (or will live) is utilised for decision making purposes so long as the parent(s) have provided evidence of this (intended) address.

Catchment Area

The map of the Catchment Area is attached. For more details, please visit <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/search-for-a-school#/details/2933>

