



Walthamstow Academy
The best in everyone™
Part of United Learning

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Frequently Asked Questions for Year 6 Parents and Children

How do I apply?

Applications for Walthamstow Academy are made through Waltham Forest School Admission Service. Details of this process can be found here <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/applying-secondary-school-place>.

Will my child gain a place if I apply?

We have 180 places available in our 2021 Year 7. These places are given out without any regard to faith, background or academic ability. In recent years there have been more than 180 applications received. When this happens we use our published oversubscription criteria to decide who gets a place. These can be found in full in our admissions policy [here](#). They are summarised below in the order they are applied:

1. Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)
2. Children in public care
3. Medical or social need. This is decided on a case by case basis
4. The child of a member of staff employed at the school for two years or more at the time of application or a staff member recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable shortage
5. Siblings already in the Academy
6. Children in Year 6 at Walthamstow Primary Academy
7. Distance from the Academy those closest to the Academy will be admitted first. As a guide, the distances at which 180 students were reached were within 0.687 miles in 2019, 0.738 miles from September 2020

It is not possible to know how far from the Academy children would need to live in 2021 to be offered a place because this distance changes every year, but the last two years can provide a rough guide. Parents should note that the distances given above are the *distance in a straight line from your door to the Academy entrance on Billet Road*. Google maps can be used to provide this distance.

The deadline for all applications to Waltham Forest secondary schools is 31st October 2020.

How much homework is given out?

Students in Year 7 are given between 30-45 minutes homework every evening. The work is clearly explained so that our students can complete it independently. It is designed to help students remember what they have learnt already, and to help prepare them for topics they are about to begin. Homework is often in the form of a reading comprehension. This involves reading a passage full of useful information

and then answering questions about what they have read. Homework like this builds core literacy skills as well as improving knowledge about a particular subject.

Homework is set using a web site called 'Google Classroom' so our students can find out what homework they have, and ask their teacher for help, using a computer with internet or an app which can be downloaded on any smartphone. We also use on-line platforms like 'Hegarty Maths' for some of the homework we give.

What are the school dinners like?

Walthamstow Academy is proud to work with a specialist school catering company called Caterlink. They provide menus that are varied and nutritious. We provide hot meals, with vegetarian and Halal options always available. There are also salads and sandwiches if students prefer a cold lunch. Food is chosen on the day, rather than ordered in advance, and the cost is deducted from a school meal account set up through School Comms (our parent communication system). Our school meals are popular with students and many choose to take up this option, but everyone is welcome to bring a packed lunch if they prefer and we don't need any advanced notice of this.

There is also a free breakfast club from 7.30am every day.

What subjects to Year 7 students study?

Year 7 students study the following subjects:

English (6 hours per fortnight)

Reading (4 hours per fortnight)

Maths (8 hours per fortnight)

Science (8 hours per fortnight)

Physical Education (4 hours per fortnight)

A Modern Foreign Language – students choose either French or Spanish (4 hours per fortnight)

History (3 hours per fortnight)

Geography (3 hours per fortnight)

Religious Education (3 hours per fortnight)

Art (2 hours per fortnight)

Music (2 hours per fortnight)

Drama (2 hours per fortnight)

Computing (2 hours per fortnight)

We have given the times 'per fortnight' because we have a two-week timetable at Walthamstow Academy. This means the timetable begins again every two weeks.

Do your students achieve good exam results?

Yes, our GCSE students' results were classified by the DfE as being 'well above average' in the 2018 and 2019 school performance tables. This is because the progress our students make between primary school and their GCSEs is much greater than is normally made across the country. In 2020 our students did brilliantly despite their being no exams for them to take, no performance tables will be published for the 2020 results.

We achieve these levels of progress through our high expectations for students' behaviour and work. We also achieve them because we employ talented teachers and then we provide comprehensive training

programmes to help them teach brilliantly. More information about our results over time can be found in the 'achievements' menu on our website.

Are there any activities after school?

Yes, Walthamstow Academy runs a wide range of after school clubs and sports teams every year. Our teachers run clubs that reflect their own interests and the interests of students. Our sports teams compete in Waltham Forest competitions and leagues, often very successfully. Our bands and orchestras play at local events and showcase their talents at our end of term concerts. Our library is open after school for students who want to stay and study here rather than at home.

Lots of our after school activities are currently paused because of COVID, but we are still finding ways to provide interesting resources for our students to use outside of their studies, for example our Art department produced the brilliant 'Go Create' resources over lockdown for our students. These can be found [here](#).

How do you help children settle in when they first arrive?

We know the transition to secondary school is a big step and, over the years, we have worked out a programme that helps children make that move successfully. All our new Year 7s get:

- An induction day in July where they can explore the school, try some lessons and meet each other for the first time.
- A Saturday morning in June when they come to the Academy to take some tests. These tests allow us to get to know their strengths and the areas where they are likely to need help. That means we can get on with providing the best possible education when they arrive in September.
- A start of term assembly that helps Year 7 students to understand our values and what it means to be successful at Walthamstow Academy.
- A tutor who they see every day and who can provide support and guidance. Parents get a phone call from the tutor within the first two weeks and then a face to face meeting within the first half term.
- A 'Character Journal' given to every Year 7 student to help them understand the Academy rules and reflect on their own character as they progress through school.
- Individual mentoring is provided for those who need help settling in.
- Learning Support Assistants in lessons for those with a particular barrier to learning.
- A school full of helpful older students, who remember what it was like to be the youngest and are always on hand to give directions when Year 7s get lost between lessons!

Do children behave well at the Academy?

Visitors to the Academy often comment on the quiet, productive atmosphere in classrooms. We are proud to have a strong behaviour policy because it ensures our students enjoy disruption-free learning. We issue detentions which can last until 4pm on the day they are given. Parents are informed of these through School Comms (our parent communication system).

Children do behave very well in the Academy, but not at the expense of fun or of warm relationships between students and staff. We celebrate good behaviour through a well-established reward system and, where we have to sanction students, we do so in a way that supports them to improve their behaviour in future.