Admissions Arrangements Academic Year 2026-27

EKC Schools Trust

Approval Date:

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1. Policy Statement and Principles

1.1. Policy Aims and Principles

We want every family to feel confident and informed when applying for a school place at one of our academies. This policy outlines how we manage admissions in a transparent, fair, and inclusive manner.

We welcome applications from all children, regardless of background, ability, or need. Our admissions process does not disadvantage any child based on their social group, race, disability, or special educational needs. We also ensure that no other school policies discourage families from applying.

This policy applies to admissions for both primary and secondary schools within our Trust for the academic year September 2026 to August 2027, including in-year admissions.

This policy aligns with national guidance and legislation, including the School Admissions Code (2021) and the School Admission Appeals Code, and supports the values and aims of our Trust.

Parents are encouraged to visit the Academy with their child before applying, to help you make an informed decision. While we encourage families to apply for places at the main intake points (Reception and Year 7), we also welcome applications for other year groups.

1.2. Policy Monitoring and Review

We review this admissions policy annually to ensure it remains up to date and effective. We may also review it sooner if:

- There are changes in the law or government guidance.
- A significant event or issue arises.
- A decision by the Schools Adjudicator requires it.
- We find that the policy is not working as intended.

If there are urgent concerns these should be raised to the Headteacher in the first instance for them to determine whether a review of the policy by the Trust Board is required in advance of the review date.

1.3. Determining Arrangements and Consultation

Each year, we formally set our admissions arrangements—even if there are no changes from the previous year.

We will consult with parents and stakeholders following the statutory process for consultation if we propose any changes to our admissions arrangements, including new schools transitioning to the Trust's admissions code. Even if no changes are made, we will still consult at least once every seven years.

When a consultation takes place, we will:

- Publish the details on the EKC Schools Trust and Academy website.
- Notify relevant stakeholders.

- Share any significant feedback with the Academy and the Trust.

Once the arrangements are finalised, we will publish them on our websites and inform the appropriate authorities.

2. Primary Admissions – Reception

Where the individual Academy has a school-run nursery, please contact the school directly for admission and application information.

The process detailed in this section is for Primary admissions. For further information on this process, please contact the individual school using the contact details on each website.

Each school has a Published Admission Number or PAN, this is the specific number of school places for Reception pupils. These are as follows:

- Aylesham Primary School: 60
- Bysing Wood Primary School: 60
- The Churchill School: 60
- East Stour Primary School: 60
- Holywell Primary School: 30
- Palm Bay Primary School: 60
- Queenborough Primary School: 60
- Thornden Wood Primary School: 60

This number (PAN) is also published on each Academy's website.

2.1. Primary Application Process

To apply for a Reception class school place (the September after your child turns 4) you need to complete the local authority's (LA) common application form (CAF) and submit this directly to the LA or child's primary school by the deadline. Applications are made to the LA in which the child lives.

For Kent residents: All the details are listed on the Kent County Council Website following the link below:

www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/primary-school-places

For other LA residents: Please see details listed on your LA's website.

Parents are asked to apply online, or they can request a form from the primary school or from the Local Authority.

Late applications (those submitted before the start of the school year but too late for an offer to be made on the national offer day as part of the Local Authority's Coordinated Admissions Process) will not be considered until all other applications have been reviewed.

All offers of Primary places will be made via the Local Authority. Academies will not contact individual families until after the offers have been made.

2.2. Primary Oversubscription Criteria

If any primary Academy receives more applications than there are available places then children with the Academy named on an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) will be automatically admitted to the Academy. As a result of this, the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly. If there are still places available, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the oversubscription criteria set out below, with each criterion held in distance order:

[Definitions can be found in Appendix 1]

PART A - Applications for places at Bysing Wood Primary School, The Churchill School, East Stour Primary School, Holywell Primary School, Palm Bay Primary School, Queenborough Primary School and Nursery and Thornden Wood Primary.

1. Looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those who appear to have been in state care outside of England and or ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders).
2. Having brothers or sisters (siblings) who are already at the Academy when your child is due to start.
3. Child of staff employed at the Academy where a) the 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.
4. Distance. The Academy will give priority to those living nearest to the Academy as per the definition.

PART B - Applications for places at Aylesham Primary School.

1. Looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those who appear to have been in state care outside of England and or ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders).
2. 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' criterion'
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 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. Geographical/Distance. The Academy will give priority to those living nearest to the Academy.

If the Academy still has an oversubscription, then a further tie breaker will be used. Distance from the Academy will be used as a tie breaker whenever two children have the same priority based on any criteria.

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 process will be supervised by someone independent of the school.

3. Secondary Admissions – Year 7

The process detailed in this section is for admissions to Secondary.

EKC Sheppey Secondary has a Published Admissions Number of 150 for entry into Year 7.

3.1. Secondary Application Process

To apply for a Year 7 place, you need to complete the Local Authority's (LA) 'Common Application Form' (CAF) by the deadline. Applications are made to the LA in which the child lives.

For Kent residents: All the details are listed on the Kent County Council Website following the link below:

https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/secondary-school-places

For other LA residents: Please see details listed on your LA's website.

Parents are asked to apply online or contact kentonlineadmissions@kent.gov.uk for assistance.

All offers of Secondary School places will be made via the Local Authority.

3.2. Secondary Oversubscription Criteria

If EKC Sheppey Secondary School receives more applications than there are available places, then children with the Academy named on an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) will be automatically admitted to the Academy. As a result of this, the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly. If there are still places available, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the oversubscription criteria set out below, with each criterion held in distance order:

[Definitions can be found in Appendix 1].

1) Looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those who appear to have been in state care outside of England and or ceased to

be in state care as a result of being adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders).

2) Children with a sibling(s) who are already at the Academy when your child is due to start.
3) Children who attend Queenborough Primary School and Nursery (part of EKC Schools Trust) up to a maximum of 60 places.
4) Child of staff employed at the Academy where a) the 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) Isle of Sheppey residents – The Academy will give priority to those living on the Isle of Sheppey (as per the 'Dual address' definition – see appendix 1).
6) Distance. The Academy will give priority to those living nearest to the Academy (as per the 'Distance' definition).

If the Academy still has an oversubscription, then a further tiebreaker will be used. Distance from the Academy will be used as a tiebreaker whenever two children have the same priority based on any criteria.

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 process will be supervised by someone independent of the school.

4. Requests For Admissions Outside Of Normal (Chronological) Age Group

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

In addition, the parents of a summer-born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they be admitted out of their normal age group – to Reception rather than Year 1.

Similarly, where children transition to Secondary education taught outside of their normal age group, agreement must be sought for an application from the Academy.

Parents should contact the Headteacher of the Academy at the earliest opportunity to avoid any delays in the application process.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made based on 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
- Headteacher's views

The panel (of at least three governors) will consider the request (and any supporting information provided) and make their decision based on what they believe is in the best interests of your child and clearly set out the reasons for the decision. Please note: Parents do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place but it is not in their preferred age group.

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the co-ordinated admissions process and considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed. 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.

Where an offer has been made, the school will provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents can choose to defer the date their child attends the school until later in the school year, but not beyond the start of the term after their child reaches compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year. Where parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year, but not beyond the start of the term after their child reaches compulsory school age or beyond the start of the final term if they have accepted a place but the child does not reach the age of 5 until after the end of the school year.

5. In-Year Admissions – Primary and Secondary

Applications for in-year admissions are considered in the same way as those made at the beginning of the academic year and are dealt with in accordance with the Local Authorities Fair Access Protocol where appropriate.

Kent County Council has produced a standard form, known as the In-Year Admission Form (IYAF), which the Academy Trust uses to allow applicants to apply for school places in any year group outside of the normal admission round. Details can be found on the LA website following the link below:

https://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0012/3522/in-year-application-form.pdf

In-year admissions forms can be obtained from each Academy in the Trust. Forms must be returned to the individual Academy and will be processed no later than 10 working days from receipt.

6. Unsuccessful Applications

The Academy will inform the child's parent if a decision has been made to refuse their child a place at the Academy for which they have applied, this will include the reason why admission was refused, information about the right to appeal, deadlines and contact details.

A child is allowed to be on the Academy waiting list while lodging an appeal and

the appeal will not affect their position on the list. The decision of the appeals panel is binding on the Academy.

7. Waiting Lists – Primary and Secondary

Each Academy will maintain a waiting list following National Offer Day for pupils involved in coordinated admissions processes and from the first day of the academic year for all other pupils. This will be open to any parent to ask for their child's name to be placed on the waiting list.

Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the respective oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. The Academy's waiting list will be re-ordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever anyone is added to or leaves the waiting list.

8. Withdrawal of a Place

The Academy will only withdraw an offer of a place if:

- The place was offered in error.
- Acceptance of the place was not received in a reasonable period of time.
- The offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application (the Academy may request evidence to ensure the child meets the admissions criteria) – if this occurs the application will be considered a fresh.

The Academy will not withdraw the place if the child has started at the Academy.

9. Appeals and Complaints

If your child is due to start Primary or Secondary school in September 2026 you can appeal if you were refused a place at one of your preferred schools. Parents have a statutory right of appeal via an independent panel should an application for a place be refused.

Please note there is a legal maximum class size for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. This is 30 children per teacher.

The School Admission Appeals code states that infant class size appeals may be upheld only if the appeals panel finds:

- That the admission of additional children would not breach the infant class size limit; or
- It finds that the admission arrangements were unlawful or weren't correctly and impartially applied and the child would otherwise have been offered a place; or
- The decision to refuse admission was not reasonable

9.1Purpose of the Appeal Hearing

The hearing lets you explain to an independent appeal panel why you think your child should be given a place at the school and lets the school explain why it could not offer your child a place.

9.2 Decision

Appellants will be advised of the panel's decision as soon as possible and within five school days of the appeal taking place.

If your appeal is unsuccessful, you can't lodge another appeal in the same academic year, unless you can show your circumstances have changed since the first appeal.

9.3 Wish to Appeal?

If you wish to appeal, please complete our Trust Admissions Appeal Form found overleaf. Forms should be sent via email or post directly to the Trust addressed to the Clerk to the Independent Appeal Panel. The appeals clerk will contact you directly to confirm arrangements for your appeal.

Trust Email: office@ekcschoolstrust.org

Trust Address: Ramsgate Road, Broadstairs, Kent, CT10 1PN

9.4 Appeals Timeline

- Secondary Appeals - You must submit your appeal before 30th March 2026 for it to be considered by 16th June 2026.
- Primary Appeals - You must submit your appeal before 19th May 2026 for it to be considered by 21st July 2026.

Any appeals received after this time will be heard within 40 school days from the deadline, or where reasonably possible in line with updated guidance from the Department for Education.

For late applications, appeals should be heard within 40 school days from the deadline for lodging appeals where possible, or within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged where reasonably possible in line with updated guidance from the Department for Education.

9.5 Complaints About Admissions Arrangements

Any person, or body, can make an objection to the Schools Adjudicator when they consider the Trust's arrangements are unlawful, or not in compliance with the School Admissions Code / relevant legislation relating to admissions. They must be placed by 15th May in the determination year.

Where there has been maladministration that has affected the outcome of the appeal, complaints can be made to the Secretary of State who can require a new panel to hear the appeal.

EKC Schools Trust Admission Appeal Form

Name of Pupil:	
Date of Birth:	**Pupil ID:**
Address:	
Home Telephone:	**Mobile Telephone:**
Email Address:	
Name of School Appealing For:	

(Please be aware that Appeals are only upheld in very limited circumstances – For more information please see our accompanying guidance)

Reasons for Appeal:

Please let us know if you intend to send a more detailed letter after you have returned this form.

Please continue on a separate sheet if you wish.

If you believe that you or your child has a disability that is relevant to your appeal, please tick this box. ☐

Signed (Parent/Carer):	**Print Name Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss:**

Appendix 1 - Definitions

The Trust uses the following definitions when applying this policy:

Looked after child – 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 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.

Siblings – A sibling is defined as:

- A brother or sister (including half brothers or sisters) who shares one or both parents, whether or not resident in the same household.
- A stepbrother or sister where the two children are related by a parents marriage.
- An adopted or foster child living in the same household under the terms of the residents order.
- Another child living in the same household where the adult has parental responsibility.

In the case of twins or other children from multiple births (two or more siblings in one year group) and where only one place is available, the application will be considered as an excepted pupil and exceeding PAN on this basis.

Distance – 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.

Dual Address – Where the child lives at two different addresses, the 'home' address will be determined as the address at which the child resides for the majority of school nights. School nights are Sunday night to Thursday night inclusive. In a case where the child spends an equal number of school nights at each address, then the address where the child benefit is paid will be used. Where no child benefit is claimed the address used to register the child with a doctor will be used.