



The Sutton Academy

Admissions Policy - 2026/27

Status	Statutory
Admitting Authority	The Challenge Academy Trust Board
Date approved by	20/02/2025
Responsible Person	Mr P Willerton

Principal: Mr Paul Willerton

Address: Elton Head Road
St Helens
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Website: www.thesuttonacademy.org.uk

Age Range: 11 - 18

Admission Number for Year 7 in September 2026: **270**

Number of Students on Roll at February 2025: **1450**

Admission Policy & Arrangements for 2026/2027

1. The Governing Body of The Sutton Academy is responsible for determining the policy relating to the admission of students. It is guided in that responsibility by the requirements of the law.

2. The ethos of the academy:

The academy's mission statement, "**Together Students Achieve**" informs everything that we do and characterises the ethos and the spirit that drives our collective endeavours and our vision for improvement. At The Sutton Academy we recognise that everyone; staff, students, parents and carers are individuals but share a strong collective will to succeed. Therefore, at The Sutton Academy we respect the individual needs of everyone and seek to foster a caring and creative environment which emphasises the positive social, emotional, physical and intellectual development of all learners.

Our work at the academy is underpinned by our desire for:

- Students to achieve to the best of their ability through an ethos of high standards
- Parents to send their children to the academy knowing they will be successful, cared for and enthused
- Staff to be challenged and supported to develop to their full potential to make a difference every day

Our role as educators is to ensure the students leave us with:

- Powerful knowledge, vocabulary and a wealth of cultural capital
- Qualifications which enable them to take control of the next stages of their life
- The four core academy values: kind, reflective, resilient and part of a community

The Sutton Academy is driven to provide:

- A culture where every child is cared for and encouraged to grow
- The highest standards of behaviour and mutual respect
- A knowledge-rich curriculum
- Highly effective evidence informed teaching

- A strong partnership with both parents/carers and students
- The best enrichment opportunities
- Staff who feel privileged to serve our community

In striving for excellence, we seek to develop first class learning opportunities for all and that, over time, The Sutton Academy Learning Community becomes recognised as outstanding in everything that it does.

The academy has a strong vision for partnership working with sponsors, the local community and external agencies to create personalised, engaging and motivating educational experiences for its young people.

3. Having consulted with the Local Authority and others in accordance with the requirements of the law, the Governing Body has set its admissions number at 270 students for the school year commencing September 2026.

4. Applications for a place in Year 7 in September 2026 should be made on the applicant's home local authority common application form. Applications for St Helens residents can be made online via St Helens Council's website from September 2025. A copy of the St Helens Secondary Education Information for Parents Booklet will also be available to view on the Council's website from September 2025 onwards.

The closing date for applications is 31 October 2025.

Decision email/letters will be sent to parents on 1 March 2026.

Late Applications

Applications submitted after the closing date will only be considered alongside those who applied on time when they are received before the allocation procedures begin. However, as this date cannot be predicted, parents have no guarantee that any application received after the closing date will be included.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admission number, applications will be considered against the oversubscription criteria set out below. After the admission of students with Education, Health and Care Plans, where The Sutton Academy is named on the Plan, the criteria will be applied in the following order:

1. Looked after children and children who were previously looked after but then became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order.¹This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted;²
2. Children from the following associated primary schools;

Eaves Primary
Robins Lane Community Primary

Sherdley Primary
Sutton Manor Community Primary
Sutton Oak CE Primary
Thatto Heath Community Primary
Willow Tree Primary

3. children who have a brother or sister at the academy at the time of likely admission. The brother or sister must be on the school roll in Years 7-11. This includes full, half or stepbrothers and sisters, adopted and foster brothers and sisters or a child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case, who is living at the same address and is part of the same family unit;
4. other children.

¹ A looked after child is a child who is in the care of a local authority in England, or is being provided with accommodation by a local authority in England in the exercise of their social services functions.

² A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

Tie Break

In the event of any over-subscription in the number of applications made under any of the categories above the Governing Body will offer places first to children whose family home is nearest the school. The measurement shall be done by the Local Authority in a straight line using a Geographical Information System (GIS) based on Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) data and the National Grid co-ordinates for the family home and the school.

Where the tie break does not distinguish between applicants e.g children living in the same block of flats random allocation will be used. This will be done by drawing lots and supervised by someone independent of the school.

Special Conditions for Twins (etc.)

Where the final place in a year group is offered to one of twins (or triplets etc) the Local Authority will not apply the tie break as it will admit the other twin etc too, even if that means going above the admission number.

Definition of Home Address

This is the confirmed address (before allocation procedures begin) where the child and parent, or person with parental responsibility, normally live. The Governing Body will use the address of the parent who is in receipt of Child Benefit for this. If parents are separated and the child spends time at each parent's address, the address which receives Child Benefit will normally be used, but the Governing Body reserves the right to request other proofs as fit the individual circumstances. It may be necessary to carry out checks to confirm that addresses given are genuine. Parents may,

therefore, be asked to produce documentary evidence of their child's home address e.g. Council Tax or utility bills.

Any subsequent change to a child's home address must be notified to the Admissions Section of the Local Authority.

False Information

Where the Trust Board discovers that a child has been awarded a place as a result of any false information, it will withdraw the offer and the child will lose the place.

Waiting List

During the normal admissions round, if a place is refused because the academy is oversubscribed the child's name will automatically be placed on the waiting list. The waiting list will be kept in priority order according to the oversubscription criteria and not on the date on which applications were received. If a place becomes available within the admission number, the child whose name is at the top of the list will be offered a place.

Children who are the subject of a direction by the local authority to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with the Authority's Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those on the waiting list.

The waiting list will close at the end of the autumn term for the September 2026 Year 7 intake.

In-Year Fair Access Protocol

The Trust Board has a duty to comply with the Local Authority's In -Year Fair Access Protocol and therefore admit up to +2 managed transfers per year group, even if the year group concerned is full.

All schools and academies should participate in their Local Authority's protocol. For that reason, admission appeal panels will not view the fact that The Sutton Academy is obliged to admit over its admission number as an indication that it can do so for all in year transfers without causing prejudice to the efficient provision of education or efficient use of resources.

In Year Transfers

Applications for a place in Year 7 after the waiting list has closed or Years 8-11 should be made on the Local Authority's in year common application form. The application will then be processed in accordance with St Helens in year co-ordinated admissions scheme.

Parents will normally receive a written response to their application within ten school days.

Appeal Procedure

Where parents are unsuccessful in applying for a place at The Sutton Academy, the decision letter will give reasons why the application was refused and notification of the right of appeal, including details of how, and to whom, to make an appeal and where to obtain further information.

Sixth Form Admission Arrangements

Applications for admission into Year 12 will be administered by the Academy. The Academy has capacity for 180 students in the Sixth Form. Applicants from outside the Academy, will be accepted if a place is available and the applicant meets the same criteria as those applying internally.

In addition to the Sixth Form's minimum academic entry of 5 GCSEs including level 4 or above in Maths and English, students will need to satisfy minimum entrance requirements for the courses for which they are applying. If either internal or external applicants fail to meet the minimum course requirements, they will be given impartial advice and guidance and the option of pursuing any alternative courses for which they do not meet the minimum academic requirements.

Process of Application

Prospectuses and application forms are published during the autumn term prior to admission, and are available to all who request them by contacting the academy.

The Sixth Form Open Evening will be held for 2026 entrance in the 2025 autumn term.

Application forms must be received by the closing date publicised in the academy's prospectus.

When the Sixth Form is undersubscribed all applicants meeting the minimum academic entry requirements will be admitted.

Post 16 oversubscription criteria

When there are more applicants that satisfy any academic entry requirements than the number of post 16 places available and after the admission of students with Education, Health and Care Plans where The Sutton Academy is named, the criteria will be applied in order in which they are set out below:

1. looked after children and children who were previously looked after but then became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order.¹ This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted;²
2. children who have a brother or sister at the academy at the time of likely admission. The brother or sister must be on the school roll in Years 7-11. This includes full, half or stepbrothers and sisters, adopted and foster brothers and sisters or a child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case, who is living at the same address and is part of the same family unit;

3. other children.

¹ *A looked after child is a child who is in the care of a local authority in England, or is being provided with accommodation by a local authority in England in the exercise of their social services functions.*

² *A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.*

Tie-break

The measurement shall be done by the Local Authority, on behalf of the school, in a straight line using a Geographical Information System (GIS) based on Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) data and the National Grid co-ordinates for the family home and the school. Home address shall be defined as the address of the primary carer of the child, who is in receipt of child benefit.

Where the tie break does not distinguish between applicants e.g. children living in the same block of flats random allocation will be used. This will be done by drawing lots and supervised by someone independent of the school.

Appeal Procedure

Any student refused admission to the Sixth Form has the right of appeal to an independent appeals panel. The academy's decision letter will give reasons why the application was refused, including details of how, and to whom, to make an appeal and where to obtain further information.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

A decision is made on the basis of the circumstances of each case.

The process is as follows:

Stage 1 - Request

Parents make a formal request to the Local Authority's School Admissions Team in writing with any supporting evidence they wish to be considered. A request for early entry into Year 7 should be made before 31 October in the previous academic year in order to give sufficient time for the case to be considered prior to the offer of school places on 1 March. A request for in year admission outside of the normal age group should be made on the Local Authority's In Year Transfer Application Form.

Stage 2 - Decision

Requests will be referred to the academy to be considered and a decision made.

Stage 3 - Outcome

Request agreed:

If the request is agreed the application will be considered for the relevant year group and ranked alongside any other applications. **There is no guarantee that a place will be offered.** Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

Request refused:

There is no statutory right of appeal against the refusal of a request for admission outside the normal age group. However, if the parents are dissatisfied they have the right to complain under the school's complaints procedure.

How places were allocated at The Sutton Academy for September 2024.

Admission Number	Total Number of Applications: First, Second and Third Preferences	How Places were Allocated	Final Number of Places Allocated after Late Applications, Changes of Preference and Appeals
270	Total: 529 First Preference 300 Second Preference 145 Third Preference 84	Children with an Education Health and Care Plan 4 Looked after and previously looked after children 218 Associated Primary Brothers & Sisters 9 Distance 25	270 (no appeals were upheld)

Please be aware that how places are allocated can substantially change from year to year.

The academy has been oversubscribed for the last six years.