



Admissions Policy

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2. Statement of Intent

At Higham Primary School, we welcome all pupils, and places at the school are offered in an open, fair, clear and objective manner. We work to the principle that any parent accessing our admissions arrangements will be able to understand easily how places for our school will be allocated, and will not be alienated or discouraged from applying based on admissions criteria.

3. Aims and objectives

We are an inclusive school that welcomes children from all backgrounds and abilities. All applications will be treated on merit and in a sensitive manner. The only restriction we place on entry is that of number. Our pupil admission number (PAN) in each year group is 30. If the number of children applying for entry exceeds the places available, we enforce the procedure set out below in order to determine whether a child is accepted or not. It is our wish to allow parents the right to have a place at the school of their choice. However, this is not always possible, due to the excess demand on the school places available.

4. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2023) 'School Admission Appeals Code'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- SEN Information Report

5. How can parents apply for their child to be admitted to our school?

The school determines the school admission in agreement with the LA. The LA is therefore the 'Admissions Authority' for our school. The regulations for entry to each school, where the Admissions Authority is the LA, are published each year by the LA. Parents can receive a copy of these regulations directly from the LA. The LA publishes a composite admissions prospectus each year, which gives information about how parents can apply for a place in the school of their choice.

Parents have a right to express a preference for the school of their choice and they should do so on the application form. Expressing a preference does not, in itself, guarantee a place at this school. Reception Common Application forms (RCAF) can be obtained from the Education Department of the LA and should be completed by the date stipulated on the forms. The school notifies parents about the school place as soon as all the applications have been considered. In this area, children enter our school in the academic year they become five. Parents do not legally have to send their child to school until the term in which their child reaches compulsory school age – the term after their 5th birthday. The school will provide for the admission of all children from the September following their fourth birthday.



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6. Admission Arrangements

6.1 The published admissions number (PAN)

The number of places available is determined by the capacity of the school. The PAN for all year groups is 30 pupils.

The LA will consult with the governing board where it proposes to increase, decrease or keep the same PAN. Where the LA has set a PAN lower than the school's wishes, the school will submit an objection to the Schools Adjudicator, where appropriate.

The governing board will communicate with the LA where the admission of additional children would prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources.

6.2 Oversubscription criteria

The LA is responsible for determining admissions arrangements for the school. The oversubscription criteria is reasonable, clear, objective, procedurally fair, and compliant with all relevant legislation, including equalities legislation. This means that the oversubscription criteria will not unfairly disadvantage, whether directly or indirectly, any child based on a protected characteristic or economic disadvantage.

Before the application of oversubscription criteria, children with an Education, Health and Care Plan which names the school will be admitted. As a result of this, the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly.

In the event that there are more applicants than available places, the LA has applied the following oversubscription criteria, in order of priority given:

- **Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children:** A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school. A previously looked after child means such children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after and those children who appear to the admission authority to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.
- **Current Family Association:** A brother or sister in the same school at the time of entry where the family continue to live at the same address as when the sibling was admitted; or –
 - if they have moved – live within 2 miles of the school, or
 - if they have moved to a property that is nearer to the school than the previous property as defined by the 'Nearness' criterion' (below).

Unfortunately, if your older sibling is currently attending school in Year 6, you cannot claim a sibling link for your younger child, as the older sibling will have transferred to secondary school prior to the younger child starting in Reception.



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- **Health, Social and Special Access Reasons:** Medical / Health and Special Access Reasons will be applied in accordance with the school's legal obligations, in particular those under the Equality Act 2010. Priority will be given to children under this criterion whose health or physical impairment means they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Medical/Health and Special Access Reasons must be supported with written evidence from an appropriately qualified medical practitioner. The evidence must demonstrate a special connection between the child's needs and the particular school.
- **Nearness of children's homes to school:** We use the distance between the child's permanent home address and the school, measured in a straight line using the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) address point data. Distances are measured from a point defined as within the child's home to a point defined as within the school as specified by NLPG. The same address point on the school site is used for everybody.

6.3 Equal opportunities

The LA will not establish admissions criteria that excludes individuals with a particular protected characteristic. The admissions criteria will not exclude a greater proportion of pupils with particular protected characteristics, unless the school can justify how this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

The admissions criteria will not discriminate against disabled applicants, unless the school can justify how this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

6.4 Admission for Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)

If your child has already been identified as having a special educational need or disability before they enter school, in most cases the admissions criteria detailed above will still apply. However, if your child has an Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP) or will have one by 15th January of the year they are due to start in the September, you need to contact the Kent County Councils Special Educational Needs Services (SEN) (see below for details) as the admissions process is different.

Please note - If your child is going through statutory assessment you should not assume a EHCP will be issued. You should therefore apply for a school place at primary school as detailed in the admissions criteria above. If you fail to do so and your child does not receive a Statement or EHCP you may not get a place later when you do apply for the school of your preference as all the places may be filled.

Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities will be admitted to Higham Primary School in line with the school's admissions' policy set out above. At Higham Primary we aim to raise the aspirations and achievements of all our pupils, regardless of their SEND status. We have high expectations of all of our children and believe in a fully inclusive and holistic approach, where every child is unique and every child matters. As a school we strive to support each and every child to the best of our abilities, so that all our children can maximise their potential, despite any barriers to learning that they may have. Therefore, we will use our induction meetings to work closely with parents to ascertain how we as a school can best meet the child's specific needs.

We ensure that no child is discriminated against and has equal opportunities to achieve their full potential regardless of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, special educational needs to socio-economic background.

The school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants and/or their parents throughout the admissions process, in line with the Equality Act 2010. If parents require additional support during school visits, applications, or transition, they should contact the school office for assistance.



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6.5 Admission for Children with Education Health and Care Plans

The admissions arrangements for children with Education, Health and Care Plans are the responsibility of Kent County Council. For advice on the arrangements to admit your child into school, you should contact your [EHCP case worker for further details](#).

6.6 Deferred Entry and Part-Time Attendance

Where a place has been offered, parents can choose for their child to start school in the September following their fourth birthday. However, they are not legally required to attend full-time education until the term after their fifth birthday (compulsory school age).

Parents may:

- Defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made
- Request part-time attendance until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age

Parents who wish to defer their child's entry or arrange part-time attendance should inform the school in writing before the start of the academic year. The child's place will be held and will not be offered to another child, provided they begin before compulsory school age.

The school will agree to all such requests and will hold the place open for the child, as long as the deferral does not extend beyond:

- The start of the term after the child's fifth birthday.
- The start of the final term of the academic year.

If parents wish to request admission outside the normal age group in conjunction with a deferral (e.g., deferring entry to Reception and starting in a later year group), the school will consider both the deferral and the age group request together, taking into account the child's academic, social, and emotional development, as well as the parents' wishes. (Please see below)

6.7 Admission Outside the Normal Age Group

Parents may request for their child to be admitted outside their normal age group (e.g., a summer-born child starting Reception a year later instead of Year 1).

Each request will be considered individually on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of:

- Parents' views and reasons for the request.
- The child's academic, social, and emotional development.
- Professional evidence (e.g., medical reports or previous school assessments) where applicable.
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- Views of the headteacher.

Parents who wish to make such a request should contact the school and LA before the application deadline and provide supporting evidence.



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Where an admission authority agrees to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to a relevant age group (i.e. the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school) the local authority and admission authority must process the application as part of the main admissions round, unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible, and on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. They must not give the application lower priority on the basis that the child is being admitted out of their normal age group. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group.

7. Transition Information

The school will offer open events and school visits to all potential applicants, irrespective of any protected characteristics. Where necessary, the school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants or disabled parents.

The school may assess its ability to cater to the applicant's needs by:

- Inviting the applicant to attend the school for half a day.
- Visiting the applicant's home.
- Visiting or contacting the applicant's current education provision.

8. Applications and offers

8.1 Applications

Kent resident parents will have the opportunity to apply for their child's school place using a Reception Common Application Form (RCAF) available online at www.kent.gov.uk/ola. Kent County Council cannot accept multiple applications for the same child. In Kent, parents will be invited to express up to three preferences in priority order. Preferences can be expressed for Kent and non-Kent schools. Parents must complete the application for their home Local Authority (e.g. Kent residents complete Kent applications, Medway residents complete Medway applications, etc). Please note the admission arrangements for Medway resident parents is different and further details and information can be found here [Dates for applying for primary school | Applying for a primary school place | Medway Council](#)

Parents can give reasons for each preference, including details of any siblings that will still be on roll at the preferred school at the time of the applicant child's admission. Please note your three preferred schools do not have to be located in the LA area where the parents live. Parents will provide LAs with the following information within the CAF:

- Their name and their child's name and date of birth
- Their and their child's address and proof of residence

The RCAF will be submitted to the parents' LA. Parents are not guaranteed to have their preferences met. The LA will request supplementary information for the purpose of processing applications where necessary.

8.2 Offers

All offers will be made on National Offer Day.

Where the school is oversubscribed, the LA will rank applications in accordance with its determined arrangements, and the qualifying scheme will ensure that only one offer will be made per child by the LA.



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An offer will only be withdrawn if it has been made in error, a parent has not responded within 20 working days, or if the offer was made via a fraudulent or misleading application. Where an offer has not been responded to within the designated time frame, the LA will give the parent a further opportunity to respond and will explain that the offer will be withdrawn if they do not. If any application is found to be fraudulent after a child has started at the school in the first term of the new academic year, the school may withdraw the place. If the fraudulent application is found after this time, the pupil will not be removed.

The headteacher will assist the LA with deciding on which year group a child will enter. Once a decision has been reached, the child's parents will be informed in writing along with an explanation of how the decision was reached and any reasons why.

The school must admit all children who have an EHC plan where the school is named. Children with SEND who do not have an EHC plan will be treated equally to all other applicants in the admissions process. This includes children who may need extra support or reasonable adjustments to be made. The details of the school's SEND provision can be found in our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy and SEN Information Report.

9. In-year admissions

The school will follow the same process for in-year admissions as for admissions at the start of the academic year. In Kent, parents complete the In-Year Admission Form (IYAF), to apply for school places in any year group outside of the normal admissions round. Applicants must use one form for each school they wish to apply for.

The school will publish a link to the LA's in-year admissions arrangements on the school website by 31 August each year.

Where the school has places available in-year, it will offer a place to every child who has applied for one without condition or use of oversubscription criteria, unless to do so would be to prejudice the efficient provision of education or use of resources.

The school will consider all such applications and if the year group applied for has space available, then a place will be offered. If a place is not available, then the child's parent can ask for their child's name to be added to the appropriate waiting list. As with admissions at the start of the academic year, parents whose applications are turned down are entitled to appeal through the process outlined below. Please note there is a legal maximum class size for reception, year 1 and year 2. This is 30 children per teacher. Your appeal may be unsuccessful if all the classes have already reached their legal limit.

The school will provide the LA with details of the number of places available, or any supporting evidence, no later than five school days after the LA requests this information. Schools must also process IYAF forms within five school days of receipt, to ensure timely coordination of in-year applications.

Once the application has been processed, the admission authority will aim to notify parents of the outcome within 10 school days and **must** do so within 15 school days of receipt, in line with the School Admissions Code 2021 (Section 2: In-year admissions).

10. Waiting lists

For admissions at the start of the academic year, the school will operate a waiting list which is maintained until 31 December on year of entry. The list will set out the priority for places in the same order set out in the oversubscription criteria. When additional children are placed on the waiting list, the list will be re-ordered in



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line with the oversubscription criteria – no pupil will be prioritised based on when their name was added to the list.

The LA will make clear in the admissions arrangements the process for requesting admission outside of the normal age group for the admissions round.

Parents may request that their child is placed on the waiting list if they are not successful in receiving a place. Where a place becomes available, it will be offered to the parents of the child at the top of the list.

For in-year admissions, if there is a waiting list for that year, the child will be placed on a waiting list until a space becomes available, or the child finds a new school setting. The list will set out the priority for places in the same order as admissions at the start of the year – when a place becomes available, it will be offered to the parents of the child at the top of the list.

If a child on the waiting list is offered a position at the school, the parents will be notified by email and letter and will have the option of accepting or rejecting the place within 10 days of visiting the school. If parents do not respond to any communication from the school within 10 days the place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list in line with the oversubscription criteria.

11. Admissions appeals

If we do not offer a child a place at this school, it is because to do so would prejudice the education of other children by allowing the numbers of children in the school to increase too much. If parents wish to appeal against a decision to refuse entry, they can do so by applying to the LA. An independent appeals panel then meets to consider all appeals by parents who have been refused a place at our school and who wish to appeal against this decision. An appeals panel's decision is binding for all parties concerned. If the appeals panel decides that we should admit a child to our school, then we will accept this and continue to do all we can to provide the best education for all the children at our school. You can obtain further information about appeals from KCC's website at www.kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions

12. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the governing board annually. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all staff and other interested parties.