

Sale High School Proposed Admission Arrangements 2026

Consultation Comments and Responses

Comment 1

Thank you for your email outlining a proposed change to the Sale High catchment area.

Whilst I understand the Schools Adjudicator wanting to ensure catchment areas remain realistic to parents options, I don't agree with the proposed changes to remove the other postcodes.

The current criteria means that on the off chance there are places available beyond M33 residents, these would be on offer firstly to Trafford residents.

Sale High sits close to a local authority border. Removing the other Trafford Postcodes from the admissions criteria means that if the school did have surplus places they would be available to Manchester residents who live closer to the school than Trafford residents. Given that Sale High is a Trafford school I feel that it should give priority to its own residents first.

The demand for high school places the last few years suggests that for the foreseeable future the school is likely to only offer to M33 residents, but should the school ever expand in the future, or demand drop, it opens up the possibility of children gaining places from further afield.

I don't see the need to change the existing admissions criteria as I believe it works fine as it is. Trafford Council contact all families applying each year and make it clear what your chances are for getting into the local schools, so parents in WA14 / WA15 / M32 are currently aware that it's unlikely they would get a place. But leaving the criteria as it is would allow Trafford Council to future safeguard spaces within their own schools before offering them to children in other authorities.

Response 1

Thank you for your enquiry regarding the Sale High School Draft Admissions Policy 2026-2027.

The School is unable to leave the catchment area unchanged because the Schools Adjudicator considered including WA14 postcodes, WA15 postcodes and M32 postcodes to be unreasonable since children living in these postcodes are unlikely to be offered places. The Schools Adjudicator, therefore, required the School to make changes to the catchment area for the 2026 admissions policy. Since the Schools Adjudicator's determination is binding and enforceable, neither the local authority or the School have any powers to challenge the adjudicator's views that the size of the catchment area is unreasonable.

All comments and responses will be collated into a report for consideration by the governing body as part of the determination process of the 2026 admission arrangements

Comment 2

We live in the M32 area and my children travel to your school via the 778 bus. Does this change to the catchment area enable us to apply for free bus travel?

Response 2

Thank you for your enquiry regarding the Sale High School Draft Admissions Policy 2026-2027.

No, your children will not be eligible for free travel assistance because you have chosen to send your children to a school that is not the nearest suitable school to your home. However, extended rights are available for low-income families to remove any financial barrier of travelling further to access a school of choice. Your children would be eligible for free travel assistance if the shortest walking distance from your home to the School is between two and six miles and you meet the low income family criteria, meaning that your children qualify for free school meals because you are in receipt of one of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

If you meet the above criteria, please contact the School Admissions Team, school.admissions@trafford.gov.uk to request travel assistance forms for your children.

All comments and responses will be collated into a report for consideration by the governing body as part of the determination process of the 2026 admission arrangements

Comment 3

I have just read the email regarding the proposed changes to the priority catchment area for Sale High School for entry in 2026.

Of course, on the face of it the logic makes sense if the school was recently oversubscribed from applicants residing within the M33 post code.

However, speaking as the parent of a student who started at Sale High this year and who lives in the M32 post code I am bound to have my concerns about the implications.

If the changes go ahead, I think we can reasonably assume that there will be a year on year attrition of the number of students attending from North of the Mersey. My worry is that this will eventually threaten the viability of the 778 school bus that my son takes to and from school (and presumably any scheduled school buses travelling from the WA post codes also). I was wondering if any thought has been given to this, and if so what is the estimated lifespan of these services?

Response 3

Thank you for your enquiry regarding the Sale High School Draft Admissions Policy 2026-2027.

We understand your concerns regarding the bus service. Dedicated school bus services are planned and co-ordinated by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) and run by commercial bus operators. This is the information from TfGM website.

TfGM reviews how school services are running and being used throughout the year. Mid-year changes can take place at any point in the year but mainly take place by October half-term. TfGM particularly

look at how school bus services are doing in the autumn term to see if any changes are needed for the next school year. It is possible that routes may change if the number of students using services is low, there's suitable alternative bus service in place, or if there's been a big change to where students attending a school live. School services can change for a number of reasons. Just because a school has a school bus service this year does not always mean that it will run in the next academic year. TfGM recommend that parents consider how their child would get to school if a school bus service was no longer provided.

All comments and responses will be collated into a report for consideration by the governing body as part of the determination process of the 2026 admission arrangements.