




# HORNCHURCH ACADEMY TRUST

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**Registered Office:** Whybridge Junior School, Rainham, Essex, RM13 7AH

[www.hornchurchacademy.org](http://www.hornchurchacademy.org)

		Hornchurch Academy Trust
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	Who reviewed this policy?	Mr C W Hobson
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## **Admissions Policy** (Kent based Schools)<sup>1</sup>

### Determined Admissions Arrangements for the Academic Year 2026/27

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<sup>1</sup> Admissions Policy for Havering schools can be found by visiting [www.hornchurchacademy.org.uk](http://www.hornchurchacademy.org.uk)

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## **Introduction**

Hornchurch Academy Trust is an Multi Academy Trust (MAT) of 6 schools and the Directors of the MAT are its admission authority. The Directors apply the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend a Trust school. All 6 schools will comply with the provisions within the Department for Education's School Admissions Code and the School Appeals Code.

There is 1 Kent based school within Hornchurch Academy Trust. The Kent based school within the MAT is:

- Shears Green Infant School

Shears Green Infant School is an inclusive schools that welcome children from all backgrounds and abilities. The only restriction placed on entry is number. If the number of children applying exceeds the places available, we enforce the oversubscription criteria 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 the place at the school of their preference. However, this is not always possible, due to the excess demand on the school places available.

- Shears Green Infant School has a published admission number of **90** for the reception applications in 2026.

## **How parents can apply to be admitted to our schools**

### **Reception and Junior Admissions**

The admissions arrangements outlined in this document apply to children starting Reception for the first time in 2026/2027 and those applying to transfer from an infant or primary school. The Local Authority will co-ordinate Admissions on behalf of Hornchurch Academy Trust and will follow the Kent County Council's co-ordinated Primary / Junior admissions scheme which is available from <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/primary-school-places>. The closing date for applications will be 15 January 2025 and parents will be notified of the outcome of their application during the evening of 16 April 2025.

All applicants must complete the Common Application Form available from their home local authority.

### **Admission Arrangements for the 2026/2027 academic year**

All Trust schools will admit any pupils with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) naming the school. Priority will then be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in order:

1. Looked after children and all children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after, including 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.

2. A child whose brother or sister (sibling) currently attends the school or partner infant / junior school (not a nursery class attached to the school), and is expected to still be attending that school at the intended date of admission.
3. Children of staff at the school. Children of staff (full time, part time and both teaching and non-teaching) who have been employed as a member of staff at Shears Green Infant School by the Hornchurch Academy Trust.
4. The distance of the home address from the school, as measured by a straight line from the school, those pupils living nearer the school being given higher priority.

A full definition of the above criteria can be found on page 8-9.

### **Tie-breaks**

If, because of oversubscription in any of the criteria's 1) to 4) above, it is necessary to distinguish between applicants, the distance of the applicant's home address from the school, as measured by a straight line from the school, will be used with those pupils living nearer the school 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. This will be supervised by someone independent from the school.

## **Reception Applications**

### **Starting School**

Schools in Kent have a single intake into Reception. All children whose date of birth falls between **1 September 2021** and **31 August 2022** will be eligible to apply for a full time place in Reception for September **2026**.

All children are entitled to a full time school place in the September following their 4th birthday. This is when most children start school and they are normally educated together in one year group.

Children are not required to go to school until the first day of the school term that follows their 5th birthday. The table below summarises the date at which the child reaches what is known as 'compulsory school age'. Children must be in suitable full-time education from this point.

For children who are under compulsory school age, once a school place has been accepted, parents may, if they wish, agree with the school a pattern of part time attendance or a deferred start until later in that school year (but not later than the beginning of the summer term). These arrangements should be discussed with the school.

In addition, summer born children (those born between 1 April and 31 August) do not need to start school until the September after their 5th birthday, a full year after they could first have started school. This does not apply to children born in the autumn and spring as these children must legally be in school full time in the term after they turn five years old (Further information is provided below).

<b>A child born between</b>	<b>... reaches compulsory school age on:</b>	<b>... and must be in suitable full time education from:</b>
1 September and 31 December	31 December	The beginning of the spring term following their 5th birthday (usually in the first week of January)
1 January and 31 March	31 March	The beginning of the summer term following their 5th birthday (usually following the Easter holidays)
1 April and 31 August (summer born)	31 August	The beginning of the autumn term following their 5th birthday (usually in the first week of September)

Should a parent decide to delay their summer born child's school start until the September following their 5th birthday, they have 2 options:

- Make an in year application for a place for the September following their child's 5th birthday. The child will begin school in year 1, as the other children in their age group will be moving from reception to year 1 at this point. Parents can apply for an in-year place via [www.havering.gov.uk/admissions/inyear](http://www.havering.gov.uk/admissions/inyear) from the 1st August (or the next working day if the 1st is a Saturday or Sunday). It is important for parents to remember that some schools are likely to be full at this point, and unable to offer a place. Schools are unable to 'hold' a place for a child from the previous year. Consideration should also be taken to the potential impact of missing the reception year with its focus on phonics and early arithmetic.
- If parents do not want their child to miss reception year, they may request that their child is admitted out of their normal age group, to reception instead of year 1, in the September following their child's 5th birthday. This application is best made when the parent would normally be expected to apply for their child's place at infant/primary school (ie before 15 January after a summer born child turns 3). This is considered in more detail in the next section.

### **Requesting admission outside a child's normal age group**

If a parent decides to delay their summer born child's start until the September following their 5th birthday and wish them to start school in reception, they must make a request (a formal application) for them to be admitted out of their normal age group. This is because the rest of the children in their normal age group will have already finished reception and will be moving into year 1.

This request must be made to Havering School Admissions Team who will liaise with the admissions authority for each of the school's the parent is requesting a delayed entry into.

Parents will need to submit their request alongside an application for their child to be admitted to reception class at age of 4. This is so that, if the request is refused, parents still have the option of sending their child to school at age 4, if they wish, so their child does not miss the reception year.

Requests must state clearly why the parents feel admission to a different year group is in the child's best interest and provide what evidence they have to support this.

### **Infant Class Size**

Infant classes, (those where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6, or 7 during the School year) must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single teacher as this is a legal limit in line with the School Admissions code 2021. Additional children may be admitted under very limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an "excepted pupil" for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit. The excepted children are:

- a) children admitted outside the normal admissions round with Education, Health and Care Plans specifying the school;
- b) Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children admitted outside the normal admission round;
- c) Children admitted, after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the Admission Authority or Local Authority in the original application process;
- d) Children admitted after an Independent Appeals Panel upholds an appeal;
- e) Children who move into the area outside the normal admission round for whom there is no other available School within reasonable distance;
- f) Children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admission round;
- g) children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil;
- h) Children with SEN who are normally taught in a SEN unit attached to the School, or registered at a Special School, who attend some infant classes within the mainstream School.

### **Information relevant to Reception applications.**

#### **Twins and multiple births**

In the normal admission round, if the last child to be offered a place is a twin, and their sibling cannot be offered a place, the trust have agreed that the Local Authority will ensure that both twins are offered a place together. In the case of other multiple births, if the majority of children can be offered a place, places to the remaining children will be offered. For example if two triplets can be offered a place, the remaining child will also receive an offer of a place.

#### **Appeals**

All applicants refused a place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code.

For information on the timetable for the appeals process and to lodge an appeal online parents should visit:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/appeal-a-school-offer>

## **Further Appeals**

The trust can only consider one appeal per school per application during each Academic year. In normal circumstances, there is no right to a second appeal for the same School within the same School year. However, if there has been a significant and material change in the family's circumstances which they believe affects the level of priority under which the application was processed, for example, if the family had moved house, the trust may consider a second application as long as a parent/carer can provide evidence of the changed circumstances. If the second application is accepted but a place is still not available at the school requested, parents/carers will be given the right to a second appeal hearing.

## **Waiting Lists**

Each school will operate a waiting list for each year group. Where a school receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate for at least the first term of the academic year in oversubscription criteria order and will be re-ranked each time a child is added or before an offer is made. A child's position on the waiting list can move up as well as down.

## **Remaining on a waiting list after the first academic term**

At the end of first academic term, parents wishing for their child's names to remain on the waiting list for their preferred schools, must complete an In Year Application Form. The application can be made via the Kent website [kentinyearadmissions@kent.gov.uk](mailto:kentinyearadmissions@kent.gov.uk).

## **In-Year Admissions**

Applications for children outside the normal admissions round, or for a place in a different year group, are called In Year Admissions. Applications will be ranked in accordance with the same oversubscription criteria and arrangements above. Applications should be made direct to the school(s), using an In Year Application Form found at [www.kent.gov.uk/inyearadmissions](http://www.kent.gov.uk/inyearadmissions).

The school will process the application. If there are no vacancies at the school, the parent will be informed in writing and they will be offered the opportunity to have their child put onto the waiting list.

## **Home Address**

The home address excludes any business, relative's or childminder's address and must be the child's normal place of residence. Where the child is subject to a child arrangements order and that order stipulates that the child will live with one parent/carer more than the other, the address to be used will be the one where the child is expected to live for the majority of the time. For other children, the address to be used will be the address where the child lives the majority of the time. In other cases, where the child spends an equal time between their parents/carers, it will be up to the parent/carers to agree which address to use. Where a child spends their time equally between their parents/carers and they cannot agree on who should make the application, we will accept an application from the parent/carer who is registered for child benefit. If neither

parent is registered for child benefit we will accept the application from the parent/carer whose address is registered with the child's current school.

We will not generally accept a temporary address if the main carer of the child still possesses a property that has previously been used as a home address, nor will we accept a temporary address if we believe it has been used solely or mainly to obtain a school place when an alternative address is still available to that child.

The address to be used for the initial allocation of places will be the child's address at the closing date for application. Changes of address may be considered in accordance with Kent's coordinated scheme if there are exceptional reasons behind the change. Any offer of a place on the basis of address is conditional upon the child living at the appropriate address on the relevant date. Applicants have a responsibility to notify the Kent County Council's School Admissions Team of any change of address and must provide verification of the new address immediately. This should be supported by evidence from a solicitor regarding the date of exchange of contracts if parents/carers are purchasing a new home or the signed tenancy agreement if they are renting a property. The length of a tenancy agreement from the letting agent should be sufficient to cover the date on which their child would start attending their preferred School.

If a parent/carer is found to have used a false address or deliberately provided misleading information to obtain a School place, the offer will be withdrawn (or if before the allocation of places, the application will be cancelled).

With regards to how the information provided by parents/carers is handled by the Local Authority, the following statement is detailed on their application form:

*"Kent County Council will handle information you have provided in line with the Data Protection Act (DPA) and will be used for school admission purposes. The information will be held in confidence with only the necessary people working within the combined children's services able to access and handle it. The Council has a duty under the Children Act 2004 to work with partners to develop and improve services to children and young people in the area. As such, the Council may also use this information for other legitimate purposes and may share information (where necessary) with other Council departments and external bodies responsible for administering services to children and young people. For the purpose of validating proof of address the admissions team may refer to data held by Council Tax records. The Council also has a duty to protect the public funds it administers, and to this end it may use the information you have provided on this form for the prevention and detection of fraud. Under the DPA you have the right to make a formal written request for access to personal data held about you or your child. For further information please contact the School Admissions Team"*

### **UK Service Personnel and Crown Servants**

We will not refuse to process an application solely because the family do not yet have an intended address. We will:

- a) allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area (as long as one is available), provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date.
- b) use the address at which the child will live when applying their oversubscription criteria, as long as the parents provide some evidence of their intended address.



- c) use a Unit or quartering address as the child's home address when considering the application against their oversubscription criteria, where a parent requests this.
- d) **not** reserve blocks of places for these children.
- e) ensure that arrangements support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children.

## **Definitions of Admissions Criteria**

### **Looked after children / Previously Looked after Children / Children adopted from state care outside of England**

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 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.

Adoption includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders).

Child arrangements orders are defined in Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.

### **Sibling (brother or sister)**

A sibling will be considered to be:

A brother or sister (that is, another child of the same parents, whether living at the same address or not), a half-brother or half-sister or a step-brother or step-sister or an adoptive or foster sibling, living as part of the same family unit at the same address.

### **Children of Staff**

Children of staff at the school (full time, part time and both teaching and non-teaching) who have been employed as a member of staff by the Hornchurch Academy Trust for two or more years at the time at which the application of admission to the school where the staff member is based is made, and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

### **Distance of the home address from the School**

The distance between the home address and the preferred school is measured in a straight line, not by the shortest walking or bus route. The measurement is taken between predetermined point for the school and the address point of the child's normal place of residence.

Address points are located in the centre of the child's home, or in the centre of a block of flats.

In the event that two or more applicants apply for a single place at the school live at addresses that are located at exactly the same distance from the preferred school, or live in the same block of flats, the place will be offered on a random basis drawn by an officer of the Local Authority who is not involved in the admissions process.

### **Partner School**

Partner schools relating to the Hornchurch Academy Trust are:

- Shears Green Infant School and Shears Green Junior School.