

Sholden Church of England Primary School

School Admissions Policy 2026 -2027



Vision Statement

'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.' (Jeremiah 29:11)

Our vision is to build a community of Hope and Love around our village school; embracing all creation, valuing respect, dignity, diversity and individuality. Like Noah, we provide a safe ark in which to foster creative, critical thinking through a dynamic, engaging learning environment where all can flourish and prosper.

Our Christian Values guide us on the journey of hope for today, tomorrow and always, following God's guidance: Love, Peace, Forgiveness, Kindness and Courage.

Sholden Church of England Primary School

Sholden Church of England Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School catering for children between the ages of 4 and 11 years. The school prides itself on being a church school with 5 specific values (Kindness, Courage, Peace, Love and Forgiveness) based on the fundamental beliefs in one God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Anglican tradition.

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to detail how Sholden School handles admissions and prioritises these when the school is over-subscribed.

2. Introduction

This policy complies with statutory regulations and the Code of Practice (see paragraph 4.23 Chapter 4) and in cases of conflict, these regulations will apply.

As a Church of England Aided School, it is hoped that parents/carers who wish their children to attend will be in sympathy with, and participate in, the Christian teaching provided.

Parents/carers should follow the Kent County Council (KCC) School Admission Procedure (which is located at <http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/primary-school-places>) and either apply on-line or return the appropriate admission forms (the Reception or Junior Common Application Form (RCAF)/(JCAF)) to the Local Education Authority (LEA) before the closing date. These forms can be obtained from the school or the LEA.

Applications received after the county closing date will be considered as late applications and will be managed by the school following the agreed admission criteria as specified below.

If the school is unable to offer a place immediately, parents/carers may put their child's name on the school's waiting list. The waiting list is kept in order of priority, according to the school's Admission Policy and not in date order of receipt of applications. Children on the waiting list for places will remain on the waiting list until the end of Term Two, 2024.

Sholden School also has its own additional supplementary criteria, for those families who attend Church. Sholden School welcomes new entrants from a broad range of circumstances, which are not solely based on an active affiliation within the Parish of Upper Deal and Great Mongeham.

3. Intake and Key Scheme Dates

Sholden School has a Pupil Admission Number (PAN) of 15.

The Key Scheme dates for 2026 are:

Mid Jan 2026	Closing date for Applications (Online and RCAFs/JCAFs) - paper copies will need to be at Admissions by this date.
April 2026	Offer e-mails and letters sent to parents/carers/guardians.

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May 2026	Welcome letters sent to parents/carers/guardians from school (no later than).
May 2026	Places must be accepted or refused and requests to go on waiting list must be submitted.
May 2026	The LA/schools re-allocate any places that have become available to those who have asked to go on the waiting lists for each school.
After end May 2026	Schools are free to admit pupils if they have spaces.

If there are more applications falling within any, or all, of the criteria below than there are places remaining available, priority will be given to those living closest to Sholden School.

4. Oversubscription Criteria

The admission of children to the School will be decided by an Admissions Panel, which is constituted as defined in the School and Community Policy. Admissions will be based on the number of places available and the admission criteria specified below.

Before the application of oversubscription criteria, children with a Statement of Special Educational Need (SEN) or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which names the school will be admitted. Consequently, the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly.

Should the number of applications exceed the number of places available, then places will be allocated in order of priority as defined below:

1. Children in Local Authority Care (LAC) or previously in Local Authority Care (PLAC) or internationally adopted previously looked after children (IAPLAC) who with their carers have an active affiliation within the Parish of Upper Deal and Great Mongeham.
2. Children in Local Authority Care (LAC) or previously in Local Authority Care (PLAC) or internationally adopted previously looked after children (IAPLAC).
3. Children whose parents/carers have an active affiliation within the Parish of Upper Deal and Great Mongeham. (see Appendix C)
4. Children who will have a sibling attending the school at the time of entry.
5. Children whose parents/carers have an active affiliation to a church which is part of Churches Together in England.
6. Children of staff at the school where a member of staff has been employed at the school for two years or more at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage.
7. Health and Special Access reasons.
8. Any other children / distance using the LEA KCC guidance of measuring.

Tie breaker

If any category is oversubscribed it is recommended that applicants will be ranked by a straight line distance (as defined above) and those closest given priority. If in the event more than one applicant has the same distance from home to school (as measured by the Local Authority), then a random selection will be applied.

Where random allocation/ a tie breaker is used this process will be independently supervised as set out in the [School Admissions Code: page 5 \(1.34 and 1.35\)](#).

Pupils will be ranked in order, using the criteria above (see also Appendix A – Definitions). **In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church [or, in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship] has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these [admissions] arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church [or in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship] or alternative premises have been available for public worship.**

5. Distance From School Calculations

If necessary, distance will be used to give priority, where two or more pupils have equal priority when the above criteria are applied.

In such situations, the nearness of a child's home to Sholden School will be the deciding factor. If in the event that more than one applicant has the same distance from home to the school (as measured by the LEA), then a random selection will be applied, overseen by the Admissions Panel.

5.1 Calculating Distance

Nearness of a child's home to school – Sholden School will 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. 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. *This definition meets the regulatory requirements from the Equality Act (2010).*

5.2 Defining a Child's Home Address

A child's home address is considered to be a residential property that is the child's only or main residence (not an address at which the child may sometimes sleep or stay) and which is either owned by the child's parents/carers/guardians or leased or rented to them under a lease or written rental agreement. Where parents live apart but share responsibility for the child, and the child lives at two different addresses during the week, the school will regard the home address as the one at which the child sleeps for the majority of week days. Measurement for residences that are flats are applied as per paragraph 2.37 of the School Admission Code.

6. What Happens if the School is Over-Subscribed?

Applications are considered by the Admissions Panel, consisting of members from the school's Full Governing Body. School places will be allocated in line with the above order of priorities and in line with the LEA co-ordinated scheme. Any parents/carers who are refused the offer of a school place for their child have the right of appeal and should in the first instance write to the Chair of the Governing Body (via the School Office) requesting that an independent appeal be heard.

7. Requests for Admission Out of Year Group

Sholden School believes that a child should be educated in their age appropriate year group, where possible. In the school's professional opinion, children who do not experience the full Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are disadvantaged both socially and academically when transferring to Key Stage 1. Through the school's highly skilled approach to differentiation, it feels that every child's needs can be catered for in their age appropriate year group, to ensure strong academic and emotional development.

Parents/carers have the right to start their child at school on a full time basis from the September following their fourth birthday, providing they have been allocated a school place.

Parents/carers also have the right to delay their child's start date (known as deferred entry), until later in the school year, but not beyond the beginning of the term after they turn 5 years old and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year in April. The child may also start part time later in the school year, but not beyond the beginning of the term after they turn five years old.

Parents/carers planning to defer their child's start date until later in the school year must still apply at the usual time for a school place. They should contact Sholden School and speak to the Head Teacher, in order to discuss how they would like their child to be admitted. The Head Teacher will be mindful of the limitations caused by school funding being driven by pupils who are on roll and attending on the January Census Day.

7.1 Summer-Born Children

Children born between 1 April and 31 August are sometimes referred to as “summer-born children”. They have the same right to defer entry as any other child. This means they must start school at the beginning of the April term if they wish to keep their offer. Where parents/carers wish for their summer-born child to defer entry until the start of Year 1, they must refuse their offered place, which may be offered to a different child, and then re-apply through the In Year process during the last month of Reception year.

For a child to start Reception year in the following September, a full year after they were first entitled to start, parents/carers will need agreement from the school's Admissions Panel. This is because a new application for a later admissions round would be needed for the child to be considered for a place to be taught outside of their age group and with a younger group of children. The Admissions Panel will make its decision taking into account the school admissions criteria in this policy and the advice of the Head Teacher.

To request admission to Reception year outside of the normal age group, parents/carers should contact the Head Teacher as early as possible during the application period for that child's date of birth. This will allow the school and Admissions Panel enough time to make a decision before the closing date.

Parents/carers are not expected to provide evidence to support their request to defer their application, but where provided, it must be specific to the child in question. This might include medical or Educational Psychologist reports. There is no legal requirement for this medical or educational evidence to be secured from an appropriate professional, but failure to provide it may impede the school's ability to agree to defer admission. Parents/carers are required to complete an application for the normal point of entry at the same time as any request for deferred entry, in case any request is declined. This application can be cancelled if the school agrees to accept the request for deferred entry into Reception year the following year.

Deferred applications must be made by completing a RCAF to the Local Authority, with written confirmation from each named school attached. Deferred applications will be processed in the same way as all applications in the following admissions round, and offers will be made in accordance with each school's over subscription criteria.

Further details may be found in the Schools Admission Code (which can be located at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/389388/School_Admissions_Code_2014_-_19_Dec.pdf).

8. Applying for a Place on Church Affiliation Grounds

Any parents/carers applying for a place on Church affiliation grounds must use the Supplementary Information Form included as Appendix B to this policy.

It is essential for the school to be able to rank all applications appropriately and without this completed form being provided with any application, the school cannot take Church attendance into account.

Parents/carers will be required to complete the Supplementary Information Form, which is a signed statement from their church minister providing a reference for their church affiliation.

A map showing the Parish of Upper Deal and Great Mongeham can be viewed at the School Office.

9. Reasons for Withdrawing Offered Place

After a school place has been offered, Sholden School reserves the right to withdraw the place in any of the following circumstances:

- When parents/carers have failed to respond to an offer within a reasonable time
- When parents/carers have failed to notify the school of important changes to the information contained in the application
- The admission authority offered the place on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from parents/carers.

10. Late Applications

Where the closing date has passed, a Late Application Form can be provided to parents/carers from the LEA. The LEA will deal with this and will then send the information to the school. The school will keep children on a waiting list until September/October of each new academic year.

In the event that arrangements are not clear, Sholden School will use the guidelines published by Kent County Council in the Admission Booklet.

11. Policy Approval

This policy was approved by the Governing Body on	
Signed	Date
(Chair of Governors)	
Signed	Date
(Head Teacher)	

Appendix A – Definitions

LAC_ Looked after children	<p>LAC_ Looked after children are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · In the care of a local authority, or · Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions
PLAC_ Previously looked after children	<p>PLAC_ Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 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
IAPLAC_ internationally adopted previously looked after children	<p>IAPLAC_ internationally adopted previously looked after children are children who were looked after outside of England, but ceased to be so because they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
Active Affiliation	<p>The School Governors consider “active affiliation” to mean that parents/carers/guardians are regular worshipping members and have attended services at least once a month during the 2 years prior to application. Evidence to support this will be sought from minister concerned.</p>
Nearness of child's home to school	<p>Sholden School uses 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. 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.</p>
New Housing	<p>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.</p>
Child's only or main residence	<p>A pupil's home address is considered to be a residential property that is the child's only or main residence, not an address at which the child might sometimes stay or sleep due to domestic or special arrangements. The address must be the pupil's home address on the day the application form is completed and which is either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owned by the child's parents/carers/guardians OR • Leased to or rented by the child's parents/carers/guardians under a lease or written rental agreement.

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Multiple residences	<p>If parents/carers/guardians live separately from each other but share responsibility for a child, and the child lives at two different addresses during the week, then the school will regard the home address as the one at which the child sleeps for the majority of weekdays.</p> <p>A block of flats has a single address point reference, so applicants living in the same block will be regarded as living the same distance away from the school. In the unlikely event that two or more children live in the same block and 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.</p>
Sibling	<p>A brother or sister in the same school at the time of entry where the family continue to live at the same address as when the sibling was admitted – or – if they have moved – live within 2 miles of the school, or have moved to a property that is nearer to the school than the previous property as defined by the “Nearness of child's home to school” criterion above. In this context, brother or sister means children who live as brother and sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters or foster brothers or sisters.</p> <p>If siblings from multiple births (twins, triplets, etc.) apply Sholden School and the school would reach its PAN after admitting one or more, but before admitting all of those siblings, the LEA will offer a place to each of the siblings, even if doing so takes the school above its PAN. If the admissions are to Reception Year, and so result in a breach of class size legislation, the additional child(ren) will be treated as “excepted” for a period of one year, as with excepted pupils as defined in the School Admissions Code.</p>
Churches Together in England (CTE)	<p>An ecumenical organisation and the national instrument for the Christian church in England. It helps the different Churches to work together instead of separately so that they can be more effective and credible. It works through a network of Intermediate Bodies, each covering an English county or metropolitan area and Co-ordinating Groups which bring together the Churches' officers in various areas of work. Bodies in Association with Churches Together in England are Christian organisations which, by their nature, are ecumenical, but which are self-governing. The Presidents of Churches Together in England are the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of Westminster, the Free Churches' Moderator and a fourth President chosen from one of the other member Churches.</p>
Parish of Upper Deal and Great Mongeham	<p>The following group of Churches: St. Leonards, Upper Deal, St. Richard, Mill Hill, St. Nicholas, Sholden and St. Martin, Great Mongeham.</p>
Health and Special Access Reasons	<p>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'/carers'/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 Sholden School.</p>

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Appendix B – Supplementary Information Form
For those seeking admission through Church affiliation

Name of Child: _____ D.O.B.: _____

Male / Female (Please delete as appropriate)

Name of Parents/carers/guardians: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

Name of Church Attended: _____

Name of Rector/Vicar/Minister: _____

Address of Rector/Vicar/Minister: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Telephone Number of Rector/Vicar/Minister: _____

The Parent(s)/Carer(s)/Guardian(s) of this child have attended this church at least once a month during the last 2 years. (Please tick box if applicable).

In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these [admissions] arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

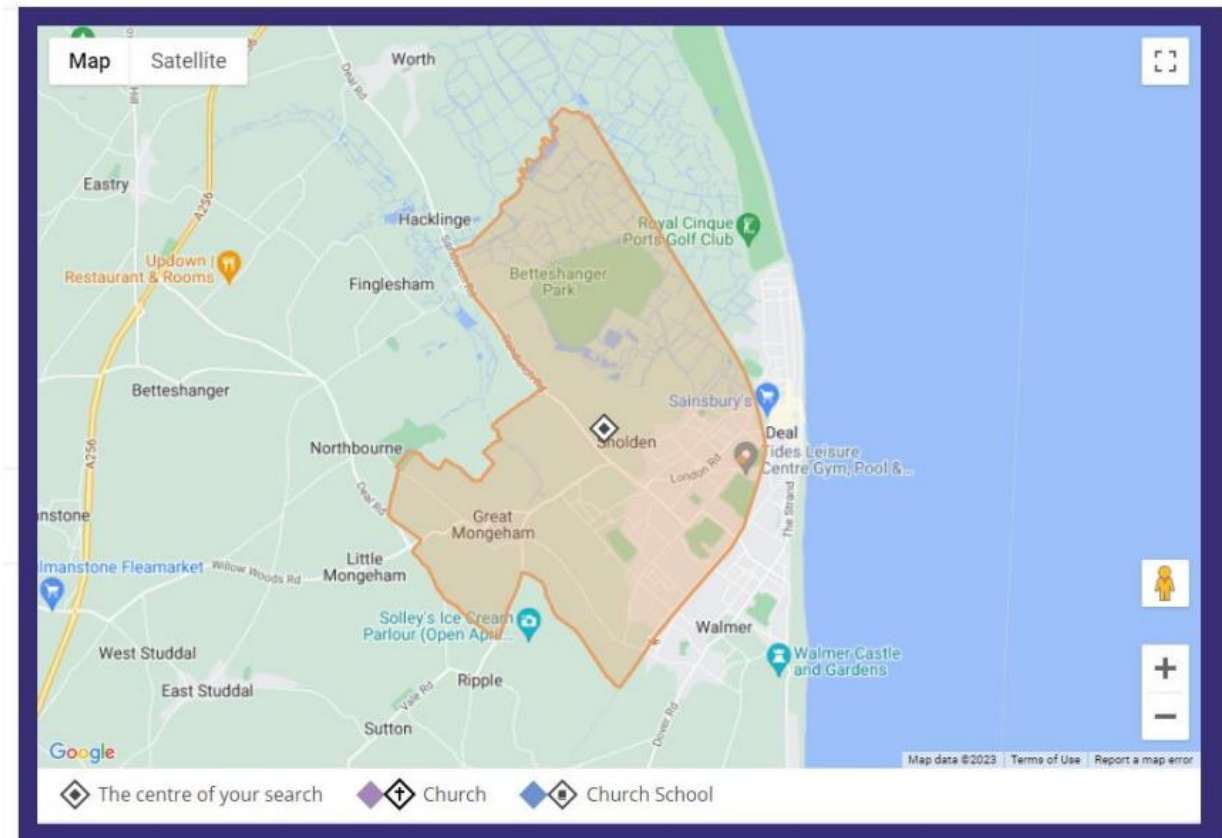
Please note under the terms of the Appeals Procedure, Parents wishing to Appeal have the right to see all correspondence relating to their application for admission.

To be completed **by the Rector/Vicar/Minister** and returned to:

Appedix C – Map of Parish of Upper Deal and Greater Mongeham



The Parish of Upper Deal and Greater Mongeham (with Sholden CE Primary School identified)



Source: www.achurchnearyou.com