



**Admissions Policy
for Academic Year 2026/27**

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1. Introduction

- a) This Admission Policy is part of the admission arrangements for St. Martin's School Brentwood (SMS), a secondary school, which is part of Discovery Educational Trust (DET), a multi-academy trust.
- b) SMS is a co-educational, non-selective, publicly-funded school that welcomes applications for the admission of children regardless of aptitude, ability, special educational or other needs, disabilities or other protected characteristics.
- c) SMS admits children into Year 7, who will usually remain on the roll throughout their compulsory education through to Year 11. SMS has a Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13), which caters for transferring Year 11 pupils and external candidates. The criteria for admission to Year 12 are set out in this Policy.
- d) The 'admission authority' for SMS is DET, via its Trust Board (TB). The SMS Local School Committee (LSC) has responsibility, on behalf of DET's TB, for monitoring the application of this Policy to ensure fairness and consistency.
- e) In education law and this Policy, a 'parent' means a natural or adoptive parent of a child (irrespective of whether they have care of, contact with or parental responsibility for, the child), as well as other persons who are not the natural or adoptive parent of the child but who have care of and/or parental responsibility for them.

2. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

- a) Children with an EHCP are not admitted under this Policy. They are admitted under separate statutory processes set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25. Their EHCPs are maintained by their home Local Authority, which is responsible for making decisions as to which educational setting will be named therein as the one that the child will attend.
- b) Where the parents of a child with an EHCP want them to be educated at SMS, they must discuss this with the Special Educational Needs (SEN) team at their home Local Authority. The home Local Authority may then consult SMS on its suitability and compatibility, before deciding whether or not to name it in the child's EHCP.
- c) Where SMS is named in an EHCP, it will admit the child. Where this happens in the 'normal admission round' (i.e. admission to Year 7 or Year 12 at the start of September), their place will be allocated before others within the Published Admission Number (PAN), reducing the number remaining. Where this happens at any other time, they will be admitted regardless of numbers.

3. Published Admission Number (PAN) for Year 7

- a) The PAN for Year 7 is **292**.

4. Aptitude Places for Year 7

SMS allocates up to 10% of the places available in the PAN for Year 7 (up to 29 places) to children who demonstrate an aptitude for sport and music.

Typically, up to 15 places will be allocated to children, who demonstrate an aptitude for sport and, typically, up to 14 places will be allocated to children, who demonstrate an aptitude for music. In circumstances where there are fewer qualifying children in either aptitude group, the number of places in the other aptitude group will be increased by the shortfall. For example, if only ten children meet the qualifying threshold in music, up to 19 places will then be available to children meeting the qualifying criteria in sport.

Where fewer than 29 children overall qualify for an aptitude place, all remaining places will be allocated in accordance with the remaining oversubscription criteria.

The aptitude tests are designed to test the child's aptitude for learning in sport or music in the future, with a threshold having been set to determine qualification for a place. The test is designed not to determine the child's ability in a particular subject and no prior knowledge, experience or training will be considered in the qualification process.

Qualification for an aptitude place does not mean that a child will be allocated a place. A place in either the sport aptitude group or music aptitude group will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria below. Children not qualifying for an aptitude place will be considered in the next oversubscription criterion applicable to them.

Where a parent wishes for their child to sit an aptitude test, they must complete the 'Request for Aptitude Testing Form' and return this via the online application platform or to Miss Neal, Admissions Manager, St Martin's School, Hanging Hill Lane, Hutton, Brentwood, Essex, CM13 2HG or by email to sneal@st-martins.essex.sch.uk by the deadline stated on the 'Request for Aptitude Testing Form'.

Parents can apply for their child's aptitude to be tested in one subject only. Parents will then be notified by SMS of the details and date of the test. Tests will be held during the Autumn term.

The tests will be accessible to children with special educational needs and disabilities and will be designed to provide an accurate reflection of the child's aptitude, irrespective of sex, race or disability.

Children sitting the aptitude test in either subject will be ranked according to their score. Where there are one or more children with the same score, the ranked position for qualification for those children will be determined by random allocation supervised by someone, who is independent of SMS.

Once the outcome of the tests is known, parents will be notified as to whether their child has qualified for an aptitude place in advance of the closing date for secondary applications on 31 October. This will enable parents to make an informed decision on school choices.

Sport aptitude testing

The aptitude test will measure the aptitude of a child across the following four areas: agility, power, speed and cardiovascular fitness. All children will also take part in a sporting activity

designed to be new to all children taking part in the test, and is designed to measure a child's potential for sporting aptitude.

The test will be administered by relevant qualified SMS staff and overseen by a DET Trustee or a Local Governor from another school, independent of SMS.

The test is designed to test the potential for the learning of sport, and no previous or current sporting training will be considered as part of the scoring process. Children will not need to prepare for the test and no prior knowledge, experience or training of any sport is required or will be taken into consideration when scoring.

Music aptitude testing

Children sitting the musical aptitude test will be tested in four areas: pitch, melody, improvisation and rhythm. The test will be administered by relevant qualified SMS staff and overseen by a DET Trustee or a Local Governor from another school, independent of SMS.

The test is designed to test the potential for the learning of music, and no previous or current musical knowledge, experience or training will be considered as part of the scoring process. Children will not need to prepare for the test and no prior knowledge, experience or training of music is required or will be taken into consideration when scoring.

5. Oversubscription Criteria

Where there are fewer applications than places available, all children will be offered a place. Where there are more applications than places available, the order in which places will be allocated will be:

a) Looked after and previously looked after children

- i. A 'looked after child' is one, who is (a) in the care of a Local Authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of its social services functions, in England. A 'previously looked after child' is one who was looked after in England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship order, as well as a child who appears to have been in state care outside of England (i.e. in the care of, or accommodated by, a public authority, religious organisation or any other provider whose sole/main purpose is to benefit society), but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted.
- ii. Applications in this category may need to be supported by documentary evidence, such as a signed letter from the child's current or former Social Worker confirming their status, and/or an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order. In the case of children adopted from state care outside of England, evidence of having been in state care outside of England and of being adopted may be required, ideally accompanying the application. When considering the evidence provided, the Department for Education (DfE)'s current guidance will be followed.
- iii. Where the Virtual School Head (**VSH**) at the Local Authority has already verified the child's status and SMS is able to confirm this with them, there will be no need for

evidence to be provided with the application.

b) Children with a sibling at St. Martin's School Brentwood in Year 7 to Year 11 at the time of application and admission

- i. The sibling must be on the roll in Years 7 to 11 at SMS at the time of application and will still be on the roll in Years 7 to 11 at the time of the applicant child's admission. For the avoidance of doubt, siblings who are in Year 12 or 13 at the time of application, or who will be in Year 12 at the time of admission (having transferred from Year 11) will not meet the definition of a 'sibling' for the purpose of this Policy.
- ii. A 'sibling' means a full brother or sister (sharing both parents), a half brother or sister (sharing one parent), an adopted brother or sister (sharing one or both parents), a long-term foster brother or sister (a looked after child), a step brother or sister (where one child's parent is married or in a civil partnership with the other child's parent) and a child of the applicant child's parent's cohabiting partner.
- iii. In all cases, the sibling must live at the applicant child's home address (as defined in this Policy) and be part of the same core family unit. For the avoidance of doubt, a child of a family member (e.g. cousin or grandchild) or child of a friend will not be a 'sibling', even if they live at the same address as the applicant child.

c) Children who attend Hogarth Primary School, Kelvedon Hatch Community Primary School or Larchwood Primary School at the time of application

- i. The applicant child must be on the roll of Hogarth Primary School, Kelvedon Hatch Community Primary School or Larchwood Primary School at the time of application for a place at SMS.

d) Children living within the Priority Admission Area

- i. The applicant child's home address (as defined in this Policy) must be located within the Priority Admission Area for SMS as shown in the Priority Admission Area Map available via the SMS website: <https://www.st-martins.essex.sch.uk/admissions/priority-admissions-area-map/>.

e) Children applying for a place in Year 7 who demonstrate an aptitude in sport or music

- i. Up to 29 places (10% of the PAN) for Year 7 will be allocated to children who qualified for consideration of an aptitude place, as set out above at section 4.

f) Children of staff at St. Martin's School Brentwood

- i. The staff member may be full or part time, and teaching or non-teaching staff. They must spend more than 50% of their working week during term time based at SMS. For the avoidance of doubt, it is not possible to have priority for more than one DET School.

- ii. The staff member must have been (a) employed at SMS for two or more years at the time of application on a permanent contract, or two or more consecutive fixed term one-year contracts, and/or (b) recruited to fill a vacant post at SMS for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
- iii. A 'child of a staff member' means their natural child or adopted child, whether they live with the staff member or elsewhere, or their long-term foster child, step-child (the child of their spouse or civil partner) or the child of their cohabiting partner where the child lives and sleeps for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Thursday night during term time at the home address recorded for the staff member in their HR file.
- iv. For the avoidance of doubt, a child of another family member (e.g. niece, nephew or grandchild) or friend will not be a 'child of a staff member', even if they live at the same address as the staff member.
- v. The staff member must be the parent whose details are given in the application form, as obtaining details for more than one parent is prohibited. A signed and dated letter on headed notepaper from the staff member's Line Manager confirming that they meet (a) and/or (b) above must be submitted with the application for inclusion in this category to be considered.

g) Children who attend other named feeder schools

- i. The applicant child must be on the roll at Bentley St. Paul's CofE Primary School, Blackmore Primary School, Doddinghurst CofE Junior School, Great Berry Primary School, Holly Trees Primary School, Hutton All Saints CofE Primary School, Ingatestone and Fryerning CofE Junior School, Ingrave Johnstone CofE Primary School, Long Ridings Primary School, Mountnessing CofE Primary School, Shenfield St. Mary's CofE Primary School, St. Helen's Catholic Junior School, St. Joseph the Worker Catholic Primary School, St. Peter's CofE Primary School, St. Thomas of Canterbury CofE Junior School, Warley Primary School, West Horndon Primary School, or Willowbrook Primary School at the time of application for a place at SMS.

h) All other children

- i. All applicant children not included in any of the categories above will be included in this criterion.

6. Published Admission Number (PAN) for Year 12

- a) The PAN for Year 12 is **50**.
- b) This PAN relates to external applicants for Year 12 only, as existing Year 11 pupils are already on the roll and do not need to apply for admission under this Policy. If existing Year 11 applicants meet the Minimum Academic Entry Criteria set out below and want to continue their studies into Year 12, they will simply transfer from Year 11.

7. Minimum Academic Entry Criteria for Year 12

- a) All external applicants and existing Year 11 pupils must meet the Minimum Academic Entry Criteria set out below to be considered for a place in Year 12. These criteria are:

Route	Pathway	Requirements
1	Three A Levels with optional Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)	Average Grade Score of 5.5 (as defined below) including English Literature or Language and Mathematics at Grade 4, plus Subject Specific Requirements.
2	Two A Levels with one BTEC	Average Grade Score of 4.5 (as defined below) including English Literature or Language and Mathematics at Grade 4, plus Subject Specific Requirements.

- b) To calculate the 'Average Grade Score', the GCSE grades achieved across the external applicant's best eight (as a minimum) GCSE results (including English Literature or Language and Mathematics) must be added together and then divided by eight to establish the average grade.
- c) 'Subject Specific Requirements' means the requirements for the specific BTEC and/or A Level courses to be studied in the Sixth Form. For full details of the 'subject specific requirements', please refer to the Sixth Form pages of the SMS website: <https://www.st-martins.essex.sch.uk/sixth-form/>.
- d) The Minimum Academic Entry Criteria described above set a threshold which, once attained, puts all applicants on an equal footing for places, with the oversubscription criteria and tie breaker set out below being applied where there are more eligible applicants than places available. For the avoidance of doubt, applicants achieving a higher Average Grade Score than the threshold will not have any advantage.
- e) These criteria are part of SMS' determined admission arrangements and will be strictly applied. They will only be adjusted where this is necessary in order to avoid a particular/substantial disadvantage caused by a disability or other protected characteristic in the application of these criteria, which has not already been adequately addressed during the examination process via special consideration or access arrangements. This will be considered on a case by case basis.

8. Oversubscription Criteria for Years 12 and 13

For the avoidance of doubt, the oversubscription criteria applies only to external applicants as internal applicants in Year 11, who meet the Minimum Academic Entry Criteria, will automatically transfer to Year 12 on application and they are already on roll with SMS.

Where there are fewer applications than places available, all external applicants meeting the Minimum Academic Entry Criteria will be offered a place. Where there are more applications from external applicants who meet the Minimum Entry Criteria than places available, the order in which places will be allocated will be:

a) Looked after and previously looked after children

- i. A 'looked after child' is one who is (a) in the care of a Local Authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of its social services functions, in England. A 'previously looked after child' is one who was looked after in England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship order, as well as a child who appears to have been in state care outside of England (i.e. in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation or any other provider whose sole/main purpose is to benefit society), but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted.
- ii. Applications in this category may need to be supported by documentary evidence, such as a signed letter from the child's current or former Social Worker confirming their status, and/or an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order. In the case of children adopted from state care outside of England, evidence of having been in state care outside of England and of being adopted may be required, ideally accompanying the application. When considering the evidence provided, the DfE's current guidance will be followed.
- iii. Where the Virtual School Head (**VSH**) at the Local Authority has already verified the child's status and SMS is able to confirm this with them, there will be no need for evidence to be provided with the application.

b) All other external applicants

- i. All applicants not included in the category above will be included in this criterion.

9. Tie Breaker

- a) In any oversubscription criterion, where there are more applications than places available, the order in which places will be allocated will be determined by reference to the straight-line distance between the child's home address (as defined in this Policy) and the SMS address, with places being allocated from the lowest distance to the highest distance. Where the distance is equal for two or more applicants, random allocation (in front of someone who is independent of SMS) will be used to distinguish between them.
- b) The straight-line distance between the two addresses will be calculated in accordance with the Local Authority Secondary Education in Essex brochure, available to view on the website www.essex.gov.uk/admissions. Measurements from any other websites or software (e.g. Google Maps) will not be relevant or accepted.
- c) In Year 7 to Year 11, where applications are received for the admission of twins, triplets or siblings of higher multiple births to the same Year Group at the same time, but not all of

them are allocated a place because of the application of the tie breaker for the final place(s), all of them will be allocated a place even where this means going over PAN or usual pupil numbers for that Year Group. Parents should note that this will not apply to children, who are allocated an aptitude place in Year 7, in accordance with section 5.e).

10. Child's Home Address

- a) The child's home address is defined in this Policy, and it is the address meeting this definition that must be given in the application.
- b) The child's home address is the residential (not business) address at which they will live and sleep for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Thursday night during term time, at the time of their admission. Where the child lives with more than one parent and the pattern for overnight stays is irregular, this will be assessed over the most recent five term time weeks.
- c) Parents will be expected to provide satisfactory documentary evidence of the child's home address and, where applicable, of siblings. This may include proof of ownership or renting, and/or registration with a GP, dentist and/or optician.
- d) Where the family owns or rents another property, additional documentary evidence that the address given will be the child's permanent home address from the date of admission may be requested.
- e) If the child moves address during the course of the application process in the 'normal admission round' (see below), parents must notify their home Local Authority, and (if different) Essex County Council, as soon as possible and provide satisfactory documentary evidence that the new address will meet the definition and is intended to be permanent, as well as the intended moving date.
- f) Applications are welcomed for the admission of the children of UK Armed Forces personnel and Crown Servants. Where the family is relocating from overseas, the address used will be the address at which the applicant will live when they return, as long as the parents provide some evidence of this address. Alternatively, a Unit or Quartering address may be used, at the parent's request.

11. Application Process in the 'Normal Admission Round' (Year 7)

- a) All Local Authorities are required to coordinate admission in the 'normal admission round' for all schools in their area (excluding Sixth Form), and all schools are required to participate in their Local Authority's scheme.
- b) The 'normal admission round' for applications for admission to Year 7 in September covers all applications made by the statutory deadline for applications (**31 October 2025**), as well as applications made after this date, but in time for a place to be offered on 'national offer day' (**1 March 2026**) or next working day.
- c) Applications in the 'normal admission round' for Year 7 must be made to the child's home Local Authority using its Common Application Form, which will be available on its website.

For applicants resident in the Essex County Council area, its admissions webpage can be accessed by clicking here: [Admissions | Essex County Council](#).

- d) Parents must carefully consider the oversubscription criteria above to check whether any additional documentation must accompany the application for inclusion in a particular category, as failing to do so could prevent the right category being identified, which could result in a place not being offered.
- e) A 'late application' is one received before the first day of term, but not in time for the Local Authority to offer a place on 'national offer day'. As these applications cannot be processed until after the first round of places has been allocated, this will inevitably reduce the chance of achieving a place at SMS. Parents are, therefore, strongly encouraged to submit applications by the stated closing date.

12. Application Process in the 'Normal Admission Round' (Year 12)

- a) Applications for the admission of external applicants to Year 12 in September must be made directly to SMS by completing an online [Sixth Form Admission Application Form](#) via a link to Applicaa (which is published on the SMS website or available in hard copy form from the SMS School Office) and submitting it to SMS, via the Admissions Manager, by email to sixthformadmissions@st-martins.essex.sch.uk or by post/hand delivery to the SMS School Office, by the closing date for applications, which is Friday 28 November 2025.
- b) Conditional offers of a place will be made on or before Wednesday 25 March 2026 and will be based upon the predicted grades given in the application form. Firm offers of a place will not be made until original documentary evidence of GCSE grades meeting the Minimum Academic Entry Criteria set out above is provided on or shortly after GCSE results day.

13. Application Process for In-Year Admission

- a) An 'in-year application' is one made for Year 7 or Year 12 on or after the first day of term in September, or for any other Year Group at any time.
- b) In-year applications made for Year 7 and Year 12 may be refused on the basis that there are no places available within their respective PANs.
- c) In respect of in-year applications for Year 8 to Year 11 and Year 13, a place will be offered unless admitting an additional child would prejudice the efficient provision of education, and/or the efficient use of resources at SMS.
- d) Where multiple in-year applications for the same Year Group are received and processed at the same time, and some, but not all, children can be offered a place within the PAN for Year 7 and Year 12 or without causing prejudice for all other Year Groups, the oversubscription criteria and tie breaker will be applied to determine the allocation of these places.
- e) Applications for in-year admission to Year 7 to Year 11 must be made **directly to SMS**, by completing the [In-Year Admission Application Form](#), which is published on the SMS website or available in hard copy form from the SMS School Office. The completed application must be sent to SMS, via the Admissions Manager, by email to enquiries@st-martins.essex.sch.uk

or by post/hand delivery to the SMS School Office.

- f) Parents must carefully consider the oversubscription criteria above to check whether any additional documentation must accompany the application for inclusion in a particular category, as failing to do so could prevent the right category being identified, which could result in a place not being offered.
- g) Applications for in-year admission Year 12 or Year 13 must be made **directly to SMS**, by completing the Sixth Form Admission Application Form, which is published on the SMS website or available in hard copy form from the SMS School Office. The completed application must be sent to SMS, via the Admissions Manager, by email to sixthformadmissions@st-martins.essex.sch.uk or by post/hand delivery to the SMS School office.
- h) The outcome of in-year applications will be notified in writing to parents within a maximum of **15 school days** of receipt, with reasons if refused.

14. Requests for Admission Outside Normal Age Group

- a) Parents have a right to request permission for admission to a Year Group outside their normal age group, which may be above or below. However, this is not an absolute right. The request must be considered by SMS, which must decide whether to agree it in principle, or refuse it, considering the factors set out below.
- b) These requests are not applications for admission, which must still be made in the usual way. Parents are strongly encouraged to make these requests as early as possible, preferably well ahead of any application deadlines for their normal age group, so that they make informed decisions when they subsequently apply for admission. A request must be made to the 'admission authority' for each school for which admission is sought outside normal age group, as the outcome may not be the same for all.
- c) SMS makes decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the parents' views, the Executive Headteacher's/Headteacher's views, information about the child's academic, social and emotional development, the child's medical history and the views of their medical professionals, whether they have previously been educated or attended nursery out of their normal age group, and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. This is not an exhaustive list, and parents may put forward any matters or documents for consideration.
- d) Parents must complete a Request for Admission Outside Normal Age Group Form (which is published on the SMS website or available in hard copy form from the SMS School Office) and submitting it to SMS, via the Admissions Manager, by email to enquiries@st-martins.essex.ch.uk or by post/hand delivery to the SMS School Office, along with any supporting documentation.
- e) SMS, via the Admissions Manager, will notify parents of the outcome of their request in writing, and will explain its reasons in sufficient detail for parents to understand why the decision was arrived at. Where the request is agreed in principle, the letter should

accompany the application for admission subsequently made.

- f) Parents do not have a statutory right of appeal against a refusal of a request for admission outside normal age group. However, they may complain to SMS about the outcome if they wish.

15. Statutory Right of Appeal

- a) Parents have a statutory right of appeal to an independent Admission Appeal Panel against the refusal of a place at SMS. The refusal letter will set out full details of this right, including where the grounds of appeal must be sent and the deadline for doing so.
- b) SMS will publish an admission appeal timetable for appeals against refusals in the 'normal admission round' on or before 28 February 2025.

16. Waiting List

- a) SMS maintains a waiting list for Year 7 to Year 11 for the duration of the school year. However, at the end of the year, the entire list will be deleted unless parents contact SMS to confirm that they wish their child's name to remain on the waiting list.
- b) In Year 12, SMS operates a waiting list until 31 December following the admission of the cohort in September, after which time the list is deleted. No waiting list is maintained for Year 13.
- c) Waiting lists are ranked by reference to the oversubscription criteria set out above, and not by reference to the date that the child's name was added to the list. This means that a child's name can go up, as well as down, the list as more names are added.
- d) When a place becomes available, the tie breaker set out above (i.e. distance and, if needed, random allocation) will be used to determine which child in the top category (if more than one) is offered the place.
- e) In Year 7 to Year 11, children allocated a place under the Fair Access Protocol (which all schools are required to participate in) take precedence over children on the waiting lists for any Year Group.

17. Review and Determination of Admission Arrangements

- a) The admission arrangements for SMS must be determined every year by the TB on or before 28 February in 'determination year' (i.e. the calendar year before admission).
- b) Where any changes are proposed from the criteria determined for the previous intake, these must be consulted on for a minimum of six calendar weeks between 1 October and 31 January, ahead of determination. The admission arrangements will, therefore, be reviewed early in the autumn term each year to establish whether any changes will be proposed.
- c) The admission arrangements for the 2026 intake (of which this Policy is part) were determined on 6 February 2025.