

**SAFFRON WALDEN COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL**  
**ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-27**

**1. ADMISSIONS; YEAR 7 INTAKE, SEPTEMBER 2026**

Number of pupils at December 2024: 2123

A. Saffron Walden County High School has Academy status and provides for the needs of pupils within the 11-18 age range.

B. The Saffron Academy Trust (SAT) is the school's Admissions' authority.

C. Pupils are admitted at age 11+ without reference to ability or aptitude.

D. The school publishes by October each year a prospectus which relates to admissions at 11+ the following September. This prospectus incorporates information required by law.

E. Applications must be made in accordance with the co-ordinated scheme operated by the child's home Local Authority (LA). For children resident in Essex this is detailed in the 'Secondary Education in Essex' booklet, which is available from the Local Authority.

F. Applications must be made by the closing date detailed in the 'Secondary Education in Essex' booklet, which is available from the Local Authority. Late applications will be dealt with as detailed in this booklet for children resident in Essex. Children resident outside of Essex should refer to the process for handling late applications published by their home Local Authority.

G. The LA will write to all parents on the annual national offer date offering a place at the allocated school.

H. The published admission number (PAN) is 300 pupils in the Year 7 cohort commencing September 1st 2025, and into the Year 7 cohort in subsequent years. By the end of December 2024, 565 applications had been received for Year 7 entry in September 2025.

I. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan, where Saffron Walden County High School is named in the Statement or Plan, will be admitted to the school. Thereafter, in the event of oversubscription, places will be allocated using the following criteria in the order given:

1. Children in the care of a Local Authority ("Looked after children") and previously looked after children (see note 1).

2. Pupils with siblings (as defined by the LA in the Secondary Education in Essex booklet) currently attending the school in Years 7-12 on the closing date for applications published in the Secondary Education in Essex booklet who live in the priority admission area (PAA) for the school (see I (4), below, for the definition of the school's PAA).

3. The children of permanent members of the teaching and support staff employed at SWCHS: a) where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time when the application for admission to the school is made; and/or (b) the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

4. Pupils who live (see note 2) in the priority admission area for the school, which constitutes the following parishes: Ashdon, Great Chesterford, Great Sampford, Hadstock, Hempstead, Littlebury, Little Chesterford, Little Sampford, Radwinter, Saffron Walden (including Little Walden), Swards End, Strethall, Wendens Ambo.

5. Other pupils with siblings (as defined by the LA in the Secondary Education in Essex booklet) currently attending the school in Years 7-12 on the closing date for applications published in the Secondary Education in Essex booklet who live outside the priority admission area (PAA) for the school (see I (4), above, for the definition of the school's PAA).

6. Pupils whose home address (see note 2) makes Saffron Walden County High School the nearest secondary school, with distance determined by straight line measurement.

7. Pupils, not qualifying under I(1) to (6) above, attending maintained primary schools situated in any of the parishes listed under I(4). A list of the maintained primary schools is available from the school office.

8. Other applicants.

J. In the event of oversubscription within any of the above criteria, priority will be determined by distance from home to school, those living closest being given the highest priority. Distances are calculated by the Local Authority, as defined in the Secondary Education in Essex booklet, by use of a Geographical Information System which accurately measures the distance from the home address to the school.

K. The Saffron Academy Trust will admit pupils who are of secondary age becoming resident at a home address (see note 2) in the area defined in I(5) above after the date referred to in (F) above, if the number of pupils holding or accepting places in the year group is less than 300.

L. A waiting list will be kept by Essex County Council until the end of the first week of the autumn term, and thereafter by the school, until at least the end of the first term.

## **2. ADMISSIONS INTO EXISTING YEAR GROUPS (MID-YEAR APPLICATIONS)**

All enquiries regarding mid-year applications should be directed to [admissions@swchs.net](mailto:admissions@swchs.net)

### **Years 7-11:**

For applications into existing year groups, a place will be offered when the number of pupils in the relevant year group is below the admission number for that year group. If the relevant year group is full, an expressions of interest list is held by the school for that year group and applications will be ranked according to the criteria in I (1-8) above.

### **Sixth Form:**

At Sixth Form, admission after the 1st September would only be accepted in exceptional circumstances and subject to the availability of places on the courses applied for.

## **3. SIXTH FORM ADMISSIONS; POST-16**

Detailed information regarding the Sixth Form application process, including application deadlines, can be found on the school's website and in the Sixth Form prospectus.

### **Procedure:**

- All students, both internal and external, will be required to submit an online application form by the deadline date, as detailed in our Sixth Form prospectus. External applicants will be required to supply a copy of their most recent report and predicted grades.
- All applications received by the deadline will receive an informal guidance discussion in February, held to advise students on appropriate course selection, grade eligibility and expectations. Conditional offers will be made to eligible candidates who are best suited academically to their chosen courses, using their predicted GCSE grades as the indicator, subject to timetable constraints and the student achieving the required GCSE grades on results day.
- Any applications received after the published deadline will be treated as late applications and placed on a waiting list, ranked according to our oversubscription criteria.
- On GCSE results day, all applicants will be required to complete an online Sixth Form enrolment form, which will be emailed to them, in order to have their place confirmed. Offers will be confirmed by the end of results day to successful applicants who have met the grade eligibility for their chosen courses.
- Late applications will only be considered, after all offers have been confirmed, in accordance with our oversubscription criteria, subject to our agreed maximum class size not being exceeded and not exceeding our PAN of 340.
- Mid-year admissions will only be considered in accordance with our admissions policy and subject to a qualification being viable.

**Admission number and criteria:**

- No student will be admitted to the school post-16 unless academic requirements, set out annually in the school's Sixth Form prospectus, have been met and there are places available on their chosen courses.
- All existing students in Year 11 at Saffron Walden County High School, who meet the overall and subject specific entry requirements of the subjects they choose, will be offered a place in the Sixth Form.
- In addition to students from our own Year 11 who meet our academic requirements, we will admit further students from other schools. Our published admission number (PAN) for external students is 90. The maximum number of students expected to be on roll in Year 12 is 340. The school will only consider admitting further external students above PAN if the overall number on roll will not exceed 340.
- In the first instance all offers made are conditional, based on the student's predicted GCSE grades. Offers will be confirmed following publication of the GCSE results.

**Oversubscription criteria for external applicants:**

If there are more external applicants with predicted GCSE grades meeting the entry requirements than places available, and there are available places on the chosen courses, then the following oversubscription criteria will be used to determine to whom conditional offers will be made, after the admission of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan where Saffron Walden County High School is named in the Statement or Plan:

- (i) Children in the care of a Local Authority ("Looked after children") and previously looked after children (see note 1)
- (ii) Students who are attending Year 11 in schools within Saffron Academy Trust at the time of application.
- (iii) Students whose predicted GCSE grades are best suited to their chosen courses.
- (iv) SWCHS's Sixth Form has no priority admission area (PAA). However, in the unlikely event of further places being available after criterion (iii) has been applied, then priority will be given to students living closest to the school by straight line distance from their home address.

---

**Notes:**

(1) Definition of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children (as stated in the Secondary Education in Essex booklet): 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 will be given first priority in oversubscription criteria ahead of all other applicants in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021. This also includes 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 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 in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

(2) The Saffron Academy Trust reserves the right to seek verification of the stated home address

---

**As required by the law, parents have the right of appeal against any refusal to admit.**

**Please see [www.essex.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.essex.gov.uk/admissions) for more information on how to appeal. Appeals should be lodged within twenty school days of the date on the letter confirming refusal.**

**Appeals will be heard by an independent appeal panel convened by the LA.**

**SWCHS Admissions Policy, September 2026-27.**