Highcliffe St Mark Primary School

Admissions Policy 2028

Reviewed (date)	September 2026
Reviewed by (name)	Claire Barker
Determined by Governors (if applicable)	October 2026
Review due (date)	September 2027

Admissions Policy – September 2028

Introduction

- The name of the school is Highcliffe St Mark Primary School (The School). The School is a Church of England Foundation School.
- The Governing Body of Highcliffe St Mark Primary School (The Governing Body) is the admissions authority.
- The School's trust deed of 1 January 2006 states that The School was established to provide education for children living within the local parish, which is referred to as the school's catchment area. A map of this area is available from the school.
- This policy will be used during 2028-2029 for allocating places in the main admission round for entry to Year R in September 2028. It will also apply to in-year admissions during 2028/29. Outside the normal admissions round, the Fair Access protocol will be applied alongside the policy to secure the admission of vulnerable pupils from specific groups.
- The school has a published admission number (PAN) for entry to Year R and Year 3. The school will admit this number if there are sufficient applications. Where fewer applications than the published number are received, places will be offered to all applicants.
- The Published Admission Number for the school for 2028-2029 is 60 children in the reception year. The transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 marks a separate point of entry into the school. A further two places per class in Year 3 are provided for within the governor's Planned Admission Number, i.e. 32 per class.
- This policy takes account of all Equalities legislation, together with all relevant regulation and the School Admissions Code (Published by the DfE in 2021). This policy will be administered fairly and impartially. The decision to admit, or otherwise, is the responsibility of the Governing Body.

1. *Admissions Process*

For main entry applications for both Year R and Year 3, The Governing Body will first consider all applications received by the Local Authority by the **deadline of midnight on Friday 15th January 2028.** Notifications to parents offering a school place will be sent by the Local Authority on **Friday 16th April 2028.**

Applications made after midnight on **15th January 2028** will be considered after all on-time applications have been fully processed unless exceptional circumstances merit consideration alongside on-time applications.

For the normal admission round, all on time preferences will be considered simultaneously and ranked in accordance with the admission criteria. If more than one school can offer a place, the parent's highest stated available preference will be allocated.

Any child with and Education, Health and Care Plan naming Highcliffe St Mark Church of England Primary School will be admitted. Where possible such children will be admitted within PAN.

2. Admissions Criteria - Oversubscription

When the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care plan naming the school, priority for admission will be given to children in the following order:

a. Looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those children who appear (to The School) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see footnote A)

b. children (or families) who have exceptional medical reasons for attending the school (see footnote F)

c. children living within the school's catchment area (see footnote C) and who will have a sibling attending the school or Fledglings pre-school at the time of application, who will still be attending at the time of admission (see footnote D & H).

d. children living within the school's catchment area who are attending Fledglings pre-school (see footnote H) and are eligible for early years pupil premium

e. children living within the school's catchment area (see footnote C) who attend Highcliffe St Mark Primary School's Fledglings Pre-School (see footnote H)

f. children living within the school's catchment area (see footnote C)

g. children living outside the school's catchment area who will have a sibling attending the school or Fledglings pre-school at the time of application, who will still be attending at the time of admission (see footnote C, D & H)

h. children whose parents wish them to attend the school because the family are active members of a Christian Church as defined by the following statement: "*A worshipping fellowship who confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Bible and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; who are members or participant observers of the World Council of Churches or the World Evangelical Alliance"* and who requests admission on denominational grounds and provides relevant evidence. The commitment must be declared by the parents and validated by a church official using the schools Supplementary Information Form (SIF). Parents wishing to apply using the Christian Commitment criteria must ask the school for a SIF and return it to the school before the deadline for admission published by BCP Council. (see footnote G).

i. children living outside the school's catchment area who attend Highcliffe St Mark Primary School's Fledglings Pre-School and are eligible for early years pupil premium (see footnotes C & H)

j. children living outside the school's catchment area who attend Highcliffe St Mark Primary School's Fledglings Pre-School (see footnotes C & H)

k. children living outside the school's catchment area (see footnote C)

Tie Breaker

For each category, oversubscription will be determined by straight-line distance between the applicant's home and the school. This measurement is calculated using BCP Council's geographical information system in use at the time of allocation. Currently, the system used is Synergy, which measures the distance between the address mapping points of the school and the applicant's residence.

Where a twin or child from a multiple birth is offered the last place available within the PAN, any further twin or child from the same multiple birth will also be offered a place, if the parents so wish, even though this may raise the number in the year group above the school's PAN.

If there are not enough places available for all applicants, and the final available place(s) cannot be split between applicants (e.g., due to identical distance measurements), the remaining place(s) will be allocated through a random selection process. This process will be administered by BCP Council.

3. *Moving address*

Applications from new entrants into the area, are required, by the deadline for receipt of applications, Thursday 15th January 2028, to produce documentary evidence to the school of their impending move as follows: (see footnote E).

i) a Solicitor's letter confirming that exchange of contracts has taken place on the purchase of a property relevant to the application;
ii) a current dated Rental Agreement, signed by both the Tenants and the Landlord, showing the address of the property relevant to the application;
iii) a letter from a housing association confirming that the parent(s) will be living at a specific address relevant to the application

4. *UK Service Personnel and Crown Servants*

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, The School will consider an application in advance of the family arriving in the area, provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date. The School will use the address at which the child will live when applying the admissions criteria, as long as the parents provide some evidence of their intended address (including using a Unit or quartering address as the child's home address where a parent requests this), and will offer a place if, after applying the admissions criteria, the child is eligible for a place.

5. *Waiting List*

Waiting lists will be established for each year group where more applications are received than places available.

Any places that become available will be offered to a child at the top of the list on the day the place becomes available. The waiting list is ordered according to the criteria of the admission policy with no account being taken of the length of time on the waiting list or any priority order expressed as part of the main admission round. Fair Access arrangements and school closure arrangements will take priority over the waiting list.

The waiting list will be reviewed and revised –

- Each time a child is added to or removed from, the waiting list;
- When a child's changed circumstance affects their priority.

For entry to Year R, the waiting list will be maintained by the school until 31 August 2029, at which point all names will be removed. For all other year groups, waiting lists will remain open until 31 August of each year. Should parents wish their child to be considered for a place at the school in the following school year, they must submit a new in-year application after 1st June for the new school year. BCP will send a decision letter on behalf of the school within the 15 school days of the application.

6. Year R – starting school

The Governing Body will admit 60 children to the reception classes. This is the Published Admission Number for the school (PAN).

Pupils born between 1st September 2023 and 31st August 2024 (inclusive) will be entitled to full-time schooling from September 2028.

Part-time places in Year R

Parents can also choose that their child takes up the place part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Deferred entry into Year R

Parents can choose that the date their child is admitted to school is deferred until later in the school year but not beyond the point they reach compulsory school age, at the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday.

Parents of summer born children (those born between 1 April and 31 August) who are particularly concerned about their child's readiness for school, may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1 in September 2029. In making such a request, parents would be expected to state clearly why they felt delaying their child's admission to Year R until the following September was in their child's best interests. It is recommended that discuss these arrangements with the school as soon as possible.

7. Admission Outside the Normal Age Group

Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group.

Requests may be made where:

- a parent wishes to delay admission to Reception for a summer-born child (born between 1 April and 31 August);
- a parent believes their child should be educated in a year group below that determined by their date of birth due to circumstances such as ill health, interrupted education or additional needs; or
- a parent believes their child should be educated in a year group above that determined by their date of birth.

The Governing Body will consider each request individually and make a decision based on the circumstances of the case and the best interests of the child.

In reaching a decision, the Governing Body may take account of:

- the views of the parent(s);
- information about the child's academic attainment and educational needs;
- the child's social and emotional development;
- any relevant medical evidence;
- whether the child has previously been educated outside their normal age group;

- the views of the Headteacher and other relevant professionals.

Parents do not have a statutory right of appeal against a decision not to place their child outside their normal age group. However, they may appeal against a refusal of a school place.
Further information is provided in Appendix 1.

8. In-Year Fair Access placements by the Local Authority

The local authority must ensure that all pupils are placed in schools as quickly as possible. It may therefore sometimes be necessary for a pupil to be placed by the local authority, or a local placements panel acting on behalf of the authority, in a particular school even if there is a waiting list for admission. Such placements will be made in accordance with the provisions of any protocol approved based on legislation and government guidance. If an admission through In-Year Fair Access raises the number on roll above the PAN, no further pupil will be admitted from the waiting list until a place becomes available within the PAN.

9. Admission appeals

If you are unsuccessful in gaining a place for your child at this school you will be informed by the Local Authority on behalf of the Admissions Authority in writing, be given reasons and informed of your right of appeal to an independent appeal panel against the decision. Please use the form online to place your appeal request: Highcliffe St Mark Primary School - Admission Arrangements

10. Applications to Key Stage 1 Classes

The Governing Body will admit a maximum of 30 children to the KS1 classes.

11. Applications to Key Stage 2 Classes

The Governing Body will admit a maximum of 32 children to the KS2 classes. This is to include the PAN of 6 children to start at the beginning of Year 3. Children already on- roll at the end of Key Stage 1 will automatically remain on roll as they transfer to KS2.

12. In Year Applications

The allocation of any places which may become available during the year will be made on the basis of the current Oversubscription Criteria. There are no deadlines for in year applications.

Footnotes

A. Parental Responsibility

Only a parent may apply for a school place. A parent is defined as any individual with parental responsibility or legal guardianship of the child, as outlined in the Children Act 1989. The term “parent” includes foster parents, legal guardians, and those acting in loco parentis.

B. Definition of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

A 'looked after child' is one who is:
Looked after children are children in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority, and previously looked after children are those who left care

through adoption, a child arrangements order or special guardianship order, including children adopted from state care outside England.

C. Catchment Area

The school's catchment area is a defined geographical zone. A map of this area is available on the school's website.

D. Definition of Sibling

A sibling includes:

- Full brother or sister
- Stepbrother or stepsister
- Half-brother or half-sister
- Adoptive or foster siblings
- Non-blood-related children living in the same household with married or cohabiting parents

If the last place offered within the school's PAN is to a multiple birth or same cohort sibling, any additional sibling from that cohort will also be admitted if parents wish, even if this exceeds the PAN. The Governors will consider whether placing multiple birth siblings in separate classes would be detrimental to their social or educational development.

E. Permanent Residence & Moving House

The child's permanent residence is where they live normally, including weekends and during school holidays as well as during the week, and should be used for the application. The permanent address of children who spend part of their week with one parent and part with the other, at different addresses, will be the address at which they spend most of their time.
If time is equally split, parents must agree which address to use. In the absence of agreement or a relevant court order, the admission authority will determine the applicable address, considering factors such as the address registered with the child's current school, nursery, childminder, GP, and for child benefit.
This must be the address at the time of application. For main entry applications, changes of address will not be accepted after the National Closing Date (15 January 2028 for Reception and Year 3).
If a move occurs after this date, the previous address will be used for categorisation. If the move occurs before the closing date, the new address will be used for waiting list purposes from National Offer Day.
Evidence of the move must be provided:

- For purchases: exchange of contracts on or before the closing date
- For rentals: signed tenancy agreement commencing on or before the closing date

F. Exceptional Medical or Psychological Need

Where a place is requested due to an exceptional medical or psychological condition affecting the child , written evidence must be provided from:

- An NHS Consultant (for medical grounds), or
- An NHS Consultant Psychiatrist (for psychological grounds)

The evidence must explain why attendance at the school is essential and the difficulties that would arise if the child attended another school. The Board of Governors must assess the school as the only one able to meet the identified needs. The admissions committee will consider the evidence confidentially and aim to reach a fair and equitable decision.

G. Faith-Based Criteria

An “active member of a Christian church” is defined as someone who has attended worship at least twice a month for the two years prior to the admissions deadline.
Parents applying under this criterion must complete a Supplementary Information Form (SIF), available on the school’s website.
If the place of worship was closed during the specified period and no alternative premises were provided, the attendance requirement will apply only to the period when worship was available.

H. Attending Fledglings

Children attending Fledglings are those who are formally registered and attend Fledglings with reasonable consistency, taking into account occasional absences due to illness or other unavoidable circumstances.

I. Fraudulent Applications

The Governing Board reserves the right to withdraw any place obtained by fraudulent or intentionally misleading application. This may include applications based on an incorrect address or other false information provided to secure a place at the school.

APPENDIX 1

Admission Outside the Normal Age Group (Including Summer-Born Children)

Introduction

This appendix explains how requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be considered by the Governing Body.
Requests will be considered on the basis of the individual circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child.
This appendix applies to all applications for admission outside the normal age group, including requests for delayed admission to Reception for summer-born children.
Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) should seek advice from the Local Authority SEND Team, as separate arrangements apply.

Making a Request

Parents wishing their child to be admitted outside their normal age group should submit a written request to the school together with any supporting evidence they wish the Governing Body to consider.
This may include:

- information from the child's current school or early years setting;
- medical evidence;
- educational psychology advice;
- reports from relevant professionals;
- any other information the parent considers relevant.

The Governing Body may seek additional information where appropriate.

Factors Considered by the Governing Body

The Governing Body will consider all available evidence and may take account of:

- the parent's views;
- the child's academic development;
- the child's social and emotional development;
- any relevant medical information;
- whether the child has previously been educated outside their normal age group;
- the views of the Headteacher and other relevant professionals;
- the likely impact of the decision on the child's future education.

No single factor will be decisive, and each case will be considered on its own merits.

Additional Considerations for Summer-Born Children

When considering requests for delayed admission to Reception for summer-born children, the Governing Body may also consider:

- the potential impact on the child of entering Year 1 without first attending Reception;
- whether the child was born prematurely and would otherwise have fallen into a different admissions cohort;
- the child's social, emotional and physical readiness for school;
- any relevant professional advice;
- current Department for Education guidance and the School Admissions Code.

Outcome of Requests

The Governing Body will notify parents of its decision in writing, giving reasons for the decision.

Approval of a request to be educated outside the normal age group does not guarantee a place at the school. Any application for admission will be considered alongside other applicants in accordance with the school's published admission arrangements.

VERSION	DATE	REVIEWER	COMMENT
n/a	Sep 2025	Claire Barker and Hannah Hardwicke	Page 3, Addition of new oversubscription criteria point: children living outside the school's catchment area who attend Fledglings Pre-School; change of wording to page 2 referencing children with an EHCP to clarify that these children "will" be admitted; Change of wording to page 5 from "request" to "choose" in reference to deferred entry and part time attendance of children who are not CSA to be in line with admissions code 2021.
	Sept 2026	Clare Barker	Page 4, updated definition of going over PAN due to multiple birth Page 5, update of admission outside of normal age to make language clearer (no change of meaning) Page 6, update definition of looked after and previously looked after children

			Page 7 update definition of permanent residence Page 7 taken out “or a family member” in the section relating to places being requested for exceptional medical and psychological need Page 8 updated point about fraudulent applications to make wording clearer. Page 9 updated Appendix 1 to make more concise and clear. No change of process.