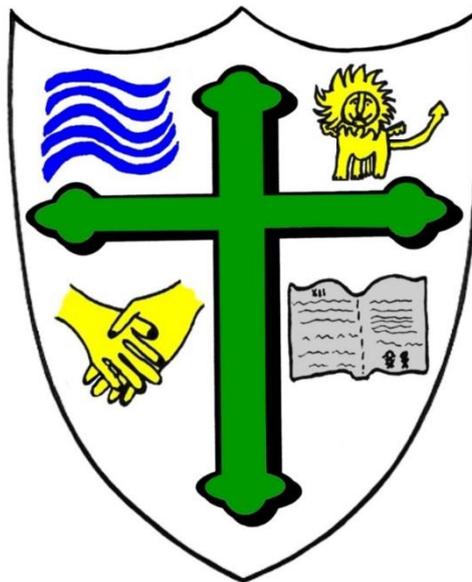


Highcliffe St Mark Primary School



Admissions Policy 2027

Reviewed (date)	September 2025
Reviewed by (name)	Claire Barker
Determined by Governors (if applicable)	November 2025
Review due (date)	September 2026

Admissions Policy – September 2027

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 2027-2028 for allocating places in the main admission round for entry to Year R in September 2027. It will also apply to in-year admissions during 2027/28. 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 2027-2028 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 2027**. Notifications to parents offering a school place will be sent by the Local Authority on **Friday 16th April 2027**.

Applications made after midnight on **15th January 2027** 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.

In cases where applications are received from families with multiple birth siblings (e.g., twins or triplets), and admitting all siblings would exceed the Published Admission Number (PAN), all siblings will be admitted, even if this means exceeding the 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 2027, 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 2028, 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 2022 and 31st August 2023 (inclusive) will be entitled to full time schooling from September 2027.

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 2028. 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 of children outside their normal age group, including summer born children

Requests can be made for an admission into a year group different to that determined by the child's date of birth in the following circumstances:

- i) Where a parent wishes to delay their summer born child's entrance into reception year until the following year (where a child is born between 1st April and 31st August)
- ii) Where a parent wishes for their child who has experienced problems or missed part of a year, for example due to ill health, to be educated in a year group lower than that determined by their date of birth
- iii) Where a parent wishes for their child to be educated in a higher year group than that determined by their date of birth

The Governing Body will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of each case. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like. See Appendix 1 for more information. If you would like to make a request, please contact the school for an application form.

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: <https://highcliffe-st-mark-primary-school.secure-primariesite.net/admission-arrangements-1/>

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:

- (a) in the care of a local authority, or
- (b) provided with accommodation by a local authority under its social services functions (see Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of application.

Previously looked after children are those who ceased to be looked after due to adoption, a child arrangements order, or a special guardianship order. This includes children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside England and ceased to be in that care as a result of being adopted. State care outside England refers to care

provided by a public authority, religious organisation, or other provider whose main purpose is to benefit society.

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 the address where they normally live, including weekends and school holidays. This address must be used for the application.

For children who divide their time between two parents at different addresses, the address where the child spends the majority of their time will be considered the permanent residence. 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 2027 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 (or a family member), 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

Each year, places are withdrawn due to false home address information on application forms. This includes short-term lets or property purchases made solely to use the address for the application, without intent to reside permanently.

All allegations of fraudulent practice will be investigated. The Governing Body reserves the right to withdraw an offer if the application contains fraudulent or intentionally misleading information.

APPENDIX 1

Delayed & Different Year Group Entry Policy (including Summer Born Requests)

This Policy will apply to requests for admission to a different year group to that determined by a child’s date of birth.

Introduction

This policy document sets out the process and criteria for considering requests to a different year group to that determined by a child’s date of birth. This policy applies to all pupils with the exception of those holding or undergoing assessment for an Education Health & Care Plan whose parent(s)/carer(s) should contact the BCP Council Special Educational Needs Team for advice. All other application forms should be submitted direct to the Local Authority School Admissions Team.

Process

1. If a parent expresses an interest in applying for a different year group to that determined by a child’s date of birth, the school should suggest that they arrange a meeting with the Head Teacher, SENCO or other relevant member of staff, to discuss their options.

2. If, after discussion with the school, the parents still wish to pursue an 'out of year' admission, they will be asked to complete and submit an application form (which can be requested from the school) together with supporting evidence to the school.
3. The application form will ask parents to confirm that they understand the policy. If approved, any existing applications will be cancelled and the parents will need to re-apply for a place. At no time will they be able to hold school offers for their child in two year groups.
4. Any applications will not be given special priority over applications for children falling naturally in that year group.
5. If the request for delayed admission is submitted after an offer of a school place in the child's chronological age group has been made and if it is subsequently approved that the child can delay admission the original offer will be withdrawn and offered to the next child on the waiting list.
6. The form will ask for basic information about the child and the following information must be provided:
 - The nature of the request;
 - Clear reasons for the request;
 - Education history (where available)
 - Child's wishes where age appropriate
7. In addition they may be asked to provide specific information/documentation such as:
 - School or Early Years reports and assessments where this is available;
 - Existing professional reports and assessments e.g. educational psychology reports from LA where this is available;
 - Health information;
 - Other relevant information and documentary evidence.

Criteria for agreement to out of year admissions

The following list is not final and binding and is an example of the type of information that will be considered by the Admissions Authority Panel. Meeting one or more of the criteria below is not in itself confirmation of agreement to the request to delay entry. The Panel will consider evidence relating to all aspects of the child's development and needs in coming to a decision and this will include the following:

For requests for change of year group where a child is already in school

- Whether there is clear evidence that the child has previously been educated in a year group above or below that determined by their date of birth and that this has had positive benefits.
- Whether there is clear, documented evidence that to place the child in their normal age group would be detrimental to their educational progress or likely exam performance.
- Whether there is clear evidence that it is in the interests of the child's social and emotional development to be educated in a year group above or below that determined by their date of birth.

For requests for delayed admission for summer born children the Panel will consider the following:

- the needs of the child and the possible impact on them of entering year 1 without having first attended the reception class;
- in the case of children born prematurely, the fact that they may have naturally fallen into the lower age group if they had been born on their expected date of birth;
- whether delayed social, emotional or physical development is adversely affecting their readiness for school;
- relevant research into the outcomes of summer born and premature children; and
- relevant advice, guidance and legislation from the Department for Education.

Consideration of the application

The Admissions Authority will arrange for a panel of Governors to consider the application. They will endeavour to make their final decision within 15 school days of receiving the written request (Application form and supporting evidence) and will write to parents within 5 days once a final decision has been made.

Right of appeal following the decision

There is no right of appeal if a parent has been offered a place in the school but it is not in the year group they would like. However, parents can make a complaint through the school’s usual complaints procedure.

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.