Admissions Policy 2027/28
The Costello School

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1. Purpose of Policy

Bohunt Education Trust (the Trust) has produced this Policy to provide the operational framework within which its ethos of Enjoy Respect Achieve is reflected in its processes for admissions into its schools. This Policy ensures the Trust's legal duties and charitable purposes are met effectively.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This Policy takes account of all Equalities legislation, together with all relevant regulations and the School Admission Code (published by the DfE in 2021).
This policy also complies with our funding agreements and articles of association.

3. Definitions

The School means The Costello School

Looked after children are defined as those who are:
(a) in the care of a local authority,
(b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

Previously looked after children are those who were looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption order, child arrangements order, or special guardianship order. An adoption order is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 or section 12 of the Adoption Act 1976.

Child arrangements orders are defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.

Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

Previously looked after children also includes those 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. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

Normal admissions round means the time period during which parents are invited to express a minimum of three preferences for a place at any state-funded school, in rank order on the common application form provided by their home local authority. The deadline for applications is 31 October 2026 for Secondary and 15 January 2027 for primary places. Offers are made on national offer day. (1 March 2027 for Secondary and 16 April 2027 for Primary)

Sibling refers to brother or sister, half-brother or half-sister, adoptive brother or adoptive sister, foster brother or foster sister, stepbrother or stepsister living as one family unit at the same address We do not include 'cousins' within our definition of sibling

Staff includes all those on the payroll of the school who have been an employee at the school continuously for two years at the time of application. 'Children of staff' refers to situations where the staff member is the natural parent, the legal guardian, or a resident step-parent.
Priority may also be given for staff who have been on the payroll for less than two years but have been recruited for a post for which there is a 'demonstrable skill shortage' and in which the school has had difficulty filling. For priority to be given on this basis, the school's senior leadership team must provide written confirmation to the admission authority that they agree that this definition applies to the staff member, confirming that the role was not filled at the first attempt, due to a lack of suitable or qualified candidates being available. The school's senior leadership team must, on request, be able to confirm to the member of staff if their role meets this definition.

Catchment area is a geographical area from which children may be afforded priority for admission to the school. Please see Appendix 1 for a map of the school's catchment area.

4. Equalities Assessment Impact Statement

The Trust is committed to treating all people equally and with respect irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. We are committed to eliminating discrimination and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face and in accordance with our duties under the Equality Act 2010. We have reviewed the effect of this policy on those who may face additional or different barriers to securing its benefits than the population as a whole and have identified the following:

- Students who are or have been looked after children as defined above;
- Students who have an education and health care plan;
- Student who have exceptional medical or social needs;
- Students who are in receipt of service premium.

We are satisfied that our admission arrangements do not disadvantage unfairly, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social or racial group, or a child with a disability or special educational needs, and that other all our other policies around school uniform or school trips or equipment do not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Trust Board

The Board of Trustees of the Trust (the admissions authority) has delegated the right to operate the admissions processes and policy to each School: however, it remains the admissions authority. The Board receives advice and guidance from the CEO, Trust Governance Lead, Local Governing Body and Headteacher of each school with respect to these processes and their application. The Board will receive an annual report from the CEO concerning the operation of this Policy, including number of applications and the application of any over subscription criteria, and appeals made including the number upheld. The CEO will also report on the process relating to in-year admissions and any waiting lists where these exist.

5.2 Local Governing Bodies

Each Local Governing Body will ensure that the School operates the processes and procedures of this policy in accordance with its provisions and will ensure that the Headteacher reports to it termly concerning the operation of this Policy, including number of applications and the application of any over subscription criteria, and appeals made including the number upheld. The Headteacher will also report on the process relating to in year admissions and any waiting lists where these exist.

6. Published Admission Number

Each school has a published admission number (PAN). The school will admit this number of children if there are sufficient applications. Where there are fewer applications that the published admission number, places will be offered to all applicants.
The published admission number for The Costello School is 224 pupils for year 7 in 2027/8

7. Co-Ordinated Admission Scheme

The School operates its admission arrangements as part of the coordinated admission scheme operated by the schools relevant Local Authority (Hampshire County Council / West Sussex Local Authority / Portsmouth City Council / Wokingham Borough Council). All applications must be made using the Common Application Form (CAF) supplied by the Local Authority (LA) in whose area the child or young person lives. The School will consider first all those applications received by the published deadline of **midnight on 31 October 2026**

Notifications to parents offering a secondary school place, will be sent on national offer day of **1 March 2027**

Applications made after the deadline will be considered after all on-time applications have been fully processed unless exceptional circumstances merit consideration alongside on-time applications.
For the normal admission round, all on time preferences will be considered simultaneously and ranked in accordance with the admission criteria.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan

Any children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming the school will be admitted. Where possible such children will be admitted within the PAN.

Children of UK Service Personal and Crown Servants

Children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting or returning from overseas will be allocated a place in advance of the family arriving in the area (as long as a place is available) provided that the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date. The school will use the address at which the child will live when applying their oversubscription criteria when parents provide evidence of intended address. When requested by parents, the admission authority will use the unit or quartering address as the home address.

8. Oversubscription Criteria

When the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with and Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming the school, priority for admission will be given to children in the following order:

First priority: Looked after Children or children who were previously looked after

Looked after children and previously looked after children (as defined in section 3)

Applications for a place for a child who is looked after or previously looked after must be made by the person with parental responsibility for the child (e.g. social worker, acting on the behalf of the local authority for a looked after child) and will need to be supported by:

- Confirmation by the home local authority that the child is looked after or
- Confirmation by the local authority that the child was looked after immediately prior to the issuing of one of the orders detailed above.

Second priority: Children or families with an exceptional medical and social need

Each application wishing to be considered under this criterion must include supporting evidence from an independent professional such as a doctor and or consultant for medical needs or a social worker, health visitor, housing officer, the police or probation officer for social needs. This evidence must confirm the family or child's medical or social needs and must be clear why these needs can only be met at this school rather than any other. The evidence must be specific to this school and it must show why the school is the most suitable; what facilities will benefit the child, and why no other school can offer the same support.

Your application cannot be considered under this priority if you do not declare that you are applying under this criterion and you do not provide written independent professional evidence at the time of application. Any evidence received after the application deadline will not be taken into account

Third priority: Children of staff

Children of school staff where the member of staff meets the criteria under section 3.

Fourth priority: Sibling on roll

Children who at the time of application have a sibling (as defined in section 3) on the roll of the school and who will still be on roll at the time of the sibling's admission. Priority will not be given to children with siblings who are former pupils of the School (or who left during or at the end of academic year 2026/27)

Fifth priority: Children living within catchment and attending a linked school

Children whose permanent home address is inside the school's designated catchment area and attend a linked school.

In alphabetical order:

- Fairfields
- Great Binfields
- Rucstall
- St Marys

Sixth priority: Children living in catchment not attending linked school

Children whose permanent home address is inside the School's designated catchment area and who live closest to the school. Distances will be measured from the Ordnance Survey home address point to the school address point using Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
(Note that if you apply for free transport, different criteria may apply and the distance from home to school might be measured using a different route.)

Seventh priority: Children living outside the catchment area, in order of priority

i. Children living outside the designated catchment area who attend a linked school as mentioned in the list above
ii. Children who live closest to the school based on distance measured from the ordnance survey home address point to school using the GIS system.

9. Withdrawal of an offer

The School reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place if an application has been made which is fraudulent or intentionally misleading and which has effectively denied a place to another child.

10. Tie breaker

When two or more applicants are equidistant, random allocation will be used to allocate a place by the Local authority who are coordinating the admissions process.

11. Multiple Births

Where a twin or child from a multiple birth is offered the last place available within the PAN any further twin or child of the same multiple birth will also be offered a place if logistically possible, even though this may raise the number in the year group above the school's PAN. Where it is not logistically possible to offer each child a place the child(ren) to be offered the last remaining place (s) will be determined by the drawing of lots. The remaining sibling(s) will be placed at the top of the waiting list, after any looked after or previously looked after child.

12. Permanent Home Address

The child's permanent residence is where they live, normally including weekends and during the school holidays as well as during the week and should be used for the application. The permanent residence of children who spend part of their week with one parent and part with the other, at different addresses, will be the address at which they spend most of their time. Where a child's time is evenly divided between the parents, parents must agree which address they would like to be

considered for the purposes of application. In the event of a dispute, in the absence of a relevant court order, the admission authority will make a judgement about which address applies, taking into account the address registered with the child's current school / nursery / Child Minder, the address registered for child benefit and the address registered with the child's GP.

Applicants will be asked to declare that the address used will be their place of residence beyond the date of the student starting school. The school reserves its right to carry out further investigation and require additional evidence and to reject applications or withdraw an offer of a place, if a false address is given or the child does not live at the address. In such cases, the applicant will have recourse to putting their application through the independent appeals process.

Parents/carers/those with parental responsibility are required to advise of any change of circumstance at any time prior to the child starting school.

If you do not declare such arrangements, or a different address is used on the application where the child does not usually live; it will be considered that a false declaration has been made and it may be decided to decline to offer a place at the school, or withdraw the offer of a place.

The Armed Forces Covenant requires that members of the armed forces and their families are not disadvantaged because of their service.

13. Applicants from Abroad

An application for the school can be made from applicants applying for a school place for their child from abroad, provided that the parents/carers/those with parental responsibility are satisfied their child has right of abode or have other immigration status to allow them to enter the UK to study at school. In the case of children of service personnel currently overseas at time of application but who with a confirmed posting or crown servants returning from overseas, the application should be accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date.

14. Admission of Children Outside Chronological Age Group

Requests from parents for their child to be admitted outside their normal age group, for example if a child is gifted or talented of has experienced problems such as ill health should be made at the time of application. The request should specify why admission outside the normal age group is being requested and which year group they wish their child to be admitted. Decisions will be made by the Headteacher of the school based on the circumstance of the case and in the best interests of the child.

15. Application after normal round of admissions/In Year Admissions

15.1 In year applications

Applications for entry to Year 7 after the end of the routine admissions round (ending on 31st August each year) and applications for entry into other year groups (if available) at any time will be processed as in-year applications and applications must be submitted to the School directly.

15.2 In Year admissions waiting list

If there are students on a waiting list for the year in to which the applicant is seeking admission, then the student will be placed on that waiting list in the position determined by applying the oversubscription criteria. Students will be admitted from the waiting list, following the oversubscription order if space becomes available. If there is no student on the waiting list for the year in to which the applicant is seeking admission, then the School will admit the student if there is space or place him/her on the waiting list if there is no space. If at the time of this determination the school has applications from more than one student for admission to the same year group, all the applications will be ordered according to the admission criteria and will be considered in that order.

16. Appeals

If a parent is unsuccessful with an application to any of their preferred schools, they will have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel and will be provided with the relevant documentation and advice by the Local Authority's Admissions Service who administer appeals on behalf of the Admissions Authority. Details are available on our website, via the School Office or from the Local Authority directly.

17. Waiting List

All pupils who have been refused a place at the school for the year 2027-2028 will be added to the waiting list.

Children will be held on the waiting list by order of the criteria in the Admissions Policy. No account can be taken of the length of time a pupil is on the list. A pupil's position can change on the list as new applicants join or other applicants come off the waiting list.

Children will remain on a waiting list only until the end of the academic year in which they applied, if parents/carers want their children to be on the waiting list for the following academic year, they must reapply.

18. Training for staff

All staff involved in operating these provisions receive training as determined by their Headteacher appropriate to their role.

19. Monitoring provisions

The Board of Trustees will review this policy annually and each Local Governing Body will be made aware of the School Admissions Policy annually.

Appendix 1 - Catchment Area Map

Please visit the Hampshire County Council website for more information about the catchment area for The Costello School.