



Leigh Academy
Cherry Orchard

Admissions Arrangements

Leigh Academy Cherry Orchard for the academic year 2026/27

Leigh Academies Trust (LAT) is the Admissions Authority of the Academy. Applications for places will be made in accordance with Kent County Council's co-ordinated admissions scheme and timetable.

Admission number

Leigh Academy Cherry Orchard has a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 60 students. The academy will accordingly admit up to 60 students in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are received. All applicants will be admitted if 60 or fewer apply.

Oversubscription criteria

If the Academy is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan where the Academy is named in the Plan, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in priority order.

1. Children in Care and previously Looked After Children

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 (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a academy. A previously looked after child means children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after and 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. 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.

2. Sibling

A brother or sister in the same academy at the time of entry where the family continue to live at the same address as when the sibling was admitted – or – if they have moved – now live in a property that is nearer to the academy than the previous property as defined by the 'Nearness' 'Distance criterion' (Point 5 below). For this criterion brother or sister means children who live as brother and sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, step brothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters.

Children residing in the same households as part of an extended family, such as cousins, will not be treated as siblings. If siblings from multiple births (twins, triplets, etc.) apply to the academy and the academy would reach its Published Admission Number (PAN) after admitting one or more, but before admitting all of those siblings, the academy will offer a place to each of the siblings, even if doing so takes the academy above its PAN. If the admissions are to Year R, and so result in a breach of class size legislation, the additional

pupil(s) will be treated as “excepted” for a period of one year, in line with the academy Admission Code.

The academy reserves the right to ask for proof of relationship.

3. Children of Leigh Academy Cherry Orchard Staff

The son or daughter of a member of staff who has been employed at the academy for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the academy is made, or who has been recruited to fill a vacant post at the academy for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

In this criteria son or daughter means a child who lives in the same house as the member of staff and is their natural son or daughter, step child, or fostered or adopted child.

4. Health and Special Access Reasons

Medical and social reasons will be applied in accordance with the academy’s legal obligations, in particular those under the Equality Act 2010. Priority will be given to those students whose medical or social reasons mean they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend Leigh Academy Cherry Orchard. Equally this priority will apply to students whose parents’/guardians’, medical or social needs means that they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend the academy. Such claims will need to be supported by written evidence from a suitably qualified medical or social worker, and submitted at the time of application.

5. Distance

We use the distance between the child’s permanent home address (defined in KCC’s annual admissions prospectus) and the academy, measured in a straight line using the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) address point data. Distances are measured from a point defined as within the child’s home to a point defined as within the academy as specified by NLPG. The same address point on the academy site is used for everybody. When we apply the distance criterion for the academy, these straight-line measurements are used to determine how close each applicant’s address is to the academy. Where applications are made from properties or abodes that are not registered to the NLPG, including new build properties, KCC may be required to use planning sites or other relevant co-ordinates. In exceptional circumstances where alternative co-ordinates are not available, measurements will be determined by a Senior Admissions Officer and confirmed by the Head of Service.

In instances where more than one applicant lives in a multioccupancy building the offer of a place will be decided by random allocation.

These straight line measurements are used to determine how close each applicant’s address is to the academy with those living closest being given priority. Where parents live at separate addresses, and have joint custody, the address used will be the one where the child spends the main part of the academy week (i.e. Sunday night to Thursday night inclusive). Applications must be made by those with parental responsibility.

Applicants eligible under criteria 1-5 are each ranked in order of the distance of the child's home to the academy, using the method given in criterion 5.

Tie breaks

If the academy is oversubscribed and it is therefore necessary to use a tie-breaker to distinguish between two or more applications in any of the criteria 1-5 above a distance criterion will be used as above in criterion 5.

In the unlikely event that two or more students in all other ways have equal eligibility for the last available place at the academy, the names will be issued a number and drawn randomly to decide which child should be given the place. This process will be overseen by someone independent of the academy trust.

Deferred entry for infants

Where an offer has been made, the academy will provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents can choose to defer the date their child is admitted to the academy until later in the academy year, but not beyond the start of the term after their child reaches compulsory academy age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the academy year. Where parents wish, children may attend part-time but not beyond the start of the term after their child reaches compulsory academy age.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Requests for admission outside of the normal age group should be made to the Principal as early as possible in the admissions round associated with the child's date of birth. This allows the academy and admissions authority sufficient time to make a decision before the closing date. Parents are not required to provide evidence to support their request, however where provided it must be specific to the child in question and may include medical or Educational Psychologist reports. There is no legal requirement for this medical or educational evidence to be secured from an appropriate professional, however, failure to provide this may impede the academy's ability to agree to a request for admission outside of the normal age group. Parents are required to complete an application for the normal point of entry at the same time, in case their request is declined. This application can be cancelled if the academy agrees to accept a deferred application for entry into Reception the following year. Deferred applications must be made via paper RCAF (Reception Common Application Form) to the Local Authority, with written confirmation from the academy Principal. Deferred applications will be processed in the same way as all applications for the cohort in the following admissions round, and offers will be made in accordance with the academy's oversubscription criteria.

Fair Access Protocols

The academy works in accordance with the in-year Fair Access Protocols held by the Local Authority. Should a vulnerable child within the protocols require a place at the academy, they will take precedence over any child on the waiting list.

Operation of waiting lists

Subject to any provisions regarding waiting lists in the coordinated admission scheme, the academy will operate a waiting list. Where in any year the academy receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until the final

day of the academic year. This will be maintained by the academy and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application. Places from the waiting list will be offered in the priority order set out above, not in order of the date applications are made. The waiting list will be re-ranked each time a child is added or removed and before the offer of any place.

Appeals

If you have not been offered a place, the law entitles you to appeal against that decision to an Independent Appeal Panel. This panel is completely independent of the academy and the Local Authority. You can access an online form to appeal via the academy's website.