

POLICY

ADMISSIONS POLICY 2026/27

Senior Team Responsibility:
Principal

Governors' Reviewing Committee:
Full Governing Board

Review Date:
Dec 2024

Next Review Date:
Dec 2025

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Admission Arrangements - CASTERTON COLLEGE RUTLAND-September 2026

Introduction

The college is its own admissions authority and as such is responsible for setting the criteria for admission and their interpretation; at all times however it will act in accordance with the Schools Admissions Code published by the Department for Education.

This policy was consulted upon in January 2023 and was last determined by the governing body in **December 2024**

All parents wishing to apply for a place at the college for Year 7 intake should do so via their 'home' authority (i.e. the authority where they live). Parents have a right to express a preference for the school they want for their child. Application forms can be obtained from the College and the home authority. Application forms must be returned to the home authority by the specified date, which is published annually.

The planned Admission Number (PAN) for the college is 180 per year group and the College will admit children up to this number.

The college will admit a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), which names the college as part of that plan will be admitted. The number of places within the PAN will reduce accordingly.

The purpose of the admission arrangements are to ensure that student places at Casterton College Rutland are allocated and offered in an open and fair way. Casterton College Rutland must act in accordance with admission legislation and School Admissions Code.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2023) 'School Admission Appeals Code'

Oversubscription Criteria for entry September 2026 admissions and mid-term applications during the 2026-27 academic year

Where there are more applications for Casterton College Rutland than the following criteria, or combination of the criteria, will be used to allocate places

1st	A looked after child who is in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by that authority. Priority under this criterion will also be given where the child was previously in care but ceased to be so because they were adopted under the terms of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order). This priority is also given to those children who were previously in care outside of England.
2nd	Children of staff directly employed by Casterton College Rutland where either the member of staff has been employed at the College for more than two years at the time at which the application for admission to the college is made, and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable shortage.
3rd	A sibling currently attending the college in Year 7 -10 at the time of application. Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, foster brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's parent where the child for whom the college place is sought is permanent living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling.
4th	Students living in the "catchment villages" of Casterton College Rutland (See note i)
5th	Students living nearest to the college measured in a straight line distance. The distance is measured from the centre point of the child's home address (including flats) to the main entrance of the college (PE9 4AT). (See note ii)

Note:

i) Criterion 4 above, the child must have been resident in the catchment village at the point of application. The villages are:

Barrow
Belmesthorpe
Clipsham
Cottesmore
Empingham
Essendine
Exton
Geeston
Great Casterton
Greetham
Horn
Ketton
Little Casterton
Market Overton
Pickworth
Ryhall
Stretton
Thistleton
Tickencote
Tinwell
Tixover
Whitwell

ii) Home residence is defined as the address of the parent or carer with whom the child spends the majority of time, as a child of a family during term-time and proof of the home address should be in the form of a utility bill. Where a child resides with parents on a 50:50 bases, e.g. three days one week and two the next, we accept both addresses in these circumstances.

Where there is equal 'ranking' following the application of oversubscription criteria, lots will be drawn.

Other Circumstances

Children of UK Services personnel and other Crown Services can be assured that their needs are taken into account and they will be considered for allocation of a college place in advance, pending proof of the posting is provided [eg. an official government letter from MOD, FCO or GCHQ]. This should include a relocation date and an intended address. The Unit postal address or quartering area address will be used for consideration against the oversubscription criteria.

Late Applications

Any applications received after the closing date will be accepted but considered only after those received prior to the closing date. Parents are therefore encouraged to ensure that applications are submitted on time. All supplementary information i.e. medical consultant letters to proof of change of address, remains the parent's responsibility to supply.

Applications for a school place received after the national closing date are classed as late. If an application is late, an appeal must be placed within 20 school days of being refused the place. An appeal will be heard up to 40 school days from the date it was lodged.

Circumstances that may be considered under this heading would include, but not be confined to a lone parents' illness during the application period, a family moving into the area, or a family returning from abroad.

Waiting List

If Casterton College Rutland is oversubscribed for Year 7 applicants, it will maintain a clear, fair and objective waiting list. Priority will continue to be based upon the oversubscription criteria and will be subject to a review of ranking when any new child is placed on the waiting list. The waiting list will be maintained for the first academic term in the year of admission. The waiting list may change; this means that a child's waiting list position during the year could go 'up' or 'down'. The waiting list makes no distinction between on time or late applications. It is important to note that the list does not operate on a "first come, first served" basis and that places will be offered according to the oversubscription criteria if they become available.

In-Year Admissions

Parents who wish to apply for a place outside the normal admissions round should do so by completing the request for school placement form on the college website or contacting the college directly. The College is responsible for handling in-year applications as it is its own admissions authority.

Right to Appeal

If a child has been refused a place at Casterton College Rutland, parent/carers retain the statutory right to appeal. Casterton College Rutland has engaged the services of the Leicestershire Local Authority to conduct its appeals. Therefore, an appeal can be submitted using the Leicestershire Local Authority's 'Notice of Appeal' procedures. Leicestershire Local Authority will arrange the appeal on behalf of the governors to be heard by an independent panel, whose decision is binding on all parties.

Education out of year group

Whilst there is no statutory barrier to children being admitted to school outside of their chronological year group, there is no duty to agree to such a request. In each case it is for Casterton College Rutland to make the decision based on the circumstances of the case and what is in the best interests of the child. Parents should discuss the matter with the college prior to making such a request. Parents must provide supporting evidence alongside their application, which clearly highlights why the admission would be in the best interests of the child. It will be for the college to determine whether (subject to places being available) to accept the child out of year group or offer a place in the chronological age group. Parents have the right of appeal against a refusal, where a place is offered in the chronological age group.

Exclusions

Casterton College Rutland may refuse admission to applicants who have been permanently excluded from two or more other schools, where the date of the last exclusion was less than two years before the application for admission is made. Casterton College Rutland will coordinate its arrangements with the Rutland Fair Access Protocol.

Fair Access Protocol

Casterton College Rutland will participate in full with the LA's Fair Access Protocol in order to make sure that the most vulnerable children are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. This includes admitting children above the published admission number of a school that is already full if it is appropriate.

Withdrawing Offers

Once an offer of a school place has been made it is only reasonable for an admission authority to withdraw that offer in very limited circumstances. These may include when a parent has failed to respond to an offer within a reasonable time or the admission authority offer the place on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent (for example, a false claim to residence by distance from the college) which effectively denied a place to another child; or where a place was offered under co-ordination by the Local Authority, through an administration error.

Equality Act

The two key duties in the Equality Act are written to ensure that educational establishments do not discriminate against disabled students. The expectation is that schools:

- do not treat disabled students less favourably
- do make reasonable adjustments to avoid putting disabled students at a disadvantage.

Within the admissions policy, the Governing Body recognises its duty under the Equality Act

- To promote equality for disabled students in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and teaching and learning
- To treat disabled students as favourably as able-bodied students

Point of Contact

Admission arrangements at Casterton College Rutland, are carried out in accordance with the Schools Admission Code (www.education.gov.uk) For information or interpretation of this policy please contact the College Admissions Officer on 01780 762168.

Stage 2 (Panel hearing)

5.15 This is the final stage of the complaints process. The complainant is entitled to a review of the decision made at Stage 1 and the actions taken. The review is carried out by a panel of the Board of Trustees at a meeting convened by the Clerk to the Trustees. Requests for a review of the decision taken at Stage 1 should be made in writing to the Clerk to the Trustees, Casterton College Rutland, Ryhall Road, Great Casterton, Rutland, PE9 4AT, no later than 4 weeks after written notification of the decision has been received. Complainants should set out:

- A brief summary of the complaint
- Why the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1
- What outcome they are seeking

5.16 If the complaint is about the Principal, the complainant should write to the Chair of Trustees, c/o Casterton College Rutland, Ryhall Road, Great Casterton, Stamford, Lincs, PE9 4AT.

5.17 The Clerk will organise the time and date of the review meeting, inviting all attendees, collating all relevant documentation and distributing this, 5 days in advance of the meeting. Minutes of the review meeting will be taken by the Clerk and provided with written notification of the decision taken at Stage 1.

5.18 The complaints panel meeting will be held in private and will follow the format set out at Annex B. The aim of the meeting will be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the college and the complainant. However, it has to be recognised that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the committee does not find in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations which will satisfy the complainant that the complaint has been taken seriously.

5.19 The procedure is as follows:

- The Clerk will acknowledge the written request for the complaint to be reviewed no later than 10 school days after receiving it
- The Clerk will convene a panel of 2 college Trustees and one independent member or 3 college Trustees to review the complaint. All 3 panel members will have no prior knowledge of the content of the complaint.
- The review meeting will take place within 20 school days of receipt of the written acknowledgment from the Clerk

5.20 The panel **may** decide to invite the following to the review meeting:

- The complainant
- The principal (or the Chair of Trustees as appropriate) who investigated the decision and made the decision at Stage 1
- Relevant persons involved in the complaint
- Person whom, in the view of the panel, can

provide relevant advice and information relating to the subject of the complaint and the review process at Stage 1

5.21 It is acknowledged that many complainants feel nervous, and inhibited, in a formal setting, especially where sensitive matters are to be discussed. The panel chair will ensure that the proceedings are as welcoming as possible, that the setting is informal and not adversarial. Where the complainant, principal and/or relevant person involved in the complaint have been invited to attend the review meeting, they are entitled to be accompanied by a family member/friend/representative as appropriate. However, legal representatives are not permitted to attend the meeting.

5.22 Where a complaint involves a child, the committee, in conjunction with the parent/guardian, will determine the degree of the child's involvement in the hearing. It would not normally be appropriate for the child to be present throughout the meeting. Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings will ensure that the child does not feel intimidated. The committee needs to be aware of the views of the child and give them equal consideration to those of any adults at the meeting.

5.23 Where the relevant persons involved in the complaint include students at the school, and their attendance has been requested by the panel, parental permission must be sought if they are under 18. Extra care should be taken to consider the vulnerability of children when they are present at a complaints hearing.

5.24 Where the complaint is about a Trustee or Board of Trustees, the complainant may request that the review meeting is held by an independent panel. This is at the discretion of the Board of Trustees, who will notify the Clerk of their decision.

5.25 After considering the complaint afresh and re-

6 Serial, Persistent and Vexatious Complaints

6.1 If, after all stages of the complaints procedure have been followed, the complainant tries to reopen the same issue, the Chair of Trustees should inform the complainant, in writing, that the procedure has been exhausted and that the matter is now closed from the trustee's point of view.

6.2 A complaint may be viewed as unreasonable if it contains threatening, abusive or offensive language and conveys unrealistic outcomes beyond all reason. In such cases, the principal/chair of Trustees/ Clerk will consult with relevant parties and may decide that the complaint is not considered under this procedure. The complainant will be notified in writing that this is the case and that Casterton College Rutland will provide no further response.

6.3 If the complainant wishes to take their complaint further, they can write to the Department for Education, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GJ, which has its own Procedures for dealing with complaints about Academies. More information can be found at: http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/complaintsprocedure/b0021_2240/makingcomplaint-school

6.4 Queries regarding any aspect of the complaints procedure should be directed to the Clerk to the Governing Body at Casterton College Rutland, Ryhall Road, Great Casterton, PE9 4AT.

7 Procedure Statement Review

7.1 This Procedure Statement will be monitored as part of the Academy's annual internal review and reviewed on a two-year cycle or as required by legislature changes.

CASTERTON COLLEGE RUTLAND

ANNEX A

Formal Complaints Form

Complainants should be provided with the format outlined below in order to formulate their evidence to the panel.

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Your name:

Student's name and year group:

Your relationship to the student:

Address:

Postcode:

Day time telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Email address:

Please give details of your complaint:

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your concern? (Who did you speak to and what was the response?)

Why do you feel that this is not a satisfactory solution for you?

What actions would you like to be taken to resolve the problem?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Office use:	By whom:
Date acknowledgement sent:	Complainant Referred to:
Date:	

**CASTERTON COLLEGE RUTLAND
ANNEX B**

Checklist for complaints Panel Meeting

Where possible, the Complaints Panel hearing should follow the format laid out below. This should only be deviated from with the consent of both parties. Some complainants may not feel comfortable speaking to, or in front of, the Principal and this should be taken into account when formalizing the procedure. The meeting should be as informal as possible.

- Witnesses are only required to attend for the part of the meeting in which they give their evidence.
- After introductions, the complainant is invited to explain their complaint and be followed by their witnesses.
- The Principal may question both the complainant and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The Principal is then invited to explain the Academy's actions and be followed by the Academy's witness.
- The complainant may question both the Principal and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The panel may ask question at any point.
- The complainant is then invited to sum up their complaint.
- The Principal is then invited to sum up the Academy's actions and response to the complaint.
- Both parties leave together while the committee decides on the issues.
- The chair explains that both parties will hear from the panel as soon as possible but, in any event, within a seven-day period.