

# St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School

Powder Mill Lane  
Tunbridge Wells  
Kent  
TN4 9DY



## Admissions Policy

Headteacher: Claire Harris  
Chair of Governors: Jayne Ingman

Ratified: September 2025  
Next Review: September 2026

*Fulfilling God-given potential*

*Distinctive Christian values-  
Honesty, Kindness, Respect, Responsibility*

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## 1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at the school
- Set out the school's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

## 2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- [School Admissions Code 2021](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

The school is required to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#).

## 3. Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority.

**Looked-after children**, as defined in section 22 of the Children Act 1989, are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

**Previously looked-after children** are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order (defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014), or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order (defined in section 14A of the Children Act 1989)

This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to 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.

A child reaches **compulsory school age** on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

A **parent** is any individual who holds parental responsibility, as defined under the Children Act 1989, or any person who has care of a child, where the child lives with them either full or part time and they look after that child.

## 4. How to apply

For applications in the normal admissions round, parents should use the application form provided by their home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools are in).

They will receive an offer for a school place directly from their local authority.

The Kent Admission form can be found at: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/primary-school-places>

## 5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group. Should parents wish to do this, they should contact the Headteacher (via the school office, [office@st-matthews.kent.sch.uk](mailto:office@st-matthews.kent.sch.uk)) to make their request, providing the reasons for their decisions. Headteachers may need to request further information and parents / carers can expect to receive a reply to their request within 10 working days of submitting it.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parents' views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- 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
- The headteacher's views

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group. Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group.

## 6. Allocation of places

### 6.1 Published admission number (PAN)

The school has a published admission number of 60 pupils for entry in the reception year.

### 6.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

In the event that the school receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in order, until all places are filled.

1. Highest priority will be given to looked-after children and all previously looked-after children who apply for a place at the school.
2. Priority will next be given to children with siblings on the roll of the school at the point of application for the new pupil. Siblings include step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and

other children living permanently at the same address. Priority will not be given to children with siblings who are former pupils of the school.

3. Priority will next be given to children on the basis of social or medical need. Priority will be given to those children whose mental or physical impairment means they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Equally this priority will apply to children whose parents'/guardians' physical or mental health or social needs mean that they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Such claims will need to be supported by written evidence from a suitably qualified medical or other practitioner who can demonstrate a special connection between these needs and the particular school.
4. Priority will next be given to children in relation to their 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. 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. When we apply the distance criterion for an oversubscribed Community or Voluntary Controlled school, these straight line measurements are used to determine how close each applicant's address is to the school.

Where new build housing development requires a new school or the significant enlargement of an existing school the 'Nearness' criterion will allow for a catchment area (defined by a map) to be created for the relevant school. This will be included in the Statutory Public Notice and admissions determination and will be valid for a period not exceeding three rounds of admissions.

In the event of any of the above criteria being oversubscribed, priority will be given based on distance as described above with those closest being given higher priority. In the unlikely event that two or more children in all other ways have equal eligibility for the last available place at the school, the names will be issued a number and drawn randomly to decide which child should be given the place.

### **6.3 Tie break**

In the case of 2 or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, the school will use random allocation as a tie breaker to decide between applicants. This process will be independently verified.

If siblings from multiple births (twins, triplets, etc) apply for a school and the school would reach its Published Admission Number (PAN) after admitting one or more, but before admitting all of those siblings, the LA will offer a place to each of the siblings, even if doing so takes the school above its PAN. If the admissions are to Year R, and so result in a breach of infant class size legislation, the additional pupil(s) will be treated as "excepted" for the time they are in an infant class or until the numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit, as defined in the School Admissions Code.

### **6.4 Waiting list**

We will maintain a clear, fair and objective waiting list for children wishing to gain a place at the school. . If your application is unsuccessful, your child's name will be added to the waiting list. Where places become available, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria outlined in section 6.2. Priority will not be given to children based on the date their application was received, or when their name was added to the list.

Under the School Admissions Code, looked-after children, previously-looked after children, and those allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol (see section 6.6 below) must take precedence over those on the waiting list.

### **6.5 Children below compulsory school age**

Where children below compulsory school age are offered a place at the school, they will be entitled to attend the school full-time in the September following their fourth birthday.

Parents may defer their child's entry to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age, and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year the offer was made for.

Where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

### **6.6 Fair Access Protocol**

We participate in Kent Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible and before anyone is considered from the waiting list. Eligibility for the Fair Access Protocol does not limit a parent's right to make an in-year application to the school for their child. Any application will be processed in accordance with the usual in-year admission procedures (see section 7).

### **6.7 Challenging behaviour**

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. The exception to this is where we may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, i.e. where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that isn't the normal point of entry, in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraphs 3.10 to 3.13) apply.

### **6.8 Children of UK service personnel and crown servants**

Families of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, will be allocated a place in advance of the family arriving in the area, provided a place is available and the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date.

We will use the address at which the child will live when applying our oversubscription criteria, provided the parents provide some evidence of their intended address. Alternatively, the unit or quartering address will be used as the child's home address when considering the application against the oversubscription criteria, where this is requested by a parent.

### **6.9 Withdrawing an offer of a place**

We will not withdraw an offer unless it has been offered in error, a parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

Where a parent has not responded to the offer, we will give them a further opportunity to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not respond.

If an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, we will consider the application afresh and a right of appeal will be offered if an offer is refused.

We will not withdraw an offer of a place once a child has started at our school except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In these circumstances, we will consider the length of time that the child has been at the school before deciding whether to withdraw the place.

## **7. In-year admissions**

Parents can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose EHC plans name the school will be admitted. Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for, your child will be offered a place.

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to the waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by 1 of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6.2 of this policy.

Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Applications for in-year admissions should be sent to the following address: [office@st-matthews.kent.sch.uk](mailto:office@st-matthews.kent.sch.uk)

You can find details on our in-year admissions by contacting the school office who will provide you with an application form and the relevant details. The application form can also be found on the school website:

<https://st-matthews-school.org/our-school/admissions>

Parents will be notified of the outcome of their in-year application in writing within 15 school days.

## **8. Appeals**

If your child's application for a place at the school is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals. If you wish to appeal, you must set out the grounds for your appeal in writing and send it to the following address: [office@st-matthews.kent.sch.uk](mailto:office@st-matthews.kent.sch.uk)

[office@st-matthews.kent.sch.uk](mailto:office@st-matthews.kent.sch.uk)

You can find details of the school's appeals timetable on the following webpage: <https://st-matthews-school.org/our-school/admissions>

Appeals will be heard by an independent appeal panel.

## **9. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Full Governing Body every year.