



MERSHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Admissions Policy

(for Admissions in the Year 2026-27)

Approved by:	The Governing Board	Date:
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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](#).

Mersham Primary School is a Foundation School and part of the CARE Foundation Trust and so the Governing Body is the admissions authority. However, the Governors of Mersham Primary School will work in co-operation with Kent County Council in order to operate within the local authority's Coordinated Scheme for Primary Admissions.

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 i.e. Kent County Council if you live in Kent.

Looked-after children 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, or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order

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 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.

4. How to apply

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the application form provided by your home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools are in). You can use this form to express your preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order. If you live in Kent, information can be

found on Kent County Council's website <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/primary-school-places>

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority.

Prospective parents are invited to view the school in the autumn before their child is due to start the following September. These visits may be in the form of an open evening or by an individual appointment and will take place between October and the end of December. Applications for school admissions have to be submitted to the Local Authority by 15th January 2026 for entry in September. If you would like to visit the school please contact the school office on 01233 720449 for further details.

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.

To request admission outside a child's normal age group here, parents should contact the headteacher on headteacher@mersham.kent.sch.uk setting out their reasons for the request.

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 Admission number

The school has an agreed Published Admission Number (PAN) of 20 pupils for entry in reception.

6.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plans name 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 at the school. Siblings include step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children who permanently live as siblings at the same address. Priority will not be given to children with siblings who are former pupils of the school.
3. Health, social and special access reasons
4. Priority will next be given to children of staff at the school, in either of the following circumstances:
 - a) The member of staff has been employed at the school for 2 or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, or
 - b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage
5. Proximity of the child's home address to the school, with those living nearer having higher priority.

6.3 Health and Special Access Reasons:

Medical, health, social 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 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 means 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 which can demonstrate a special connection between these needs and the particular school that parents feel is the only school that can accommodate their child's needs. This must be sent to the Primary Admissions Team with the application form.

6.4 Proximity of the child's home address

We use the distance between the child's permanent home address (defined in KCC's annual admissions prospectus) 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 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 the school, these straight-line measurements are used to determine how close each applicant's address is to the school. Where applications are made from properties or abodes that are not registered to the NLPG, including new build properties, KCC may be required to use planning sites or other relevant co-ordinates. In exceptional circumstances where alternative co-ordinates are not available, measurements will be determined by a Senior Admissions Officer and confirmed by Head of Service.

6.5 Tie break

In the case of 2 or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, the school will use the distance between the school and a child's home as a tie breaker to decide between applicants. Priority will be given to children who live closest to the school.

Distance will be measured in a straight line from the child's home address. A child's home address will be considered to be where he/she is resident for the majority of nights in a normal school week. In the unlikely

event that a child spends an equal number of days during a normal school week at two different addresses, we will use the address that is closest to the school.

6.6 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.

7. In-year admissions

Parents can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round.

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 a 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.

Admission to a particular year group maybe refused if the admission of another child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources.

Applications for in-year admissions should be sent to the following address:

office@mersham.kent.sch.uk

Parents will be notified of the outcome of their in-year application in writing within 15 school days and requested to confirm whether or not they will be accepting the place. If they do not respond, the parents will be given one more opportunity to respond and if no response is received, the offer of a place maybe withdrawn.

9. Waiting List

A Waiting list will be held for at least 31 December of each school year of admission in oversubscription criteria order and will be re-ranked each time a child is added or before an offer is made.

10. 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. You should contact the school office on office@mersham.kent.sch.uk in the first instance to obtain further information.

The deadline to submit an appeal for a place in Reception in September 2025 is Tuesday 20 May 2025. This is to ensure that appeals are heard before the end of the summer term. For in-year applicants, parents can appeal at any time and their appeal must be heard within 30 school days.

Appeals will be held in line with Kent County Councils procedures. Information can be found on www.kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions

11. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the governing board every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the governing board will publicly consult on these changes. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years.