Admissions Policy

Ratified by Full Governing Body: March 2026

Admissions Policy

Aims

This document provides a framework to enable us to ensure that all of our children, regardless of background or circumstances, fulfil their potential within our Christian community. The school Christian Values of Respect, Friendship, Perseverance, Forgiveness, Compassion and Trust are applied when following this policy, and we will use this guidance to ensure that our children will be fully prepared for the future, with high self-esteem and having forged strong and respectful relationships with other people.

We want our children to be fully prepared for God's ever changing world.

As a school founded by the Church of England and part of The Diocese of Canterbury, Ashford St Mary's CEP School has a distinctive Christian ethos at its heart.

The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes the school Christian values of

Respect, Friendship, Perseverance, Compassion, Forgiveness, Trust

through the experience it offers to all its pupils. Having had a discussion with the Head Teacher, parents have the right to withdraw their children from the daily Christian act of worship and Religious Education. We welcome applications from all members of the community, and we ask all parents to respect the Christian ethos of our school and its importance to our community.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

This policy should be read while referencing our school's Single Equality Scheme. All children have equal access to the curriculum regardless of their race, gender, or disability. Our behaviour policy underpins all that we do at St Mary's and should be closely linked to our other policies.

The Governing Body is responsible for the admission of pupils to the School and admits 60 pupils per year. This admissions number has been agreed between the Governing Body and the Local Authority.

The Governors have set a maximum class size of 30 pupils in Key Stage 1. Legislation states that no infant class may exceed 30 pupils unless there are exceptional circumstances

To apply for a Reception school place at this school, in the normal admissions round, parents should apply online at Primary School Places. If parents are unable to apply online they should email kentonlineadmissions@kent.gov.uk

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For In Year admissions applications at this school parents must complete the In Year Application form (IYAF). These can be found via the following link: In Year Admission Form

Where parents wish to be given preference on the grounds of their faith within their application for a place at this school, they should complete the school's supplementary information form in addition to the online application. Our supplementary form is available on line, accessible through our school website. http://www.st-marys-ashford.kent.sch.uk/our-school/admissions/ This form must be completed and returned to the school together with all documentary evidence by the closure date published by KCC, so that we can apply our Admission Criteria to your application.

Oversubscription Criteria

Ashford St Mary's Church of England Primary School admits 60 pupils into each year group. In the event of oversubscription in any year group, the following criteria will be applied:

Before the application of the oversubscription criteria, children with a **statement of special education or Education (SSEN), Health Care Plan (EHCP),** which names the school will be admitted. As a result of this, the published admissions numbers will be reduced accordingly.

1. **Any Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children.**

2. **Children of families who regularly attend either Ashford St. Mary the Virgin Church or another Church belonging to Churches Together in Ashford / Churches together in England or the Evangelical Alliance within the Ashford Parish.**

3. **Children living at the same address as siblings, natural or adopted, attending St. Mary's School at the time of entry.**

4. **Children of a member of staff at Ashford St. Mary's School.**

5. **Families with medical, health, social and special access reasons, supported by an appropriate professional.**

6. **Places will be allocated on the distance from home to the school measured in a straight line. Allocations within each category will be based on distance from home to school, with those living nearest, measured in a straight line, taking priority.**

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The waiting list will be re-ranked, in line with the published oversubscription criteria, every time a child is added to the waiting list.

Where a parent wishes for their child to be admitted to school outside of their normal age group (ie, if the child is gifted & talented, ill health problems or summer born) parents may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday. In this case parents are encouraged to visit the school and will be asked to provide in writing to the head teacher reasons & evidence to support their case. A decision will then be made by the school admission authority.

Published admission number for 2027/28 is 60.
Please see overleaf for definitions of above criteria.

Definitions:

1 - Any Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children: A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangement, or special guardianship order. 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). Children in Local Authority Care who meet the faith criterion will be given the highest priority within the faith related criterion.

A previously looked after child means such children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after and 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.

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.

2 - Church Affiliation: If a parent has applied for their child to be admitted to Ashford St Mary's Church of England Primary School on denominational grounds, applications should be supported by the completion of the school's supplementary form. In order for the Church Affiliation to be considered, the child, along with their parents or guardians, must regularly attend either Ashford St Mary the Virgin Church or another church belonging to Churches Together in Ashford / Churches together in England or the Evangelical Alliance within the Ashford Parish. Regular attendance is defined as at

least monthly for at least a year prior to the LA closing date for foundation stage pupils and at least a year before the date of application for casual admissions and will need to be confirmed by your Minister, who should complete the relevant section on the school's supplementary form.

NB. "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.

For casual (in year) admissions, i.e. families moving into the area, evidence of regular attendance at an Anglican church in the family's previous home area will be required. This evidence will need to be confirmed by your Minister, who should complete the relevant section of the school's supplementary form.

3 - Siblings/ Current Family Association: A brother or sister is attending the school when the child starts and will continue to do so when the sibling is admitted. In this context brother or sister means children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers and sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters.

The sibling link is maintained as long as the family live at the same address as when the first child applied, or has moved closer to the school than when the first child was offered a place, or has moved to an address that is less than 2 miles from the school using the distance measured by the method outlined in the distance/ criterion.

4 - Children of staff at the school:

a) Where a member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

5 - 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 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.

6 - Distance: Nearness of children's homes to school: We use the 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 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.

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 stay or sleep) and which is either owned by the child's parents or guardian or leased or rented to them under a lease or written rental agreement. Where partners live apart but share responsibility for the child, and the child lives at two different addresses during the week, we will regard the home address as the one at which the child sleeps for the majority of weekdays. 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.

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Deferred entry for Reception Places

Parents offered a place in Reception for their child have a right to defer the date their child takes up the place, or to take the place up part-time, until the child reaches compulsory school age. Children reach compulsory school age on 31st August, 31st December or 31st March - whichever of those three dates follows (or falls on) the child's 5th birthday. Places cannot be deferred beyond the beginning of the summer term (April) of the school year for which the offer was made.

Admission of children outside of their normal age group

Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group. To do so, they should include a written request with their application, setting out the year group in which they wish their child to be allocated a place and the reasons for their request. When such a request is made, the Head will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case, based on their professional judgement of what is in the best interest of the child, taking account of the evidence and rationale provided by the parents.

Withdrawal of an Offer

The Governing Body reserve the right to withdraw an offer of placement but only under the following circumstances:

1. It has been offered in error,

2. A parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time (two weeks).

3. It is established that the offer was obtained through fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

We will write to parents prior to any potential case for withdrawal. Parents will be offered the opportunity to respond to our concerns.

Appeals Procedure

In accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, parents may appeal against a decision by the Governing Body to refuse an application for a place. Details of the appeal procedure are included in the Kent Admission to Primary School Booklet, a copy of the appeals procedure will also be available from the school office upon request.

Queries about the Admission Policy should be addressed to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors, c/o the School Office.

Admin1@st-marys-ashford.kent.sch.uk

RESPECT FRIENDSHIP PERSEVERANCE FORGIVENESS COMPASSION TRUST