



SHIRELAND
COLLEGIATE ACADEMY



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Shireland Collegiate Academy – Admissions Policy 2025/26

Committee and Date Approved	Trust Board – Autumn 2023
Category	Statutory
Review Cycle	Annually
Officer Responsible	Trust Board

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Introductory statement

Shireland Collegiate Academy (SCA) is a 11-18 Secondary School supported by Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust. It aims to provide a high-quality education for local children and prepare them for further education or employment in a safe and welcoming environment.

Our inclusive admissions process will at all times be open, transparent and fair, and will meet the requirements of the national Schools Admissions Code, the Appeals Code and Admissions Legislation.

Our vision and values

Our mission at SCA is to develop a generation of learners who aim higher, see further, and are concerned for all. They will learn in a way that encourages both independence and collaboration in a technology-rich environment to enable them to succeed in an ever-changing world. We have three core beliefs:

- We believe that every pupil will have access to a whole education underpinned by academic rigour.
- We believe that every pupil should be equipped for today, tomorrow and their future lives, through learning cutting-edge skills and the ability to discover the world and beyond.
- We believe that every pupil should be safe, happy, ambitious for themselves and respectful of all.

All of this is underpinned by a set of strong values that are central to the Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust Family of schools. They are: **Innovate, Inspire and Collaborate.**

Main School (Pre-16) Admissions

Admission numbers

The school has a Published Admissions Number (PAN) of 250 pupils for entry in Year 7 from September 2025.

The school will accordingly admit this number of pupils if there are sufficient applications. Where fewer applicants than the published admission number(s) for the relevant year group are received, the Academy Trust will offer places at the school to all those who have applied.

In accordance with the law, children with Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will be admitted to the school where the Local Authority (LA) has specifically named SCA as the most appropriate placement.

Application process

As part of the co-ordinated admissions arrangements scheme, **parents MUST complete an online registration form provided by their home LA by 31st October 2024**. In completing this form SCA must be chosen as one of the preferences on the LA registration form.

Preference forms received after the closing date will be considered where the LA identifies that exceptional circumstances apply.

Preference forms received after the places have been offered will be kept on file and form the basis of the 'Applications to Transfer to Year 7'. Those who are offered a place at the Academy will be informed on 1st March 2025 by their home LA.

Those that are not offered a place at SCA will be informed on 1st March 2025 and will be offered a place at an alternative school by their home LA.

Arts Aptitude Places

Parents/Carers wishing for their child to be considered for the Arts Aptitude, which will take place on **11th October 2024** must register with the Academy by completing the Arts Aptitude Registration Form by **29th September 2024**. Details of the Arts Aptitude Registration form will be published on the Academy website in the Spring Term of the 2023/24 academic year.

Those who have registered on time will be advised in writing about the arrangements for the Arts Aptitude Interviews. SCA admits 10% (25) applicants with an Arts Aptitude. The main purpose is to identify children who have potential, aptitude and enthusiasm for Art, Dance, Drama or/and Music. The children will meet with the Principal in small groups together with members of the Arts staff and places will be offered based on assessment of ability.

Fair Banding

The Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust will use norm referenced banding to achieve an intake representative of the ability profile of applicants. This is a method of achieving an intake which reflects the range of abilities of the children applying to a particular school. It is not a way of selecting children by high academic ability or aptitude for a particular subject. Shireland uses fair banding as an oversubscription criterion; all children applying for a place are distributed into one of five equal sized ability bands based on their performance in an NFER non-verbal reasoning test or appropriate similar product. Places are then allocated within each band using the oversubscription criteria detailed below. Within bands, priority is not given according to performance in the test. The LA will allocate places and will do so according to the Code of Practice.

The assessment tests will be held at SCA during November/December 2024 (all children who have completed an on-line LA application form will be invited for testing). A 'mop-up' session will be offered to students who for any reason could not attend their first date. Students not sitting the test at all will be considered for a place but only after all those who did attend testing have been considered.

Oversubscription criteria

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the PAN, applications will be considered against the criteria in the order in which they are set out below:

1. A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order including those 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.¹
2. A total of 25 applicants (10% of the total number of places) with an aptitude for the Arts. The definition of Arts is Art, Dance, Drama and Music. (The word aptitude means a gift or talent. It denotes a potential or propensity to develop an ability given appropriate teaching or preparation. In other words, aptitude plus preparation equals future ability.)
3. Siblings (brother and sister at the Academy at the time of admission, not including Sixth Form).
4. Children who are currently attending Shireland Technology Primary (Feeder School).
5. Thereafter, on the basis of distance between their home address and the main entrance to the Academy. (Distance will be calculated according to a straight-line measurement between the applicant's home and the main entrance to the Academy as measured by an external consultant)

NB: Children with an EHCP naming the Academy will be admitted before other applicants.

¹ A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions as defined by section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of making the application for a school place

Tie-break

If a tie-break is necessary to determine which child is admitted, random allocation will be undertaken by the LA (or another body that is unconnected from the Academy Trust) as a tie break to decide who will be admitted.

Random allocation will not be applied to multiple birth siblings (twins, triplets, etc.) from the same family tied for the final place; we will admit them all and exceed the PAN.

Admissions 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 having or has experienced problems such as ill health and the Academy Trust will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. 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 may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

Parents should submit a request to the school with their application specifying the age of the child, which year group they wish him/her to be admitted and the reason for the request.

In year applications

An application can be made for a place for a child at any time outside the normal admission round and the child will be admitted where there are places available. To apply for a place other than the normal intake into Year 7, parents must apply using the in-year application form available on LA's website ([Changing schools | Sandwell Council](#)).

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out for the normal round of admissions, will be applied.

Parents will be advised of the outcome of their application in writing from the LA and, where the decision is to refuse their child a place, have the right to appeal to an independent appeal panel.

Operation of waiting list and appeals

If the Academy is oversubscribed and children have been refused admission because other applicants have a higher priority for admission under the published admission criteria, then those applicants who are unsuccessful will automatically be placed on the waiting list. This will be maintained by the Local Authority. Children placed on the waiting list will be ranked in accordance with the Academy's published admissions criteria. For Sandwell schools, waiting lists will normally operate until the end of the Autumn Term.

Parents will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision. The arrangements for appeals will be in line with the Code on School Admission Appeals published by the Department for Education. The determination of the Appeals Panel will be made in accordance with the Code on School Admission Appeals and is binding on all parties. (For further information about appeals, see Appendix A)

Timetable for Aptitude Tests

March 2024	Details of Aptitude Test on Shireland Collegiate Academy website: www.collegiateacademy.org.uk
1 st May 2024	Aptitude Test registration opens
29 th September 2024	Deadline for Arts Aptitude Registration forms to be submitted.
11 th October 2024	Aptitude Tests to be held at Shireland Collegiate Academy
16 th October 2024	Results of Aptitude Tests posted to parents

Timetable for Admissions

July 2024	Local Authority Online Applications are available.
31 st October 2024	Deadline for Online Applications to the Local Authority
November/December 2024	Fair Banding Assessment Tests held at Shireland Collegiate Academy
1 st March 2025	Parents and Primary Schools notified of the result of applications
May/June 2025	Appeals considered

Sixth Form (Post-16) Admissions

Making an Application

Information concerning the Sixth Form is available to view on the Shireland Collegiate Academy website along with details of courses available and option blocks. Applicants must complete the application form on the website [Sixth Form Admissions Process - Shireland Collegiate Academy](#)

The closing date for receipt of applications for admission into Sixth Form for September 2025 is 1st September 2025. Students entering Shireland Sixth Form will be expected to read and sign a learning agreement which outlines the commitment required to be successful in Sixth Form study and the support that students can expect to receive from Academy staff. In addition, Sixth Form students must recognise that they are part of a large community and have a responsibility to abide by our dress code and conduct themselves in a manner that supports the Academy ethos.

Admissions Criteria

The law requires the Academy to admit students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) where a Local Authority has specifically named Shireland Collegiate Academy as the most appropriate placement and where they meet the academic requirements of their chosen course. These applications will usually be agreed in advance of the main allocation process. Where they are a late application, the Academy can be required to admit even if the admission number for external applicants has been reached. Students with a EHCP admitted to the Resource Unit will be allocated places in excess of the admission number (to be limited to the maximum capacity of the Inclusion Unit).

Other Students

Admission to Sixth Form will be as follows:

- Students currently in Year 11 at Shireland Collegiate Academy (referred to as 'internal applicants') and students from outside the Academy currently in Year 11 (referred to as 'external applicants') who meet the academic entry criteria
- Students from outside the Academy currently in Year 12 (referred to as 'external applicants') who are applying for restarting their academic studies
- Students currently in Year 12 on a level one programme aiming to progress on to a level two programme

Academic criteria are usually measured by attained GCSE grades, but may include further skills required, in order to be successful on a course as indicated on the subject description of each course on the Shireland Collegiate Academy website.

The agreed minimum admission number for external applicants is 20 for entry in September 2025. The anticipated capacity for Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13) in September 2025 is 250.

The Academy has only a limited capacity to offer certain courses. For a Level Three course the maximum expected class size will be 25, for any other level the maximum class size will be 15.

Students on roll at the Academy are required to apply for a place in Sixth Form as are students from other Academies or Schools.

The entry requirements for admission to Sixth Form shall be the same for students on roll in Year 11 at Shireland Collegiate Academy and external applicants.

Students will be admitted into Sixth Form at the start of the Autumn Term in each Academic year.

Minimum Entry Requirements

Entry Requirements for Advanced Level Courses operate at two levels

- Pathways based upon the number and type of Level Two courses gained at the end of Key Stage 4
- Subject specific criteria

All students seeking admission to Sixth Form must achieve the academic requirements for access onto the courses they are taking - details are on the Academy's website.

Oversubscription Criteria

As the Academy has only a limited capacity to offer certain courses. For a Level Three course the maximum expected class size will be 25, for our Level Two and Level One Courses the maximum expected class size will be one group each of 15. If the number of students applying for a particular course exceeds the capacity, that course will be deemed to be oversubscribed and the criteria applied. Where the number of eligible internal and external applicants for a course of study exceeds the places available, then admission for all applicants will be determined in accordance with the following priority of admission criteria:

1. Looked after children who meet the academic requirements of the course. This category includes a 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order including those 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 with exceptional medical or social reasons for requiring the Academy.

² A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions as defined by section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of making the application for a sixth form place

3. Students with siblings in any year at the Academy at the time of admission, who meet the academic requirements of the course.
4. All other applicants who meet the academic requirements of the course with straight line distance from the Academy as the tie breaker. This will be measured in a straight line from the front door of the student's house to the door of the main reception area of the Academy using the LA's GIS system. If two or more children live at the same distance from the Academy (for example, families living in flats) and there are fewer places available then random allocation will be used to decide which child will be allocated the remaining place(s). In the event that parents have shared responsibility for a child following the breakdown of their relationship and the child lives for part of the week with each parent, the relevant distance will be measured from the front door which is closest to the Academy.
5. If courses are full, students will be offered a place with alternative course options. Shireland Collegiate Academy will hold a waiting list, in order of the above criteria, of students who have not been offered a place. The waiting list will operate for the first term, after which no more students will be admitted.

Extra students can sometimes be accommodated over the admission number if the student's chosen courses are not full.

The Academy reserves the right to withdraw courses.

False Information

Where Shireland Collegiate Academy has made the offer of a place in Sixth Form on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application which has effectively denied a place in Sixth Form to a student with a lower level of priority, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

Late Applications

If an application is received after the deadline this will be considered 'late'. Unless exceptional circumstances apply, e.g. hospitalisation of a parent/carer or a family has just moved into the area, late applications will be considered after the allocation of places. If Shireland Collegiate Academy is full, late applicants will be placed on the waiting list in order of the over-subscription criteria. Evidence will be required of exceptional circumstances.

Applications received after the start of the Academic year will only be considered if places on the requested courses are available and the student meets the academic requirements of the course. Further applicants will be added to the waiting list.

Accepting or Declining the Offer of a Place

Places are offered on the understanding that there is a commitment to meet the academic requirements of the course.

Parents/carers are required to accept or decline the allocated place using the form sent with the conditional offer letter. The form must be returned to Shireland Collegiate Academy within two weeks from the date of the offer letter. Failure to respond may result in the place being withdrawn. Parents/carers are requested to advise Shireland Collegiate Academy at any stage, if they are not accepting the place for any reason.

Timetable for Sixth Form Admissions

September 2024	Sixth Form Application forms available on the Academy web site.
December 2024	Desired deadline for return of application form to the Academy for internal students
July 2025	Deadline for the return of acceptance forms
1 st September 2025	Deadline for application forms to the Academy Sixth Form

Appendix A - Appeals

The Governing Body of Shireland Collegiate Academy (SCA) has contracted the appeals function to Sandwell Local Authority (LA).

If you are unhappy with the school allocated to you (even if it was your first preference) and you wish to appeal, contact the LA's Admission and Appeals Service for an appeal form. Before deciding to appeal, you may wish to contact the Advisory Centre for Education (0808 800 5793) who will provide you with free, impartial advice.

If you choose to exercise your right of appeal, arrangements will be made for you to attend an appeal hearing. The Appeals Panel is independent of the LA and SCA and is arranged by Democratic Services of the Council. The Panel will consist of 3 or 5 members. There will also be someone representing SCA (this will be a LA officer) and a clerk from Democratic Services in attendance. At the meeting, you will be invited to say why you would like your child to go to SCA rather than the one offered. The LA officer will explain why a place at SCA has been refused.

You cannot appeal for SCA if you did not list it on your common application form. The LA recommends that you accept the school that has been offered to you even if you decide to appeal for SCA. By accepting the school offered, you will guarantee a school place for your child. If you refuse the place, you are likely to be reducing the options which may be available to you. Accepting the place will have no bearing on the outcome of your appeal.

Appeal hearings will normally be held within 40 school days of the deadline for submitting an appeal i.e during the late Spring and early Summer Terms. You will be given 10 days' notice of an appeal hearing date and time. Appeals for heavily oversubscribed schools can last for up to two weeks. You will be notified of the decision no later than five school days after the last hearing unless there is good reason why the decision has been delayed.

The decision of the Panel is binding on parents, the LA, and schools. The Council, Councillors and even Members of Parliament are unable to change its decision. If you think that the appeal process has been conducted unfairly you can complain to the Local Government Ombudsman. However, the Ombudsman does not have the power to change the decision of the Panel.

All arrangements for allocation of school places and for appeals will be in line with the School Admissions Code and the School Admission Appeals Code published by the Department for Education.

Notes

Home address:

The home address is where a child normally lives. Where a child lives with parents with shared parental responsibility, each for part of a week, the address where the child lives is determined using a joint declaration from the parents stating the pattern of residence. If a child's residence is split equally between both parents, then parents will be asked to determine which residential address should be used for the purpose of admission to school. If no joint declaration is received where the residence is split equally by the closing date for applications, the home address will be taken as the address where the child is registered with the doctor. If the residence is not split equally between both parents, then the address used will be the address where the child spends the majority of the school week.

Sibling:

'Sibling' means a natural brother or sister, a half brother or sister, a legally adopted brother or sister or half-brother or sister, a stepbrother or sister or other child living in the same household as part of the same family who, in any of these cases, will be living at the same address at the date of their application for a place.