ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR BIDDULPH HIGH SCHOOL FOR SEPTEMBER 2027-2028

Admissions Authority

1. This document sets out the admission arrangements for Biddulph High School.

2. Biddulph High School is part of the Potteries Educational Trust and converted to an academy on 1st September 2011.

3. The Local Governing Body are the Admissions Authority for Biddulph High School.

Aims

4. This policy is designed to ensure there is an open and fair admissions procedure for all applicants and to help guide parents and their children through the application process. The school's admissions arrangements will not disadvantage unfairly, either directly or indirectly, any child from a particular social or racial group, or any child with a disability or special educational needs, and other school policies do not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child.

5. This policy details the school's arrangements for admissions and will apply to all admissions from September 2027 to July 2028. This includes in-year admissions within this period.

6. The Local Governing Body will consult on the admissions arrangements at least once every seven years or earlier, if there are proposed changes to the admission arrangements which require consultation.

7. This policy will be reviewed annually or updated in the following circumstances:

Changes in legislation and / or government guidance
As a result of any other significant change or event
As the result of a decision of the office of the Schools' Adjudicator
Admissions arrangements will be set annually. This will happen even if there are no changes from previous years and a consultation is not required.

Published Admissions Number

8. Biddulph High School has a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 211 for entry into Year 9 in September 2027.

9. This number may be exceeded at the discretion of the Local Governing Body, but they are not obliged to accept pupils in excess of this number unless parents have won their case at an Independent Appeal Panel.

10. Biddulph High School may accept pupils above their published admission number for any specific year without consultation, after notifying the Local Authority.

How to apply for Year 9 place for September 2027

11. The allocation of places at Biddulph High School will be co-ordinated by Staffordshire County Council. To apply you need to complete Staffordshire County Council's admissions application process and all submissions must be sent directly to them by formal deadline of 31 October 2025.

Co-ordinated scheme 2027-28

12. Please refer to www.staffordshire.gov.uk for information regarding co-ordinated admissions to secondary schools 2027-28.

13. Advice on the procedures including appeals should be taken from the Staffordshire Local Authority website www.staffordshire.gov.uk. The Local Authority website states that parents have the right to express a preference for the school that they wish their child to attend however there is no guarantee of a place being offered at their preferred school.

Oversubscription Criteria

14. It is Biddulph High School's policy to try and meet parents' wishes where possible, however in some cases there may be more applications for Biddulph High School than there are places available.

15. In accordance with legislation, after applicants with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan* which names the school have been admitted, priority for any remaining places will be given to those children who meet the oversubscription criteria set out in the priority order below. If there is oversubscription within a criterion and all children within that criterion cannot be admitted within the PAN of 211, places will be allocated in accordance with the remaining criteria. For example, if all children within criterion 4 cannot be accommodated, children within this criterion will be prioritised in accordance with criterion 5 () and 6 ().

16. Criteria are:

Children in care or children who ceased to be in care because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order), 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.

Children living within Biddulph High School's catchment area**.

Children who have an elder sibling in attendance at Biddulph High School and who will still be attending the school at the proposed admission date***

Children who attend James Bateman Middle School or Woodhouse Academy - defined as major contributory middle schools

Children of staff at Biddulph High School where the member of staff has been:

- employed for two or more years at the time of application or
- recruited to fill a vacancy for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage

Children with exceptional medical or social needs who satisfy both of the following tests:.
Test 1: the child is distinguished from the great majority of applicants either on their own medical grounds or by other exceptional circumstances.
Medical grounds must be supported by a medical report (obtained by the applicant and provided at the point of application). This report must clearly justify, for health reasons only, why it is better for the child's health to attend Biddulph High School rather than any other school.
Exceptional circumstances must relate to the choice of school and the individual child, i.e. the circumstances of the child, not the economic or social circumstances of the parent/carer. It should be supported by a professional report (obtained by the applicant and provided at the point of application), e.g. social worker. This report must clearly justify why it is better for the child to attend Biddulph High School rather than any other school.

and
Test 2: the child would suffer hardship if they were unable to attend Biddulph High School. Hardship means severe suffering of any kind, not merely difficulty or inconvenience, which is likely to be experienced as a result of the child attending a different school. Applicants must provide detailed information about both the type and severity of any likely hardship at the time of application.

Children arranged in order of priority according to how near their home addresses is to the main gate of the school on Conway Road, determined by a straight-line measurement as calculated by the local authority's geographical information system. ****

General Notes

17. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide any supportive information required for the application to be assessed against the published admissions criteria, the Local Governing Body will not seek to obtain this information on behalf of the applicant.

18. The home address is usually considered to be the child's, along with their parent's main and genuine principal place of residence at the time of the allocation of places, i.e. where they are normally and regularly living. If a child is resident with friends or relatives (for reasons other than legal guardianship), the friends or relatives' address will not be considered for allocation.

19. Where a child lives at two different addresses, the 'home' address will be determined as the address at which the child resides for the majority of school nights e.g. 3 out of 5 nights. School nights are Sunday night to Thursday night inclusive. In a case where the child spends an equal number of school nights at each address, then the address where the child benefit is paid will be used. Where no child benefit is claimed the address used to register the child with a doctor will be used.

20. If a place is offered on the basis of an address that is subsequently found to be different from a child's normal and permanent home address, then that place is likely to be withdrawn.

21. It is expected that parents will agree on school places before an application is made, and it may be necessary to request evidence from you to confirm that this is the case. The Local Governing Body is not in a position to intervene in disputes between parents over school applications and will request that these are resolved privately.

Waiting lists for Normal Point of Entry

22. If your child has not been offered a place, your child's name will be automatically kept on the waiting list of Biddulph High School by the Local Authority and then transferred to Biddulph High School by 31 December of the year of admission.

23. Waiting lists will be kept for the duration of the time at Biddulph High School for each cohort. If places become available after this date, they will be offered according to the child at the top of the waiting list.

24. The waiting list is held in accordance with the published admissions criteria and that a child's position on a waiting list is not fixed and is subject to change during the year i.e. they can go up or down the list since each added child will require the list to ranked again in line with the oversubscription criteria.

25. Inclusion on a school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available at the preferred school.

26. Children who are subject of a direction by a local authority to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with the fair access protocol will take precedence over those on the waiting list.

Late applications

27. Preferences received after the closing date will be considered alongside those applicants who applied on time wherever possible. Where it is not practical because places have already been allocated, or are shortly to be allocated, then late preferences will be considered only after those that were made before this point.

28. A late application does not affect the right of appeal or the right to be placed on a school's waiting list.

Appeal Process

29. You have the right of appeal under the School Standards & Framework Act 1998 and in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021, against the refusal of a place at any of the schools for which you have applied. If you wish to appeal, you must contact the school, within a few days of receiving the refusal, to obtain the procedure and the date by which an appeal must be received by them. The appeal will be conducted by an independent appeal panel.

Fair Access Protocol

30. The school complies with Staffordshire County Council's Fair Access Protocol to allocate places to vulnerable and other children in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021. Admitting pupils under the protocol may require the school to admit above the planned admission number for the relevant year group. Students included in the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those held on the waiting list.

Repeat Applications

31. Parents do not have the right to a second appeal in respect of the same school for the same academic year unless, in exceptional circumstances, the local authority has accepted a second application from the appellant because of a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school but still refused admission.

Admission Outside of the Normal Age Group

32. Parents may seek to apply for their child's admission to school outside of their normal age group, for example if the child is exceptionally gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

These parents will need to make an application alongside children applying at the normal age which should explain why it is in the child's best interest to be admitted outside of their normal age which may include information such as professional evidence as to why this is the case and why an exception should be made in the case of the child.

33. A decision as to whether this is an appropriate course of action will be made by the Local Governing Body who will take into account the circumstances of the case and views of the Headteacher. Parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular year group.

In-Year Admissions Arrangements

34. Parents or carers who are seeking their child to be admitted to Biddulph High School 'in year', may make an application directly to Biddulph High School using the appropriate application form. This application will be processed in line with the procedure outlined in the determined admission arrangements.

35. Where a year group in the school is at the level of the published admission number (PAN) applicable to the age group, the child will be added to the waiting list (see paragraphs 22-26) in line with the oversubscription criteria (see paragraphs 14-16).

36. Parents and carers need to be aware that in the case of transfers between local schools, **any date set for joining the new school may be after the next term or half term holiday** and those parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that their child continues to receive appropriate education in the interim.

37. Parents and carers moving to the area, or those who wish to move their child to the school, should contact the school directly and email us your proof of address:
    - We need 2 documents showing your current address. At least one of them needs to be a council tax bill, utility bill, solicitor's letter upon completion (exchange of contracts not accepted) or a signed tenancy agreement.
    - If you're moving, we also need proof of your new address. This should be either a tenancy agreement showing the start date of the tenancy or a solicitor's letter confirming the completion date.
    - We won't use the new address until we have proof that the child is living there permanently. If you're moving to a rented property, send us evidence that you've sold or are in the process of selling your current property, or that your current lease agreement has ended.

38. Within exceptional circumstances the Local Governing Body may refuse to admit a child where there are places available, on the grounds that admission would cause prejudice to the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources.

39. Parents and carers whose application is turned down shall be advised that they are entitled to appeal.

Withdrawing an offer or a place

40. The offer of a place will not be withdrawn unless it has been offered in error, a parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application. Where the parent has not responded to the offer, the school will give the parent a further opportunity to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not. Where an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, the application will be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if an offer is refused.

Post-16 admission criteria

41. Biddulph High School sixth form has an agreed admission number of 120 students and will accordingly admit at least 120 students in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are received. Where the number of applications exceeds 120, applications will be considered in accordance with the criteria in paragraph 47. The Local Governing Body can agree to take above this number in exceptional circumstances.

42. The school will provide for the admission or progression of students through internal admissions and for students from external admissions.

43. Normally, both internal and external students wishing to enter the sixth form will be expected to have met the minimum academic entry requirements for their preferred options in the sixth form.

44. In addition to the sixth form's minimum academic entry requirements students will need to satisfy minimum entrance requirements to the courses for which they are applying. Students should refer to the course information booklet for the minimum grades for each subject. If either internal or external applicants fail to meet the minimum course requirements, they may be given the option of pursuing any alternative courses for which they do meet the minimum academic requirements.

45. Biddulph High School sixth form has high expectations of behaviour, attendance and work ethic from all of its students. Failure to meet these expectations will be addressed thorough the sixth form's behaviour policy.

Procedures where the school is oversubscribed in admissions to Year 12

46. When the Sixth Form is undersubscribed, all internal applicants meeting entry requirements specified in paragraphs 43 and 44 will be admitted.

47. For external applicants, where the sixth form has applications in excess of the agreed admission number, places will be given to students that meet the oversubscription criteria set out in the priority order below. If there is oversubscription within a criterion and all children within that criterion cannot be admitted within the PAN of 120, places will be allocated in accordance with the remaining criteria. For example, if

all children within criterion 3 cannot be accommodated, children within this criterion will be prioritised in accordance with criterion 4 () and 5 ().

48. In accordance with legislation, after applicants with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan* which names the school have been admitted, priority for any remaining places will be given to those children who meet the oversubscription criteria set out in the priority order below.

49. Criteria are:

1. Children in care or children who ceased to be in care because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order), 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 living within Biddulph High School's catchment area**.

3. Children who have an elder sibling in attendance at Biddulph High School and who will still be attending the school at the proposed admission date***

4. Children of staff at Biddulph High School where the member of staff has been:
    - employed for two or more years at the time of application or
    - recruited to fill a vacancy for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage

5. Children with exceptional medical or social needs who satisfy both of the following tests:

- Test 1: the child is distinguished from the great majority of applicants either on their own medical grounds or by other exceptional circumstances.
  Medical grounds must be supported by a medical report (obtained by the applicant and provided at the point of application). This report must clearly justify, for health reasons only, why it is better for the child's health to attend Biddulph High School rather than any other school.
  Exceptional circumstances must relate to the choice of school and the individual child, i.e. the circumstances of the child, not the economic or social circumstances of the parent/carer. It should be supported by a professional report (obtained by the applicant and provided at the point of application), e.g. social worker. This report must clearly justify why it is better for the child to attend Biddulph High School rather than any other school.

  and

- Test 2: the child would suffer hardship if they were unable to attend Biddulph High School.
  Hardship means severe suffering of any kind, not merely difficulty or inconvenience, which is likely

to be experienced as a result of the child attending a different school. Applicants must provide detailed information about both the type and severity of any likely hardship at the time of application.

6. Children arranged in order of priority according to how near their home addresses is to the main gate of the school on Conway Road, determined by a straight-line measurement as calculated by the local authority's geographical information system. ****

50. There will be a right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel for students refused admission.

Notes

**An Education, Health and Care Plan is a plan made by the local authority under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 specifying the special education, health and social care provision required for that child. In accordance with legislation, children who have an education, health and care plan (EHCP) that names Biddulph High School as being the most appropriate to meet the child's needs must be admitted to that school. This will reduce the number of places available to other applicants.*

*** Copies of the school catchment area are available to download from the from the Local Authority:https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Admissions-primary/Catchment-areas.aspx*

**** (For admission purposes, a sibling is a child who lives 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 by a common parent or are unrelated children who live at the same address, whose parents live as partners.)*

***** If we cannot distinguish between applicants using the criteria listed, such as in the case of children who live in the same block of flats, then the child or children who will be offered the available spaces will be randomly selected. This process will be independently verified.*
School uses a geographical information system (GIS) to calculate home to school distances in miles. The measurement is calculated using Ordnance Survey (OS) data from an applicant's home address to the main front gate of the school. The coordinates of an applicant's home address are determined and provided by the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and OS address point data.

Appendix A

Timetable for coordinated admission scheme for normal age entry

Local Authority timelines	Key Dates
Closing date - all applications to be submitted to School Admissions and Transport Service	31 October 2026
Applications sent to and received from other Local Authorities	8 November 2026
Application details and supporting documentation sent to academies, aided and foundation schools	26 November 2026
Academies, Aided and Foundation schools forward lists of all preferences ranked in accordance with criteria to School Admissions and Transport Service	10 December 2026
Provisional offers shared between Local Authorities	6 January 2027
Final offers exchanged with other Local Authorities	12 February 2027
Parents notified of Secondary School place outcomes	3 March 2027
Places offered to children who have made late applications that can not be considered within above timescales and to those included on oversubscribed waiting lists.	2 weeks of above