Tannery Drift
First School

Enjoyment – Achievement – Respect

Admissions Policy

Last Review Date:
October 2026

Next Review Date:
October 2027

Artsmark Gold Award Awarded by Arts Council England

www.tannerydrift.herts.sch.uk

Admissions Policy

Admissions to Tannery Drift First School are determined by the Local Authority under the Hertfordshire County Council Determined School Admission Arrangements.

Hertfordshire County Council's oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary controlled first, infant, primary, junior, and middle schools. Rules are applied in order.

All schools and academies must admit a child with an EHC (Education, Health and Care) Plan that names the school.

Rule 1: Children Looked After and children who were previously looked after, 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. Previously looked after children are those who were looked after but ceased to be so because of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangement order or a special guardianship order.

Children who were not looked after immediately before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order, will not be prioritised under this rule.

Evidence needed (Rule 1)

Include a letter or document from your child's social worker, advisory teacher or other professional as evidence.

Rule 2: Medical or Social Needs. Children who have a particular medical or social need to go to the specific school being applied for.

Before submitting a Rule 2 application, ensure you read the Rule 2 Protocol document (PDF, 167KB), which clearly sets out the procedures and criteria for applying under the social / medical category within Hertfordshire County Council's school admissions framework.

All Hertfordshire schools can support children with a wide range of additional needs and are expected to accommodate severe medical needs.

An application made under Rule 2 should clearly demonstrate why the school applied for is the **only one** that can meet your child's need in a way that no other school can.

You may wish to complete the Rule 2 application form if you're making an application for a school or academy whose social / medical arrangements are considered by Hertfordshire County Council. Check the rules of the school you're applying to for clarification on how to apply under Rule 2.

Evidence needed (Rule 2)

Recent independent objective evidence, for example from a doctor, psychologist, social worker or other professional involved with your child.

Professional evidence that outlines exceptional family circumstances making clear why only one school can meet your child's needs.

If the requested school is not the nearest school to your child's home address, give specific reasons why closer schools will not meet your child's needs.

Evidence must relate specifically to the school being applied for under Rule 2.

A panel of officers will decide whether the evidence provided is enough to meet the requirements for this rule.

Contact the admissions team if there are exceptional reasons stopping you from getting independent objective professional evidence by the application deadline. Applications without this evidence will be rejected.

Examples of cases that have and have not been accepted under Rule 2

Examples of cases that **have been accepted** under Rule 2 include:

- children with an exceptional illness or disability (for example, restricted mobility) who can only reasonably attend one school
- where only one school is suitable due to child protection issues. Hertfordshire County Council will give priority to children whose education would be seriously affected if they did not go to a particular school
- exceptional cases relating to disability, where more than 1 school in the county can meet the child's specific needs, but a clear case has been made for the 'nearest school' with the relevant facilities, environment or location.

Examples of cases that **have not been accepted** under Rule 2 include:

- cases made around childminding arrangements, such as using a childminder that children are already familiar with who caters for children attending certain schools. Or childminding by family members who live close to a specific school. These cases weren't upheld because they're not exceptional. Many families rely on complex childminding arrangements
- cases made for children with specific learning or behavioural needs where the professional evidence submitted is not school specific.

  All schools are able to support children with a wide variety of individual needs. If a child's individual needs warrant an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, the EHC plan will name the appropriate school
- medical cases where even though there is a severe illness, more than one school could accommodate the child's needs.

Applying under Rule 2 during the continuing interest process

Hertfordshire County Council will only consider applications under Rule 2 (medical or social reasons) when you first apply for a school.

However, if your child's medical or social circumstances have changed a lot since your original application, you can apply under Rule 2 at the continuing interest stage.

You'll need to tell the Local Authority the change in circumstances and include relevant professional evidence.

Rule 3: Linked School - In the case of junior schools, children who attend the linked infant school at the time of their application. This rule is only relevant if you're applying for a place at a junior school and your child is currently in Year 2 of the linked infant school.

If your child is currently attending a community or voluntary controlled infant school with a linked junior school, you will qualify under Rule 3.

Tannery Drift is not a linked school.

Rule 4: Sibling - Children who have a sibling on the roll of the school (or linked school) at the time of application.

This applies to:

- Infant, junior and primary schools – Reception to Year 5.
- First schools – Reception to Year 3.
- Middle schools – Year 5 to Year 7.

Sibling definitions:

- Brother or sister.
- Half brother or sister.
- Adopted brother or sister.
- Child of the parent / carer or partner.
- Children looked after or previously looked after. This doesn't include children temporarily living in the same house. For example, a looked after child in a short term foster or bridging placement.

A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.

If an applicant lives at more than one address, the sibling must also reside at the same address for the majority of the school week. The sibling's address will be verified by the school.

A sibling must be on the roll of the named school or linked school at the time of application (and when child starts), or have been offered and accepted a place.

Rule 5: Child's Nearest School - Children for whom it is their nearest school or academy, excluding those that allocate places on the basis of faith (membership or practice) before allocating on the basis of distance/location. This can include schools outside Hertfordshire.

Rule 6: Distance - Children who live closest to the school are given priority. Children not considered under Rule 5 will be considered under Rule 6.

Details about how Hertfordshire County council measure home to school distance can be found here.

Admission rules are applied in order. If more children qualify for a school place under a particular rule than there are places available, children will be prioritised using the next rule (for rules 2-5).

A tiebreak will be used if 2 applications have addresses that measure the same distance from a school. For example, if 2 applications had identical home to school distance measurements, a random tiebreak would be used to decide which applicant is offered a place.

Every applicant is given a unique random number for each of their school preferences. When a random tiebreak is needed, this random number is used to allocate the place – the lowest number is given priority.

If 2 applications were received from the same block of flats, the applicant with the lower door number would be classed as nearest and offered a place because they are likely to be closer to the ground floor and, therefore, the school.

This tiebreak method is used for all schools that Hertfordshire County Council manage admissions for.

Tannery Drift is an inclusive school where we focus on the wellbeing and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth. We aim to provide a safe environment which all members, adults and children, can feel happy and secure enough to develop both academically and socially.

Our approach to equality is based on the following 8 key principles –

1. All learners are of equal value. Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.

2. We recognize, respect and value difference. We welcome difference and strive to support individuals by removing any possible barriers they may have in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We feel that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit our school.

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships. We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities that are different from each other.

4. We encourage a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community. We hope that our policies will encourage positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status.

5. We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development. We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.

6. We have the highest expectations of all our children. We expect that all pupils can make

good progress and achieve to their highest potential. We strive to provide all children with as many life experiences as possible, hopefully having an impact on their future.

7. **We work to raise standards for all pupils, including the most vulnerable.** We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.

8. **Society as a whole should benefit.** We believe that the work we do in school has a great impact on the wider society, by fostering greater social cohesion and reduce prejudice-related bullying and incidents.

How parents can apply for their child to be admitted to our school

In the Autumn term before your child is due to start Reception, parents will be contacted by Hertfordshire County Council with information about how to apply online for a Reception School place. In order to help you make your decision, prospective parents are welcomed and encouraged to visit Tannery Drift during session times. We hold two Open Mornings during the Autumn term, where parents can drop in to see the school at work. Individual tours can also be arranged if you are unable to attend one of the Open Mornings. A member of staff is always made available to explain our school layout, areas of work, and methods.

At Tannery Drift we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum (EYFS), recognising each child is unique and is constantly learning to become resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. Tannery Drift is an enabling environment where we have high expectations of behaviour and learning attitudes.

Reception Places

Once you have accepted your Reception place a member of our Early Years Team will visit your child at their nursery to introduce themselves. Children attending Tannery Drift Nursery will already have had opportunities to work with the Reception Class Teams.

Parents will then be invited in to attend a pre-start meeting where they will be given a 'Welcome Pack' which contains useful information about the school and how to help children settle into a school environment.

HCC Admission Arrangements can be found here.

For help and support please contact the Customer Service Centre on: 0300 123 4043

Applying for a Nursery Place

Children are able to begin Nursery at the start of the academic year in which they will turn 4 (the academic year begins on 1st September). Applications for a place in the Nursery are made directly to the school; a link to the online application form will be available on the school website, and paper copies may be requested from the school office. Details of Open Events are published on the school website.

Applications for a place in our Nursery will be accepted as on time applications when received by the school no later than 15th January. Any applications received after this period

will be considered as late applications and will not be considered for a place until all on time applications have been processed.

We have a maximum of 45 part-time places in our Nursery, if there are more applications than places available, the criteria outlined below will be used to prioritise applications.

Nursery Over-subscription criteria

Rule 1: Children who are already attending Tannery Drift First School Nursery.

Rule 2: Children who will use their hours (under either the 15-hour or 30-hour schemes) across 5 days. Priority will be given to those children who will use their funded hours across 5 days. 15 hours places will be allocated as either a block of 5 morning sessions or a block of 5 afternoon sessions.

Rule 3: Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, 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. Previously looked after children are those who were looked after but ceased to be so because of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangement order or a special guardianship order.

Children who were not looked after immediately before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order, will not be prioritised under this rule.

Rule 4: Medical or Social Needs. Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school. An application made under Rule 2 should clearly demonstrate why the school is the only one that can meet your child's need in a way that no other school can.

Rule 5: Sibling. Children who have a sibling on the roll of the school at the time of application. This applies to Reception through to Year 3.

Sibling definitions:

- Brother or sister.
- Half brother or sister.
- Adopted brother or sister.
- Child of the parent / carer or partner.
- Children looked after or previously looked after. This doesn't include children temporarily living in the same house. For example, a looked after child in a short term foster or bridging placement.

A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.

If an applicant lives at more than one address, the sibling must also reside at the same address for the majority of the school week. The sibling's address will be verified by the school.

A sibling must be on the roll of the named school or linked school at the time of application

(and when child starts) or have been offered and accepted a place.

Rule 6: Nearest School. Children for whom it is their nearest school.

Rule 7: Distance. Children who live closest to the school are given priority. Children not considered under Rule 6 will be considered under Rule 7. Distance will be measured using FreeMapTools.com. We will apply an as the crow flies measurement using postcodes.

Admission rules are applied in order. If more children qualify for a school place under a particular rule than there are places available, children will be prioritised using the next rule.

In the event of a tie break, where two different addresses are the same distance from school we will use a ballot to allocate the place.

We will notify parents of whether we are able to offer a place or not by 23rd February. If a child is not offered a place initially they will be placed on a continuing interest list and will be contacted if a place becomes available. Places on the continuing interest list will be ordered using the oversubscription criteria above.

Nursery Places

Parents will have seven days to accept or reject their place, if no response is received by the deadline it will be assumed that the place is not required, and it will be offered to the first person on the waiting list.

Once your place is confirmed, parents are invited to a pre-start meeting where a date will be set for children to visit the setting and experience the Early Years provision. At this time you will also collect a 'Welcome Pack' which contains useful information about the school.

A member of the Early Years Team will visit your child at either their playgroup or nursery to introduce themselves. If your child does not attend one of these settings, they will arrange to visit your child at home.

If we feel that the allocation provided to your child does not meet their learning and development needs, we reserve the right to change their attendance pattern. In this case, we will discuss this with you before any changes are made and keep this under review.

A place at Tannery Drift First School Nursery does not guarantee a place in Reception in the main school. Parents will need to reapply through the Hertfordshire County Council Admissions system for a place in Reception.

If you have any further queries regarding the admissions process please contact the school office on 01763 246549 where Mrs Smith will be happy to help you.

Nursery Places for 'Rising 3s'

In the event that we have available spaces in our Nursery from September, once all children who will be 4 during the academic year have been allocated and taken up their places, the school may offer a limited number of places to 'Rising 3s'. These are children who will turn 3 during the academic year and who meet the eligibility criteria set out below.

Children offered a Rising 3 place may start from the beginning of the term following their third birthday. Rising 3 children will usually attend Nursery for four or five terms before joining Reception.

If a child is offered a Rising 3 place, they will automatically retain their Nursery place for the following academic year. A place in our Nursery does not guarantee a place in Reception; parents must apply through the Hertfordshire County Council Admissions process.

As part of the decision-making process, we ask parents/carers to consider whether their child is 'school ready' before applying for a Rising 3 place. Children should be able to:

- separate from their parent with appropriate support
- follow simple instructions and routines
- engage in play and learning alongside others
- demonstrate early independence in self-care (e.g. toileting, handwashing, eating)

Before submitting an application for a Rising 3 place, parents must contact the school to arrange a visit. This visit allows staff to meet the child, discuss their developmental needs, and ensure that both the school and parents feel that a Rising 3 place is appropriate for them. The School Office will provide a Rising 3 application link following your visit.

Allocation of Rising 3 places will usually be made on a first-come, first-served basis. However, where more applications are received than spaces available, allocations will be made in line with the existing Nursery oversubscription criteria.

If you have any further queries regarding the admissions process, please contact the school office on 01763 246549 where Mrs Smith will be happy to help you.