



The Rutland Learning Trust

Providing outstanding education for all pupils – today and tomorrow!

World-class education and care that allows every child to achieve their potential, regardless of location, prior attainment or background.

By.....

Working Together

Sustaining Excellence

Transforming Learning

Admissions Policy 2021 Empingham CE Primary School



Introduction to the school

“Together, we RISE to the challenge”.

‘Rise up and shine, for your light has come.’

Isaiah 60.1

R – we are **ready, resilient, respectful, reflective, resourceful** and **responsible** learners

I – we are **inclusive**; supporting each other and celebrating difference

S – we **strive** for **success** in the challenges we face

E – we **engage** with our learning and our social responsibilities

Our Vision and Values are at the core of everything we do. They underpin our teaching and learning and provide an environment which prepare our children to be confident, happy and successful individuals, who will make a positive contribution to their world.

This is the foundation upon which our school aims, values and ethos are based and that we aspire to share with everyone in our community.

Our Christian Values

We show reverence to God through our core values and love towards others based on the Christian Story and the teachings of Jesus.

We work to encourage and demonstrate our core values:

Endurance Hope Friendship
Forgiveness Trust Compassion

Planned Admission Number

The Planned Admission Number (PAN) for first-time admission to Reception in this school is:	13
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Administering School Admission Applications

1. Starting Primary School in September 2021

A child normally starts primary school at the beginning of the term after their fifth birthday – this is the start of compulsory school age.

Empingham CE Primary School will admit pupils at the beginning of the academic year in which their fifth birthday falls – that is, children may be admitted below compulsory school age. This means that pupils who were born between 1 September 2016 and 31 August 2017 may start school in September 2021.

When admitting children below compulsory school age:

- a) these arrangements do not apply to those being admitted for nursery provision including nursery provision delivered in a co-located children's centre;
- b) parents of children who are admitted for nursery provision must apply for a place at the school if they want their child to transfer to the reception class. Separate admission arrangements are published for entry to the nursery;
- c) attendance at the on-site nursery does not guarantee admission to the school;
- d) parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year. In addition, parents of summer born children may request that their child is admitted out of their normal age group (see Section 3); and
- e) parents can request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

The local authority (LA) has responsibility to co-ordinate the primary school admissions process. It also acts as a central point of contact for all applications for a primary school place to start in September 2021. This ensures a common timetable, common application form and common date of allocation for the benefit of all parents and children. However, the Rutland Learning Trust is the admission authority and will apply their own admission arrangements to applications received for their school.

These admission arrangements support the guidance given in the School Admissions Code which states: -

“While parents may express a preference for any state funded school – regardless of whether it is in the local authority area in which they live – admission authorities must not give any guarantees that the preference will be met.”

Decisions to offer or refuse admission will not be made by one individual in the admission authority. An admissions committee established by the governing body will make such decisions.

Such principles are applied equally to in-year admissions, in that the head teacher or other school staff will not give parents an expectation that their application will be successful, or tell them that their child has been given a place at the school, before an offer of a place has been made formally by the admission authority.

2. Applications

For normal round admissions (those starting primary school for the first time) the form used to collect details about the child and the family is available both online and in hard copy (i.e. a printed form on paper) and is called the ‘Application Form’. In some instances, supporting documentation is required to accompany the application form. Applications will only be considered as complete when both the completed application form and all supporting documentation, as appropriate, have been received by the local authority.

Parents have a statutory right to express a preference for any school they choose, though no guarantee of an offer of a place at a particular school can be made.

It is not a requirement that applications must include a preference for the child’s catchment area school, if applicable. However, if a place cannot be offered at any of the preferred schools on the application, a place will be offered at the nearest school to the child’s home address that has a place available after all allocations have been made. A place may not be offered at the catchment school if the catchment school is full.

Once the closing date for applications has passed, preferences cannot be changed without a genuine reason for doing so, for example, if the family has recently moved address. If changes to preferences are required then a new application must be submitted which will then be classed as ‘late’ (see Section 10) due to being submitted after the closing date.

3. Delaying a child’s admission to school (deferred entry)

If a parent prefers their child not to start primary school at the beginning of the academic year in which the child’s fifth birthday falls, but chooses instead to wait a little longer, then this is acceptable as long as the child has started school by the beginning of the term after their fifth birthday and within the academic year. In such cases, an application form must still be submitted within the normal admissions round but the parent should state that they wish to express a preference for deferred entry. Any place offered should still be accepted within the normal response time (see Section 7) and the place will be held open for that child but only up to the end of that academic year. A parent that has

expressed a preference to defer entry for their child will still be eligible to access funded education for 4 year olds in private or voluntary sector provision and as such will be benefiting from an offer of education.

With respect to summer born children (born between 1 April and 31 August), compulsory education does not apply until the beginning of the following academic year although deferring entry beyond the 'normal' academic year of entry would normally comprise entry straight into Year 1 and in such cases a place would not be held for the child and the parent would have to submit an application for an 'in-year' place for Year 1. A parent may request, alongside their application form, that their child is admitted into the Reception year group in the following year, which would mean the child is admitted outside their normal age group. Such a request would have to be considered by the school and a decision made based on the circumstances of each individual case. This will include taking account of:

- the parent's 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 views of the head teacher.

The admission authority cannot hold a place for a child beyond the academic year and if it is agreed that a child can be admitted outside their normal year group into the Reception class the following year, the current application would be withdrawn and an application would need to be made as part of the normal round for the following year. Even if a place has been offered for the previous September, there is no guarantee that a place will be available for the following September.

Parents wishing to seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group must contact their home local authority for guidance on the procedure to follow.

4. Starting school before compulsory school age

It is not Empingham CE Primary Schools policy to admit a child to school before the beginning of the academic year in which their fifth birthday falls. This policy applies regardless of academic ability.

5. Timetable

The Rutland Learning Trust operates a 6 term year and term dates are published on the schools website at <https://www.empinghamprimaryschool.co.uk/term-dates/>

Rutland's timetable for first-time primary school admission applications for September 2021 is as follows: -

*NB. No school may confirm an offer of a place to an applicant until after the offer date. It is important to remember that it is the local authority that makes the offer as part of the coordinated admissions process.

6. Oversubscription criteria for Empingham CE Primary School

In the case of oversubscription, the following criteria will be applied in priority order to rank the applications and determine which children will be offered a place: -

Criterion 1 – Child Looked After / Previously Child Looked After

Where the child is a child looked after or was previously a child looked after (previously looked after refers to a child who was looked after but ceased to be so after they were adopted, or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).

Criterion 2 – Catchment Area

Where the child's place of residence is within the catchment area of the school. For Empingham CE Primary School this is the villages of Empingham and Whitwell.

- The place of residence is determined to be the address of the parent or carer with whom the child spends the majority of time as a child of a family during term-time. If clarification is required regarding our catchment area, applicants should contact the local authority for further details. If the child spends equal time with each parent/carers, the parents/carers must reach agreement as to which address will be classed as the child's place of residence for the application form. If agreement cannot be reached, the application received from the parent/carers in receipt of child benefit would be the application to be processed. Proof of receipt of child benefit would need to be provided.

Criterion 3 – Sibling

Where there is already a sibling at the school who is expected to be on roll at the school at the time of admission of the younger sibling;

- a) Sibling is defined as a child of the family, sharing a parent by birth or adoption or living at the same address at the time of application and until and including the date of the offer letter.
- b) In the case of same age siblings, where there are insufficient places available to admit the children, the school will be authorised to exceed its Published Admission Number to allow admission of the subsequent child, (see Section 18 regarding infant class sizes). The above paragraph refers to twins but would also apply to triplets, children from other multiple births or siblings in the same age cohort.

Criterion 4 – Special Need

Where a child has a special educational or medical need or there is a family/carer need;

- a) In order to be allocated a place under this criterion, supporting evidence is required, which must include the particular reasons why the school is the most suitable for the child and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. Supporting evidence could be in the form of:
 - i. special educational need which is not defined in an Education, Health and Care Plan but which still requires support by written evidence from a GP, educational psychologist, speech therapist or other recognised professional;
 - ii. medical need should be supported by written evidence from a GP, educational psychologist, speech therapist or other recognised professional;
 - iii. family/carer need should be supported in writing by an appropriate professional, eg, a GP, health visitor or other recognised professional,
- b) This criterion is not intended to discriminate against or disadvantage children with special educational needs or disabilities.

Criterion 5 - Distance

Pupils who live nearest the school by distance;

- a) Distance is measured from the centre point¹ of the child's place of residence to the centre point of the main school building. The route is defined as a driving route² or safe walking route, whichever is the shorter. Distance is measured using a computerised mapping system.
- b) In the event two or more addresses have the same computerised distance measurement, a representative of the local authority will visit the locations to determine which address is closest to the school in question. Distances will then be measured by the representative physically travelling a route from the front door of the child's home address (including flats) to the main entrance of the main school building, with these distances overriding those of the computerised system.

It should be noted that where over-subscription results in the PAN being reached within one of the five criteria then sub-prioritisation within criteria will take place. For example, if there are 22 applicants for a PAN of 20, all of which are in catchment, then sibling within catchment will take precedence, followed by special need within catchment, followed by distance within catchment.

¹ The centre point of any location is determined by data taken from the National Land and Property Gazetteer.

² Routes follow maps supplied by the Ordnance Survey as part of the Integrated Transport Network dataset.

If the PAN has been reached for all of the schools named on the application form and no offer can be made for a preferred school, then a place will be offered at the next nearest school to the child's home address with a place available (which may or may not be a catchment school). In the situation where all schools in the area have reached their PAN, then reference will be made by the local authority to Fair Access guidance.

7. Accepting the offer of a place

Following the offer of a place by the local authority, the applicant will be required to indicate acceptance, in writing to the local authority, within 14 days of the date of the offer letter. If a parent has not responded to the offer of a place within this time limit, the local authority will remind the parent of the need to respond within a further seven days. Continued lack of response will result in the local authority, on behalf of The Rutland Learning Trust, withdrawing the offer (see Section 12).

8. Right of appeal

In the case where an application is declined due to oversubscription, all parents will be informed of their right to appeal against the decision made. All appeals must be heard by an independent panel, operate within legislation and conform to the procedures laid down in the School Admission Appeals Code (February 2012). The panel must also have regard to the implications of other legislation cited in the School Admission Appeals Code. This system is in place to provide an independent, impartial and informal forum for parents and the admission authority concerned to present their respective cases and to be confident that they will be given a fair hearing.

The appeal panel weighs up all the evidence presented to them carefully and objectively before reaching a final decision on the appeal. Empingham CE Primary School will admit a child whose parents have won an appeal. If the schools wants to challenge the decision of the appeal panel, it will be required to seek judicial review.

9. Waiting Lists

The Rutland Learning Trust operates a waiting list for any oversubscribed Trust schools. Waiting lists must be clear, fair and objective and must not give priority to children based on the date either their application was received or their name was added to the list – that is, waiting lists cannot be administered on a 'first come, first served' basis. In the case of a place becoming available the oversubscription criteria will be applied to all those on the list and a place allocated accordingly. All applications declined through the oversubscription process will be given the opportunity to be placed on the waiting list. Being placed on the waiting list does not remove an applicant's right to appeal.

In the case where a place becomes available before appeals are heard, the admission authority will allocate a place from the waiting list based on the oversubscription criteria. Should the place be allocated to a child whose parents are in the process of appealing then they may accept the place and withdraw the appeal.

Waiting lists will be maintained for the whole of the academic year for which the original application was accepted. If a parent would like their child's name to remain on the waiting list for the school beyond the academic year, a new in-year application must be made.

10. Applications received after the closing date

The closing date for applications is 15 January 2021. Applications received by this date will be considered and processed within the first admissions round with offers being sent out on national offer day. Applications received after the closing date will be held as pending and processed within the second offer round in May.

11. Requests to reserve a school place

Admission authorities are not able to reserve school places for children whose parents may, or may not, decide to apply for a place later.

12. Withdrawing offers of places

Once an offer of a school place has been made, the Rutland Learning Trust will only withdraw that offer in the following circumstances:

a) when a parent has failed to respond to an offer within a reasonable time;

These arrangements define a reasonable time as 14 days from the date of the offer letter, inclusive. If a parent has not responded to the offer of a place within this time limit, the admission authority will remind the parent of the need to respond within a further seven days.

b) when the place was offered on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent;

c) when a place was offered in error.

A school will not withdraw a place once a child has started at the school, except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In deciding whether to withdraw the place, the length of time that the child has been at the school will be taken into account. For example, it might be considered appropriate to withdraw the place if the child has been at the school for less than one school term (Rutland County Council term). Where a place is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, the application will be reconsidered and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.

13. Admission of a child into a year group other than that normally associated with their age

With the exception of delayed entry, (see Section 3), the admission authority will only admit children outside of their chronological (age) year group in exceptional circumstances. Such cases must be approved by the local authority subject to the

conditions defined within the local authority guidance document, "Admission of children outside their normal age group". Decisions will be made based on the circumstances of each individual case.

14. Children with challenging behaviour

The admission authority will not refuse to admit children in or outside the normal admissions round on the basis of their poor behaviour elsewhere (unless the child has been excluded twice, see Section 15) or make subjective judgements as to the suitability of certain children for schools. There is a Fair Access Protocol in place, agreed with schools within Rutland, to ensure that – outside the normal admissions round – unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible.

The DfE provides no definition within its School Admissions Code of what it considers to be a "pupil with challenging behaviour".

15. Children who have been permanently excluded twice

Where a child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools, a parent can still express a preference for a school place, but the requirement to comply with that preference is removed for a period of two years from the date on which the latest exclusion took place. This does not apply to:

- a) children with an Education, Health and Care Plan;
- b) children who were below the compulsory school age when excluded;
- c) children who were reinstated following a permanent exclusion or who would have been had it been practicable to do so.

A permanent exclusion is regarded as taking effect from the first school day the headteacher has told the child not to attend school.

16. Children **with** an Education, Health and Care Plan

There is not a requirement for the admissions process to be followed as the special educational needs team will co-ordinate the school admission.

A child's parent or a young person has the right to request a particular school, college or other setting (Section 33 & 39 of the Children and Family Act 2014). The local authority will consult with the named school which must comply with the expressed preference unless:

- a) it would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or special educational needs of the child or young person concerned;
- or

the attendance of the child or young person at the named school would be incompatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources.

17. Children without an Education Health and Care Plan who require special educational needs support

The School Admissions Code requires children and young people with special educational needs to be treated fairly.

Admission authorities have a statutory requirement that children and young people who do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan:

- a) must have their applications from parents of children and young people considered on the basis of the school's published oversubscription criteria as part of normal admissions procedures;
- b) must not refuse to admit a child or young person because they do not feel able to cater for their needs;
- c) must not refuse to admit a child or young person on the grounds that they do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

18. Infant Class Sizes

Infant classes (those where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6, or 7 during the school year) must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single school teacher. The admission authority must, therefore, refuse admission to Empingham CE Primary School if admission of an additional child to an infant class would result in the class being in breach of infant class size legislation and result in the school having to take 'qualifying' measures, e.g., employ another teacher.

The infant class size legislation makes allowance for the entry of an additional child in very limited circumstances. These children will remain an 'excepted pupil' for the time they are in an infant class or until the numbers fall back to the infant class size limit. The 'excepted children' are:

- a) children admitted outside the normal admissions round with an Education, Health and Care Plan specifying a school;
- b) children looked after and children previously looked after admitted outside the normal admissions round;
- c) children admitted, after initial allocation of places on the offer date, because of a procedural error made by the admission authority or local authority in the original application process;
- d) children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal;

- e) children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance;
- f) children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round;
- g) children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil;
- h) children with special educational needs who are normally taught in a special educational needs unit attached to the school, or registered at a special school, who attend some infant classes within the mainstream school.

19. Children of UK Service personnel (UK Armed Forces)

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting to their area, or crown servants returning from overseas to live in that area, the admission authority will:

- a) allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area, if the application is accompanied by an official letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) that declares a relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address. (For in-year admissions, the place must be taken up no later than 30 school days following the offer. See Section 20.)
- b) ensure that arrangements in their area support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children.

The admission authority will not refuse a service child a place because the family does not currently live in the local authority area, or reserve blocks of places for these children.

20. In-Year Admissions - applications outside the normal admissions round

For in year admissions applications should be made directly to the school.

The admission authority will only allocate places in advance of a family moving into the area where suitable confirmation of residence, such as proof of completion of contracts for house purchase or a letting agreement, has been received. If there are places available but more applicants than places, then the published oversubscription criteria will be applied. If a place cannot be offered, the applicant will be given the opportunity to add the child's name to the school's waiting list and given details of their right to appeal against the decline of a place.

All offers of a place for an in-year admission must be accepted or refused within 14 days of the date of the offer letter. If a parent has not responded to the offer of a place within this time limit, the admission authority will remind the parent of the need to respond within a further seven days. Continued lack of response will result in the admission authority withdrawing the offer (see Section 12).

Once offered, the place must be taken up no later than 30 school days following the offer. Failure to take up the place within this timescale will result in the offer being withdrawn.

21. Point of Contact

For further information regarding these arrangements, please contact:

Admissions Administrator
The Rutland Learning Trust School Admissions
c/o Cottesmore Academy
Kendrew Barracks
Cottesmore
Rutland LE15 6BT

Email admissions@rltschools.com