



The Sutton Academy

Admissions Consultation The Sutton Academy

PROPOSAL:

- To consult on changes to admissions arrangements at The Sutton Academy relating to Sixth Form closure

Consultation Timeline

Consultation period opens	15/12/2025
Consultation period closes	31/01/2026
Review by Governors and Trust Board	W/C 02/02/2026
Publication on the website and inform LA of outcome	By 28/02/2026

Admissions Consultation Document

Proposed Change to The Sutton Academy Admissions Arrangements for September 2027

1. Introduction

The Sutton Academy is consulting on a proposed change to its admissions arrangements from September 2026 onwards. This consultation is being carried out in accordance with the statutory requirements set out in the School Admissions Code (2021).

The Sutton Academy is a member of The Challenge Academy Trust which is the admissions authority for the school and is therefore responsible for determining its admissions arrangements. We are now consulting with parents, carers, staff, local schools and colleges, St Helens Local Authority, and other interested parties.

2. Proposed Change

Following a recent consultation regarding the future of post-16 provision at The Sutton Academy, the Trust Board of The Challenge Academy Trust and the Local governing Challenge Board have taken the decision - subject to approval from the Department for Education (DfE) - to close the academy's sixth form.

We are now consulting on the corresponding change to our admissions arrangements, specifically:

- The Sutton Academy will no longer admit students into Year 12 from September 2027 onwards.
- The academy's admissions policy will be amended to remove references to sixth form entry criteria, application processes, oversubscription arrangements, or any other references relating to post-16 admissions.
- From September 2027, the academy will operate as an 11–16 provider.
- Current KS5 students will still receive the same high quality sixth form offer until completing their post-16 education in July 2027.



3. Rationale for the Change

The decision to close the sixth form followed a detailed review of financial sustainability, student demand, curriculum breadth, and long-term viability. The most recent consultation with stakeholders demonstrated limited demand for post-16 places and highlighted a strong preference for the wide range of alternative post-16 options available locally.

To ensure that all students receive the highest-quality education and access to appropriately broad post-16 pathways, the Trust Board and Local Governing Challenge Board believes this is the most sustainable approach.

The Sutton Academy continues to be fully committed to supporting students with high-quality careers guidance, impartial advice, and strong partnerships with a wide range of local post-16 providers.

4. Who We Are Consulting

In line with the statutory requirements, we are consulting:

Parents and carers of current and prospective students

Staff and governors

St Helens Local Authority

Neighbouring Local Authorities (where appropriate)

Local schools, colleges and post-16 providers

Local community stakeholders

5. Consultation Period

The consultation will run for six weeks from:

Monday 15th December - 31 January 2026

Representations must be received by 5.00pm on 31 January 2026.

6. How to Respond

We welcome views from all stakeholders. Responses can be submitted:

By email: consultation@thesuttonacademy.org.uk

By post: The Sutton Academy
Elton Head Road
St Helens
WA9 5AU

All responses will be considered by the Trust Board and Local Governing Challenge Board before final admissions arrangements are determined.

7. Determination of Arrangements

Following the consultation, the Trust Board will consider all representations and will recommend formally determine the school's admissions arrangements for 2027–28. This will take place w/c 2 February 2026, in accordance with the School Admissions Code.

The finalised admissions arrangements will be published on the school's website and submitted to St Helen Local Authority for inclusion in their composite prospectus.