



Sandwell Academy

Year 7 Admissions

Frequently Asked Questions

1. I live within walking distance of Sandwell Academy. Your school is the closest secondary school to my home address. Why hasn't my child been offered a place?

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admissions number, applications will be considered against the oversubscription criteria as described in the Rules of Admission. Distance is calculated according to a straight line measurement between the applicant's home and each of the centroid points (as the crow flies) to determine which centroid point is closest. There are six centroid points, one each in Oldbury, Rowley Regis, Smethwick, Tipton, Wednesbury and West Bromwich - see Centroid Point Map for further location details. There are up to 30 places attached to each of the centroid points for the towns Oldbury, Rowley Regis, Tipton and Wednesbury and up to 40 places attached to each of the centroid points for the towns Smethwick and West Bromwich. Sandwell Academy itself is not a centroid point. This means that living close to the Academy will not guarantee your child a place. It is the distance from the applicant's home to the nearest centroid point that is considered, not the distance from the applicant's home to Sandwell Academy.

2. I know of another child who lives on the same street as me that has been offered a place at Sandwell Academy. Why hasn't my child been offered a place?

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admissions number, applications will be considered against the oversubscription criteria as described in the Rules of Admission. Within each band of ability, priority places will be allocated to children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and children in Public Care (Looked After Children). Up to 20 places will then be allocated based on Sporting Aptitude. Thereafter, taking into account the priority places as previously listed, for the towns Oldbury, Rowley Regis, Tipton and Wednesbury up to 30 places will be allocated and for the towns West Bromwich and Smethwick 40 places will be allocated, to each town's centroid point on the basis of distance between an applicant's home address and the centroid point nearest to their home. The following table illustrates how the 200 places available for Year 7 were allocated:

Town	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Totals	Places allocated by Distance
Oldbury	6	6	6	6	6	30	30
Rowley Regis	6	6	6	6	6	30	30
Smethwick	8	8	8	8	8	40	40
Tipton	6	6	6	6	6	30	30
Wednesbury	6	6	6	6	6	30	30
West Bromwich	8	8	8	8	8	40	40
Totals	40	40	40	40	40	200	200

Maintaining an equal allocation of places in the five ability bands will always be the determining factor when applying the oversubscription criteria. For the towns of Oldbury, Rowley Regis, Tipton and Wednesbury, six places will be allocated in each of the five bands of ability. For the towns of Smethwick and West Bromwich, eight places will be allocated in each of the five bands of ability. Therefore, if two children have a similar calculated distance to the nearest centroid point they may not both be offered a place as they may be in different bands of ability or the child allocated a place may be eligible for a priority place, as listed above. If there are more children within your child's band of ability that live closer to the nearest centroid point than you do your child may not be offered a place.

3. I have moved address since my child's application for secondary school was made, can you recalculate my child's distance measurement to the nearest centroid point?

Residency of applicants must be established and proved at the time of application for a place. We are unable to recalculate any distance measurements due to a change of address after this time. The Academy's ruling on residence, as defined by the Funding Agreement is final. Any offer of a place that is fraudulently obtained will be withdrawn.

4. I already have other children attending Sandwell Academy, why hasn't their younger sibling been offered a place?

The admission of students to Year 7 at Sandwell Academy is based on the applications received for that academic year. Therefore, there may be more applicants that live closer to the nearest centroid point than you do this academic year in comparison to previous academic years. When offering places for Year 7 admission, preference is not given in favour of siblings.

5. My child / myself / a family member has poor health conditions, why has this not been considered?

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admissions number, applications will be considered against the criteria in the order in which they are set out in the Rules of Admission. When offering places for Year 7 admission, preference is not given in favour of those with medical conditions, unless accompanied by an EHCP.

6. My child was not offered a place at Sandwell Academy, as another secondary school that was listed as a higher preference has been able to offer them a place. I am unhappy about this outcome, what can I do about this?

As stated in the Rules of Admission, parents need to be aware that the naming of Sandwell Academy and the ranking on the Local Authority's online form are taken into consideration by the Local Authorities and, as a consequence, by the Academy. The Local Authority will always try to place students in their first preference school. If your child's first preference secondary school is able to offer them a place, the Local Authority will allocate them this school and advise Sandwell Academy to offer the place to another student. If Sandwell Academy is not named on the Local Authority online form, a place will not be offered. This information is also expressed clearly at the Information Evenings held at the Academy each academic year. You may request for your child to be placed on the Waiting List for Year 7 admission by completing and returning the Waiting List Form. A copy of this form will be posted to you on 1 March.

7. I believe there was an error in the application process / a mistake was made on the application form / my child's application was submitted after the deadline / I did not understand a part of the application form that was submitted to the Local Authority, what can I do about this?

If you believe that there has been an error of this nature you may wish to appeal against the decision not to offer your child a place at Sandwell Academy. There will be an Independent Appeals Panel appointed in accordance with the provisions of the statutory Code of Practice on School Admission Appeals. As all applications are made through the Local Authority, Sandwell Academy is unable to view, alter or comment on the application process. Advice cannot be given by Sandwell Academy on what grounds may be accepted by an Independent Appeals Panel; the final decision on all appeals is not made by the Academy but by the Independent Appeals Panel.

8. My child was not offered a place at Sandwell Academy as they did not sit the Non Verbal Reasoning Test. What can I do about this?

All applicants must be tested using a NFER (National Foundation of Education Research) Non-Verbal Reasoning Test. The dates for the test are published in advance in the Rules of Admission, on the Academy website and discussed during the Information Evenings held at the Academy each academic year. During the Information Evenings, it is made clear that it is your responsibility, as a parent/carer, to ensure you have received the details for the Non Verbal Reasoning Test session for your child. Furthermore a reminder email is also sent to the parents/carers who have supplied an email address on the Local Authority form.

There is also a 'Mop Up' testing date (usually up to five school days after the published dates) for any student who, for any reason, did not attend their first date and who requested a further date within that time scale. It is your responsibility, as a parent/carer, to have contacted us if your child could not attend their scheduled test session. Sandwell Academy is a hugely oversubscribed school and we are unable to follow up with each applicant that does not attend a test session. We are unable to hold any further testing sessions after this time as we are unable to keep or conduct the test outside of the dates agreed with the external testing company. Furthermore, we have strict deadlines set to us by the Local Authority which we must meet.

As stated in the Rules of Admission, any student not sitting a test, will be considered for a place but only **after** all students who did attend testing have been considered.

You may request for your child to be placed on the Waiting List for Year 7 admission by completing and returning the Waiting List Form. A copy of this form will be posted to you on 1 March. However, it will be necessary for your child to attend a further testing session to establish their band of ability before they can be placed on the Waiting List.

9. My child attended the Non Verbal Reasoning Test, can you provide me with the test results?

As the results of the Non Verbal Reasoning Test are not a determining factor when allocating places for Year 7 admission we do not receive each applicants individual test score from the external testing company. Each applicant is placed in to a band of ability, band 1 being the highest and band 5 being the lowest. We are able to provide the band information upon request. Please make this request in writing including your child's name, date of birth and home address.

10. My child excels in their academic achievements and has been placed in one of the higher ability bands, from the results of the Non Verbal Reasoning Test, why have they not been offered a place?

Sandwell Academy admits students of all abilities. Maintaining an equal allocation of places in the five ability bands will always be the determining factor when applying the oversubscription criteria. Your child has most likely not been offered a place as there are more children within your child's band of ability that live closer to the nearest centroid point than you do.

11. My child has been placed in one of the lower ability bands, from the results of the Non Verbal Reasoning Test, is this why they have not been offered a place?

No, Sandwell Academy admits students of all abilities. Maintaining an equal allocation of places in the five ability bands will always be the determining factor when applying the oversubscription criteria. Your child has most likely not been offered a place as there are more children within your child's band of ability that live closer to the nearest centroid point than you do.

12. My child did not understand the Non Verbal Reasoning Test, can they sit the test again?

As no child can fail the Non Verbal Reasoning test, any requests to re-sit the assessment will be refused.

13. My child has not been offered a place at Sandwell Academy, however, they are very sporty and excel at physical education. Why haven't they been offered a place?

There are up to 20 places available, within the total published admission number, for Sporting Aptitude. Places are allocated by numerical scores based on a series of internationally recognised and standardised physical tests, to determine potential to succeed at a high level in Sport. The physical tests measure aerobic endurance, speed, power, agility, co-ordination and flexibility. The physical tests are generic and measure aptitude across a range of sports for which the Academy has expertise and facilities. We are unable to measure sporting aptitude for sports that the Academy is unable to support. Sandwell Academy is a hugely oversubscribed school regularly receiving over a thousand applications each academic year, around a third of applicants choose to take the Sporting Aptitude Test.

14. My child has not been offered a place at Sandwell Academy, I would still prefer them to attend, what can I do? OR There has been a change in my child's / my family's personal circumstances that I feel should be considered, what can I do?

You may request for your child to be placed on the Waiting List for Year 7 admission by completing and returning the Waiting List Form. A copy of this form will be posted to you on 1 March.

Parents who do not obtain a place for their child may appeal against the decision. There will be an Independent Appeals Panel appointed in accordance with the provisions of the statutory Code of Practice on School Admission Appeals. Advice cannot be given by Sandwell Academy on what grounds may be accepted by an Independent Appeals Panel, the final decision on all appeals is not made by the Academy. Should you wish to make an appeal you should make this request in writing, as advised in the letter emailed to you on 1 March. You will be asked to provide any supporting information/documents in advance of the Appeal Hearing, you may provide any information/documents that you feel best support the points you wish to raise with the Independent Appeals Panel.