

THOMAS MILLS HIGH SCHOOL



POLICY DOCUMENT 54

Academy Policy on Admissions – 2026/2027

Date approved by Board of Trustees	10/12/2024
Next review due:	Academic Year 2025 - 2026
Policy review cycle:	Annually
Policy Owner:	Headteacher

Vision Statement

*We, the staff and governors, aspire
to ensure that all our students,
irrespective of ability
and regardless of anyone's doubts,
achieve their potential in full;
and we aspire in this way to make Thomas Mills High School
the best in the country.*

Thomas Mills High School is an Academy and a company limited by guarantee incorporated in England & Wales under number 7605059

1. As an Academy, Thomas Mills High School remains committed to its continuing role as a comprehensive school serving children of all abilities from the local community.
2. The Admissions Policy of Thomas Mills High School conforms fully with the requirements in Annex B of the Funding Agreement made with the Secretary of State.
3. The Academy shall continue to work in partnership and agreement with the local authority in the smooth management of the whole admissions process.
4. The Academy Trust Board gives full delegated powers to decide upon the admission of pupils to the School in accordance with this policy and the requirements of Annex B of the Funding Agreement to the Admissions Committee working with the Headteacher and the Deputy Head.
5. The Academy adopts in full the policy in relation to admissions to Year 7 which applies to Suffolk County Council's community high schools, including all provisions relating to Children in Care and Children Previously in Care, pupils with Education, Health and Care plans, those with disabilities and those with challenging behaviour. As part of its policy, the Academy also adopts in full the local authority's Admissions Oversubscription Criteria for community high schools.
6. The Trust is mindful of the provisions of the Equality Act 2010. The principle of fair access is applied. Admissions are co-ordinated independently by Suffolk County Council.
7. Admission to the Sixth Form is open to all who wish to attend, providing that a suitable course is on offer in which a sufficient number of students enrol.
8. A minimum of three A Level courses (or equivalents) will be deemed to be a suitable course for students if they have attained a minimum of four GCSEs at grade 4 or higher. A minimum of grade 5 will be necessary to study that subject at Advanced Level.
9. The Published Admissions Number (PAN) for Year 7 is 168.
10. The admissions number for Year 12 is 140.

Policy amended July 2024 with the following points:

- Operational Capacity. Where a year group recruits below PAN, the school has to consider the best use of resources and this includes financial resources. In some cases, an operational capacity will be set which may be below the PAN.
- **SEPTEMBER 2022 ENTRY:** The year group that started Year Seven in 2022 was below PAN, 168. It has remained below PAN in Year Eight reaching 145 students. This has led to a corresponding drop in funding and the school has reduced staffing levels as a

result. The school has organised its teaching groups around this number and as a result it is no longer effective, efficient or desirable to go beyond a reasonable number which has been set as 150. On average this allows for five teaching groups of 30 students. The constraints to many of the classrooms make it unlikely that groups of 31 or above are achievable either. 150 has therefore been set as an Operational PAN or Operational Capacity. Applications above the Operational PAN are likely to be rejected for the reasons set out above.

The above point also applies to the **SEPTEMBER 2024 entry** and an operational capacity of 150 has been set.

Policy amended May 2025 with the following points:

- **SEPTEMBER 2023 ENTRY.** The year group that started year seven in 2023 has remained below PAN. The mid-year admissions are not funded and therefore the school has had to operate with reduced staffing levels. As option subjects have now been set and teaching groups organised it is no longer effective, efficient or desirable to go beyond the number which has been set as 160. Some core subjects have only 5 teaching groups and the average class size can be above 30. 160 is operational PAN or operational capacity. Applications above the operational PAN are likely to be rejected for the reasons set out above.