ADMISSIONS POLICY 2026/27

Date of last review:	September 2026	**Review period**	1 year
Owner:	Academy	**Approved**	Regional Board

Varied Admission Arrangements as approved by the DfE Regional Director

Ocean Academy Poole Admissions Policy

The following information is for admissions for the academic year 2026/27

THE ADMISSION OF STUDENTS TO OCEAN ACADEMY POOLE

This policy sets out the admission arrangements for Ocean Academy Poole. The Academy will comply with all relevant provisions of the statutory codes (the School Admissions Code and the School Admission Appeals Code) as they apply at any given time to maintained schools and academies, and with the law on admissions as it applies to publicly funded schools. Reference in the codes to admission authorities shall be deemed to be references to the South Coast Regional Board - governing body of the Academy. In particular, the Academy will take part in the Admissions Forum set up by the LA as appropriate and have regard to its advice; and will participate in the co-ordinated admission arrangements operated by the LA, including the local Fair Access Protocol.

Notwithstanding these arrangements, the Secretary of State may direct the Academy to admit a named pupil to the Academy on application from an LA. Before doing so the Secretary of State will consult the Academy.

Admission arrangements

The Academy Governors have agreed to admit 60 pupils in Year 3. These arrangements and the admissions criteria (below) are reviewed annually. When there are more applications than there are places available after the admission of students with an Education, Health and Care Plan where the Academy is named on the plan, the following criteria will be applied to determine those children that will be offered places.

The criteria are listed in priority order:

Year 3

1. Looked after children and children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order (Note 1a)
2. Children who appear to Aspirations Academies Trust to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (Note 1b)
3. Children with a sibling attending the school in the academic year of admission (Note 2)
4. Children of staff at the school:
    a) 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 is made or
    b) Where the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
5. All other children.

All categories will be ranked in order of the shortest distance between the given home address and Ocean Academy Poole measured by shortest safe walking distance (Note 3)

Tie break

If there are insufficient places to accommodate all applicants and the last two (or more) places are equal distance from the academy (up to three decimal points) or at the same address or in the same block of flats who are eligible for the remaining places, the academy will use a random allocation. Applicants will have their names drawn as lots to see who should be offered the place(s). The person drawing the names will have no involvement in the school admissions process.

NOTES

1. Looked After Children (LAC)

A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order, including those who appear to Aspirations Academies Trust to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). An adoption order is an order under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders). A 'child arrangements order' is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 as amended by Section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014. 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).

2. Siblings

Priority will be given to those who have a brother or sister attending Ocean Academy Poole at the time of admission but not application. This means that there will be no sibling connection for admission purposes for applicants for entry to Year 3 if they have a brother or sister in Year 6 at the time of application.

The definition of a brother or sister is:

- A brother or sister sharing the same parents
- Half-brother or half-sister, where two children share one common parent
- Step-brother or step-sister, where two children are related by a parent's marriage
- Adopted or foster children

In the event that the school has one place to offer and the next child on the waiting list is one of twins, triplets or other children of multiple births, the Academy will offer both twins, all triplets or children of multiple birth a place even if this means going over the published admission's number.

3. Distance

The distance from home to school is measured using the shortest, safe and practicable walking route using the centre line of roads and footpaths (excluding paths identified for the sole use of bicycles i.e. cycle ways). Roads and footpaths measured are normally public. If your property is only accessible via a private road or footpath, this road or footpath may be included in the measurement. The starting point for the measurement is taken from your home address. This has been geo located using the geocoded address point obtained from the local authority's Local Land and Property Gazetteer. The total distance measured is a combination of 2 measurements using 3 points, i) Geocoded home address point -to- ii) Centre of nearest road/footpath -to- iii) Nearest approved school access point that is for use by pupils. All measurements are obtained from the local authority's Admissions System. The GIS maps used are provided by Ordnance Survey and represent the position as at the beginning of the annual admission cycle i.e. September in the year prior to admission. Any alterations to Ordnance Survey map references, footpaths or roads added after this time will not be taken into consideration. No measurements obtained through other sources (e.g. search engines, mapping systems) will be accepted.

For applicants living on islands or residing permanently on a boat within Poole harbour, the distance measurement will be a straight line from the geocoded home address point to either
1. the nearest public landing steps at Poole Quay, or
2. a point on the mainland that the applicant proves to the satisfaction of the admission authority that he/she can access. The total distance measured is a combination of 3 measurements using 4 points:
i) Geocoded home address point to Ocean Academy
ii) Public landing steps or other approved access point on the mainland Ocean Academy
iii) Centre of nearest road/footpath to Ocean Academy
iv) Nearest approved school access point that is for use by pupils.

If an applicant advises the admission authority that the child would or could use the Sandbanks/Studland Chain Ferry in the journey to school, then the distance will be measured on that basis from the geocoded home address point and will include the distance travelled by the ferry.

If there are insufficient places to accommodate all applicants and the distance criterion is used, the school will use random allocation for applicants living an equal distance from the school (up to three decimal points) or at the same address or in the same block of flats who are eligible for the remaining places. Applicants will have their names drawn as lots to see who should be offered the place(s). The person drawing the names will have no involvement in the school admissions process.

4. Home Address

The home address where a child lives is considered to be a residential property that is the child's main or only address during term time. Applicants can be asked to provide additional evidence in order to verify addresses and/or other details provided. It is at the discretion of the admission authority what evidence is required (evidence may include, but is not limited to, GP registration, evidence of home ownership/tenancy etc.). The final decision on the home address of a child will be made by the admission authority. If any information supplied by an applicant is judged by the admission authority to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading, the admission authority may refuse to offer a place, or if already offered, may withdraw the offer.

When applying for point of entry, Ocean Academy will not accept a change of address once the National Closing Date has passed. The National Closing Date for point of entry year groups: Year 3 is 15 January 2026. This means if your moving date is after 15 January 2026, we will use your old address to categorise your application. You will need to tell us your new address so we can update your child's record. If you move house after you have submitted your application but before the National Closing Date, the main allocation will be based on your address at the closing date, and the address will be updated on any waiting list from national offer day, should you not initially have been offered a place. The relevant date for the house move is (if purchasing) exchange of contracts occurring on or before the closing date; (if renting) signed tenancy agreement which commences on or before the closing date.

5. Applications from separated Parents/Carers

Only one application can be considered for each child. Where parents/carers are separated it is essential that agreement is reached by both parties concerning the nominated preferred schools. Where a child spends part of their week with one parent and part with the other, only one address can be used. This must be the address at which the child spends most of their time during term time. Applicants can be asked to provide additional evidence in order to verify addresses and/or other details provided. It is at the discretion of the admission authority what evidence is required (evidence may include, but is not limited to, Child Benefit, GP registration, evidence of home ownership/tenancy etc.). The final decision on the home address of a child will be made by the admission authority. If any information supplied by an applicant is judged by the admission authority to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading, the admission authority may refuse to offer a place, or if already offered, may withdraw the offer.

6. Fraudulent Information

If the allocation of a place has been made on the basis of fraudulent or intentionally misleading information, the Governors reserve the right to withdraw the place. An offer of a place can be withdrawn even after the child has started at the Academy.

7. Waiting List

Applications that have not been successful will be automatically placed on the waiting list until 31st December. The waiting list is ranked using the over subscription criteria above applied in the order set out. If and when a place becomes available (for example because a family with a child at the Academy or to whom a place has been offered moves away), this will be offered to the child at the top of the list. It should be noted that children can be added to or removed from the waiting list at any time (for example because a family moves to the area) with the result that the ranking of a child already on the list may move up or down. Waiting lists are kept until 31st December and then after that the application will be treated as an In-Year Admission.

8. Pupils with Disabilities

Children with disabilities will be treated no less favourably than other applicants for admission. Disabled children will be given equal consideration of a place with others under the stated criteria for admission. The definition of disability is that contained within the Equalities Act 2010 (amended). Ocean Academy Poole will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in accordance with the Disability Rights Commission Code of Practice.

9. Late Applications

Late applications will be acknowledged and, if places are unavailable, the child will be placed on the school's waiting list in criteria order.

10. Admission of children outside their normal age group

The Academy will consider any request for a child to be admitted in a year group outside of their normal age group individually, with regard to the individual circumstances of that child. Parents should submit a written request for consideration to the Principal at Ocean Academy.

11. Independent Admissions Appeal Committee

Parents who are not offered a place for their child are entitled to an appeal constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admissions Appeals Code. Parents wishing to appeal in these circumstances should complete an appeal form available from the Academy. The form should be sent to the Clerk to the Appeal Committee, via the Academy, within 20 school working days from the notification of the decision not to admit. Ocean Academy appeals are undertaken by an independent body PJO Education Ltd.

12. In Year Admissions

The above criteria will be applied if in-year vacancies arise during the school year and there are more applicants than places.

Ocean Academy takes part in the BCP coordinated scheme.

ANNUAL PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Consultation

Ocean Academy Poole will set admission arrangements annually. Where changes are proposed to admission arrangements there will be a public consultation on these arrangements. If no changes are made to admission arrangements the Academy consultation will take place at least every 7 years.

The Consultation Period will follow the procedures laid out in the School Admissions Code.

The Academy will consult:

a) Parents of children between the ages of seven and eleven years
b) Other persons in the relevant area who in the opinion of the Academy have an interest in the proposed admissions
c) All other admission authorities for primary and secondary schools located within the relevant area
d) The local authority
e) Any adjoining neighbouring local authorities where the admission authority is the local authority. For the purposes of consultation, the Academy will publish a copy of the proposed admission arrangements on the Academy website together with the contact details of the Admissions Officer, to whom comments must be sent.

The Academy will also send, upon request, a copy of the proposed admission arrangements to any of the persons or bodies listed above inviting comment.

Determination and publication of admission arrangements

Ocean Academy Poole will determine its admission arrangements every year, even if they have not changed from previous years, by 28 February.

Publication of admission arrangements

Ocean Academy Poole will notify the appropriate bodies and publish a copy of the determined arrangements on the Academy website for the whole offer year (the academic year in which offers for places are made). The Academy will also send a copy of the full, determined arrangements to the Local Authority before 15 March.

Representations about admission arrangements

Where any of those bodies that were consulted, or that should have been consulted, make representations to the Academy about its admission arrangements, the Academy will consider such representations before determining the admission arrangements. Where the Academy has determined its admission arrangements and notified all those bodies whom it has consulted, anyone who objects to the Academy's admission arrangements can make an objection to the Schools Adjudicator. The Schools Adjudicator will consider the representation and in so doing will consult the Academy. The Academy will provide all the information that the local authority needs to compile the composite prospectus no later than 8th August, unless agreed otherwise. Those consulted have the right to ask the Academy to increase its proposed Published Admissions Number for any year. Where such a request is made, but agreement cannot be reached locally, they may ask the Secretary of State to direct the Academy to increase its proposed Published Admissions Number. The Secretary of State will consult the Academy and will then determine the Published Admission Number. In addition to the provisions above, the Schools Adjudicator may direct changes to the Academy's proposed admission arrangements and, in addition to the provisions above, the Secretary of State may direct changes to the proposed Published Admissions Number.

Proposed changes to admission arrangements by the Academy after arrangements have been published

Once the admission arrangements have been determined for a particular year and published, the Academy will propose changes only if there is a major change of circumstances. In such cases, the Academy must notify those consulted under paragraph 16 above of the proposed variation and must then apply to the Schools Adjudicator setting out:

a) the proposed changes
b) reasons for wishing to make such changes
c) any comments or objections from those entitled to object

Records of applications and admissions shall be kept by the Academy for a minimum period of one year and shall be open for inspection by the Secretary of State.

(For applications in the normal admission round only) Children or families with an exceptional medical and/or social need (see definition ii). Supporting evidence from a professional is required such as a doctor and/or consultant for medical needs or a social
worker, health visitor, housing officer, the police or probation officer for social needs. This evidence must confirm the child or family's medical or social need and why that need(s) makes it essential that the child attends this school rather than any other. If evidence is not submitted by the application deadline, the medical and/or social need cannot be considered.

(ii) Applicants will only be considered under this criterion if on the application form (online or paper) they have ticked the appropriate box explicitly indicating that they wish for their application to be considered under medical / social need. 'Medical need' does not include mild medical conditions, such as asthma or allergies. 'Social need' does not include a parent's wish that a child attends the school because of a child's aptitude or ability or because their friends attend the school or because of
routine childminding arrangements. Priority will be given to those children whose evidence establishes that they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Equally this priority will apply to children whose evidence establishes that a family member's physical or mental health or social needs mean that they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school.
Evidence must confirm the circumstances of the case and must set out why the child should attend a particular school and why no other school could meet the child's needs. Providing evidence does not guarantee that a child will be given priority at a particular school and in each case a decision will be made based on the merits of the case and whether the evidence demonstrates that a placement should be made at one particular school above any other.