



**THE CASTLE ROCK
SCHOOL**

Lionheart Educational Trust

SIXTH FORM ADMISSIONS POLICY

2026 – 2027



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This policy was written in order to be compliant with the current DfE School Admissions Code

As well as our own Year 11 students (referred to as Internals), the school admits students who are studying for GCSEs at other schools (referred to as Externals). The Published Admissions Number for external applicants is 200. If spaces remain on some courses, this number can be exceeded.

Internal and External students must meet the same academic admissions criteria in order to be admitted to the Sixth Form.

Admission for first entry to Castle Rock in Year 12 in September 2026.

- 1) The Castle Rock Sixth Form is a coeducational, comprehensive sixth form.
- 2) All applications for places will be considered in accordance with the arrangements set out below.
- 3) We reserve the right to change academic offer if numbers for each subject do not meet the threshold.

Entry criteria Level 3

Students wishing to study Level 3 at the Sixth Form are required to achieve the equivalent of at least 5 grade 4's in their GCSE examinations including at least a grade 4 in either English Language or Literature. Where English Language has not been achieved a grade 4, students are required to re-sit this qualification in Year 12. It is assumed that the majority of students will study for three A-levels and an extension course. Student requests to study 4 A Levels will only be considered where Further Mathematics is being selected and the student meets the entry requirements.

Some individual subjects have additional specific entry requirements which are published on our website.

Appropriate Courses

Students who are offered a place at the school for September 2026 will be invited to a Course Guidance Meeting where their preferred choice of subjects will be discussed. It is imperative that students choose courses on which they will find success, and which lead to their chosen career, training or university course.

A place in the Sixth Form will be confirmed as a conditional offer, specifying the agreed subjects to be studied following the Course Guidance Meeting. Changes of subject may later be possible, but cannot be guaranteed. The conditions set out in the academic admissions criteria must be met.

Internal Applicants

All internal students who request a place and who meet the academic criteria of the Policy will be offered a conditional place. Students **MUST** choose **THREE** subjects (there will be an opportunity for students with exceptional academic ability to undertake Further Mathematics if they so wish and the course is running in the academic year).



Applications

- 1) Applications will be made electronically through the Positive Steps 16 website which can be accessed here: <https://ps16.co.uk> and the college will consider all applications.
- 2) The closing date for application forms is the 31st January 2026.
- 3) The Sixth Form aims to allocate each successful applicant a Course Guidance Meeting within 15 weeks of this deadline. After that meeting and course choices have been confirmed a final offer letter will be sent by the end of May 2026. Unsuccessful candidates will be confirmed by the end of May 2026 and offered the opportunity to remain on our waiting list. These offers will be conditional on a student achieving the entry criteria and will be confirmed following GCSE results day.

Late applications

Applications received after the closing date (31/01/26) will be considered in date order and a place offered if spaces remain on their chosen course.

Appeals

Any applicant refused a place as part of the selection process or as a result of not meeting entry criteria, they will be offered a right of appeal to a committee of the academy trust operating within the college. The panel will consider the appellant's case and decide whether to uphold the appeal. The determination of the appeal panel is binding on all parties. Full details of the procedure will be sent to parents with the decision letter. Appeals must be submitted within 10 working days of a place being refused and will be heard by 30th June 2026 for those not receiving a place as part of random allocation and 10th October 2026 for those whose GCSE results do not meet entry criteria. Anyone wishing to appeal should contact emma.parker@castlerock.org.uk

Admission of Children Outside of the Chronological Age-Range

The vast majority of children are educated in the year group determined by their date of birth. Paragraph 2.17 of the School Admissions Code does, however, allow parents to request that their child is educated outside of their normal age group; for example, if their child is gifted or talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. If a parent/carer wishes to request that their child is taught out of year group they should submit their request to The Castle Rock School along with their reasons. Parents are encouraged to do this ahead of the relevant closing date for applications.

Parents may also wish to submit other information in support of their request; for example, from professionals who have worked with their child. Each request for a child to be taught out of year group will be looked at on an individual basis with all available information considered. Any decision taken will be on the basis of what is in the child's best interests. Decisions as to whether or not a child is educated out of year group will be taken by the admission authority.

Parents will be notified once a decision is reached along with the reasons for the decision.

Offers

All external applicants meeting the minimum entry and subject specific academic requirements and completing a Sixth Form Application Form will be offered a place, except that if the number applying is more than the Published Admission Number. The Published Admission Number is 200 pupils.



Students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will be offered a place, where the school – after consultation with the Local Authority – has been named on the EHCP as the appropriate post-16 provision. He/she will still need to meet the minimum entry and subject specific academic requirements.

Oversubscription Criteria (external applicants)

If there are more applicants than we have places available on any course who have met the academic criteria for entry, we will prioritise pupils based on the following:

1. Children in care of the Local Authority and those children who were previously looked after children including those who appear to the admission authority to have been in State Care outside of England and those that ceased being in care due to being adopted (or become subject to a residence order or special guardianship order) are considered under this criterion. In such circumstances a letter from the Local Authority/State in which the child was in the care of will be required (see definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).
2. All other external students will then be subject to an independent sequencing procedure generated by computer. This will anonymously match students to courses, where space is available and entry criteria are met. (For full description see Appendix A)

Waiting list

The waiting list will only include those having met the minimum academic entry criteria and who wish to be placed on it. It will operate for those not offered a place by 1st September and for those applying for a place after this date. It will operate until 31st December.

It will be organised in accordance with the oversubscription criteria above and if a place becomes available a fresh independent sequencing of pupils will take place.

Tie Breaker

As Castle Rock uses random allocation in the event of more applications than external places, it is very unlikely that two applicants would ever be tied. However, in the event of this happening, lots will be drawn to decide which applicant should be given a place.



Appendix A – Summary of the Oversubscription Procedure for External students

Castle Rock Sixth Form has to have a policy and procedure to admit students in a fair way, which complies with the requirements of the School Admissions Code.

The procedure is explained below and will be talked through at the Open Day.

1. The Sixth Form will decide the optimum size of classes in each subject and the number of classes that will run. This will establish the number of available places remaining in each subject for external students. This number will remain confidential during the admissions process in order to maintain the integrity of the process. The minimum number of external students admitted will be the Published Admissions Number of 200.
2. All external prospective students will be invited to the Open Evening in September. The admissions process will be explained to students and parents. Students who choose to complete a Sixth Form Application Form through the electronic process MUST choose THREE subjects (there will be an opportunity for students with exceptional academic ability to undertake Further Mathematics if they so wish), and will have their application dealt with as follows:
 - a) All external applicants will be placed anonymously in a random order using an independent sequencing procedure, after those under over-subscription criterion one have been allocated priority places.
 - b) The computer system will randomly select students who meet all relevant entry criteria and match them to their course choices, where space is available. Conditional places will be offered to those selected. Students will have a period of time specified in their offer letter to accept their place. Any places not accepted by this date are relinquished and will become available. The independent sequencing process will be repeated, as above, to fill remaining places where possible.
 - c) The process continues until no more students can have their choices matched. At this point, the school is full and the process is complete.
 - d) The process will be supervised by someone independent of Castle Rock School.
3. The students to be offered a conditional place will then be invited to attend a Course Guidance Meeting, following which the conditional offer will be confirmed, based on the agreed combination of subjects. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure that the student will be choosing the right choices for their career goals and is not used to determine whether to offer a place. Changes to subject choices may later be possible, but only if there are places available in a subject to which a change is requested. Where a student has a course changed then the relevant subject entry requirements have to be met for the courses that the student requests to change to.
4. Once all conditional places have been confirmed following the completion of Course Guidance Meetings, the Waiting List will commence. From this day, only those applicants who have requested to go on the Waiting List will be used to allocate any places that become available.



Places will become available if a student declines their offer or fails to meet the academic criteria set out above, following the publication of GCSE results. The process described above will be re-run and places allocated as per the oversubscription criteria.

5. All unsuccessful applicants will be informed by letter and will be told of their right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel, details for which will be given in the letter.