



## **Admissions Policy**

# **Godinton Primary School**

**Policy for Admissions to Godinton Primary School from  
September 2017**

**Policy approved by Governor's Strategy Group 21/09/16**

**This Policy is due for renewal in Term 1 2018 - 2019**

Godinton Academy Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 9404783. The registered office is at Lockholt Close, Ashford, TN23 3JR.

# **Admissions Policy**

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1** This document sets out the admissions arrangements for Godinton Primary School. As an Academy Trust, Godinton Primary acts as their own admissions authority and as such is responsible for its own admissions procedures.
- 1.2** The governing body of Godinton Primary School applies the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend this school.
- 1.3** The school complies with the statutory School Admissions Code issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, which came into force in December 2014.

## **2 Aims and Objectives**

- 2.1** Godinton Primary School is an inclusive school that welcomes children from all backgrounds and abilities.
- 2.2** All applications for a place at Godinton Primary School will be treated on merit and in a sensitive manner.
- 2.3** The only restriction we place on entry is that of number. If the number of children applying for entry exceeds the places available, the school uses its own over subscription criteria to determine whether a child is accepted or not. It is our wish to allow parents the right to have a place at the school of their choice. However, this is not always possible, due to the excess demand on the school places available.
- 2.4** The level of ability of a child or any special needs that s/he may have plays no part in the admissions policy of this school.

## **3. Planned Admissions Number (PAN) and Infant Class Sizes**

- 3.1** The current PAN for Godinton Primary School is 60 for statutory school years.
- 3.2** The PAN is determined in accordance with the results of the school's Net Capacity Assessment (NCA), the impact on the community and neighbouring schools and is agreed in consultation between the Local Authority, relevant parties and the school.
- 3.3** As our own Admissions Authority, Godinton Primary School is only required to consult on proposals to decrease our PAN.
- 3.4** Once determined, pupils should not be admitted above PAN unless exceptional circumstances apply.

This may include:

- The admission of pupils with Educational, Health and Care (EHC) plans (previously known as pupils with statements of special educational needs).
- The admission of Children in Care

- An allocations error has occurred and a place should have been offered.
- An independent appeal panel has upheld an appeal
- Children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round and for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance
- Children of UK service personnel
- Children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an 'excepted pupil'.
- Children with special educational needs who are normally registered at a special school, who attend some classes within the mainstream school

3.5 We teach infant children (aged five to seven) in classes that have a maximum number of 30 children. Additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances as outlined above. These children will remain as an 'excepted pupil' for the duration of their time in an infant class or until the class size falls back to below 30.

#### **4. Over subscription Criteria**

4.1 Before the application of the over-subscription criteria, children with an Educational Health and Care (EHC) plan will be admitted even when this means going over PAN.

4.2 The allocation of places up to the planned admissions number is in accordance with the over-subscription criteria below, which are applied in priority order:

**Children in Care** or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, resident or special guardianship order.

**Current Family Association** - Those children who have a brother or sister already at the school. To qualify for this criterion, the brother or sister must still be attending the school when the younger sibling starts. There is no sibling link if the brother or sister is in Year 6 when an application is made, and will subsequently have left the school when the younger sibling joins. In addition, the family must still live at the same address as when the brother/sister was first admitted, or if they have subsequently moved, they must now live within 2 miles of the school (straight line distance) or have moved nearer to the school from where they were living previously. If the family has moved more than 2 miles from the school since the sibling was admitted, the sibling link is deemed to have been broken. In this context brother or sister means children living as brother or sister in the same house which is their main residence, including natural brothers and sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers and stepsisters and foster brothers and sisters.

**Staff children** – Where admission of the child is required to enable the retention of a member of staff to a key position, provided the staff member has been employed at Godinton Primary School for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made; and/or where admission of the child is required to allow recruitment of the member of staff to a post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

**Health and Special Access Reasons** - This applies to children whose health or physical impairment means they have to go to a particular school because he/she can only move easily around certain kinds of building. A medical practitioner must provide written evidence to support your request. The KCC admissions booklet also provides details with regard to parental health issues and how this impacts on applying for a school place.

**Nearness of the Child's Home to School** - Once the other criteria have been taken into consideration, the children are offered places according to who lives closest to the school. The distance is measured, using a computer system which measures the straight line distance using Ordnance Survey set point data. Distances are measured from a point defined as within the child's home to a point defined as within the school as specified by Ordnance Survey. The same address point on the school site is used for everybody. A pupil's home is considered to be a residential property that is the child's only or main residence and not an address at which your child might sometimes stay or sleep due to parents' own domestic arrangements. If parents live separately but share responsibility for a child, and that child lives at two separate addresses during the week, the school will regard the home address as the one at which the child sleeps for the majority of the week. The address must be the pupil's home address on the day that an application for admission was completed and which is either owned by the child's parents or guardian OR leased to or rented by the child's parent(s) or guardian under a lease or written rental agreement. Historical furthest distances from which children have been admitted into the Reception classes are published on the school website. Random allocation (names out of a hat) will be used as a tie breaker to decide who has the highest priority for admission in the event that the distance between two children's homes and the school is the same.

## **5. Consultation on Admissions Arrangements**

**5.1** Godinton Primary School determines its admission arrangements annually. Where changes are proposed to the admission arrangements, including to the over-subscription criteria, the admissions authority must first publicly consult on those arrangements. Consultation must be for a minimum of 6 weeks and must take place between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 31<sup>st</sup> January of the school year before the admission process begins. This is known as the determination year. (i.e. for admission into school in September 2017, consultation must take place between 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015 and 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016). The consultation period allows parents, other admissions authorities and the local community to raise any concerns about proposed admissions arrangements.

**5.2** If no changes are made to the admissions arrangements, they must be consulted on at least once every seven years.

**5.3** For the duration of the consultation period, a copy of the full proposals for admissions arrangements (including the proposed PAN) will be published on the school's website, together with details of the person within the authority to whom comments may be sent and the areas on which comments are not sought.

**5.4** Once all arrangements have been determined, arrangements can be objected to and referred to the Schools Adjudicator. Objections must be referred to the Adjudicator by 15<sup>th</sup> May in the determination year. Any decision by the adjudicator must be acted upon by the admission authority and the admissions arrangements amended accordingly. For further information, please access the following website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-schools-adjudicator>

## **6. Admission to Godinton Primary School**

### **Entry into the Reception classes**

**6.1** Godinton Primary School complies with the Local Authority (LA), Kent County Council, co-ordinated scheme for admission into the Reception Classes.

**6.2** The Local Authority A publishes a composite admissions prospectus each year, which gives information about how parents can apply for a place in the school of their choice for their reception aged child. Parents have a right to express a preference for the school of their choice and they should do so on the application form. Expressing a preference does not, in itself, guarantee a place at this school. Application forms can be obtained from the Admissions Team of the LA or are available online and should be completed by the date stipulated on the forms. All preferences are collated by the Local Authority and parents then receive an offer from the Local Authority at the highest preference school at which a place is available.

**6.3** A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday if this should fall on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31<sup>st</sup> December, 31<sup>st</sup> March and 31<sup>st</sup> August. The term 'summer born' is used to refer to children born from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> August. Summer born children are not required to start school until a full school year after the point at which they could have first been admitted.

**6.4** As an admissions authority, Godinton Primary School is required to provide for the admission of all children in September following their fourth birthday but flexibilities exist for children whose parents do not feel they are ready to begin school before they reach compulsory school age. Most children do begin school in September on a full time basis following a part-time induction in term 1. However in a small number of cases parents may wish to discuss concerns about a full time autumn start with the school. In these circumstances, parents are requested to meet with the Headteacher in order to outline any issues. The school will strive to work with parents to reach a positive outcome for the child, this may be the deferment of the date at which their child is admitted to the school (providing they do not defer beyond the point at which they reach statutory school age or beyond the start of the final term of that school year), or a part time placement until they reach statutory school age.

**6.5** However, 'summer born' children are not required to start school until a full year after the point at which they could have been admitted – the point at which other children in their age range are beginning year 1. Should a parent wish their child to be admitted to reception, rather than Year 1, at this point, they may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group. In these circumstances, parents should make an application for their child's normal age group at the usual time but simultaneously submit a request for admission out of the normal age group. The Headteacher will then

request to meet with the parents to listen to and discuss their concerns. Parents will be asked to provide the school with evidence in support of their request which demonstrates why it would be in the child's best interest to be admitted to reception rather than into Year 1. This may, but does not have to, include professional evidence.

The school will then make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and the individual needs and abilities of the child and whether these can best be met in reception or year 1. They will also consider the potential impact on the child being admitted to Year 1 without having first completed the reception year. The final outcome of the process will be that the school will determine which year group the child should be admitted to and will provide parents with an explanation regarding this decision. Only once this has been decided, can the school apply its over-subscription criteria to determine whether a place can be offered in that year group. Parents will be notified as to the outcome prior to Primary National Offer day. If their request is granted then their application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. If their request is refused then parents must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or to refuse it and make an in year application for admission to Year 1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday. When a parent's request is agreed, they must make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year. They will then still be subject to the school's over-subscription criteria and as such cannot therefore be guaranteed a place at the school. Godinton Primary School are not required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group.

Once a child has been admitted to a school it is for the Headteacher to decide how best to educate them. In some cases it may be appropriate for a child who has been admitted out of their normal age group to be moved to their normal age group, but in others it will not. Any decision to move a child to a different age group will be made by the Headteacher in consultation with parents and will be based on sound educational reasons.

## **In Year Admissions**

**6.6** In year admissions are dealt with by the school itself. If parents wish to apply for a place for a child in a year group at any point during the school year then they must complete an IYCAF (in year casual admissions form).

**6.7** If a place is available in the year group requested then an offer of a place will be sent to the parents by the school.

**6.8** If no place is available in a year group a refusal letter is sent out to parents setting out the reasons as to why a place has not been offered. This is accompanied by a slip which can be completed and returned to school requesting a place on the waiting list. The waiting list is updated annually and parents are telephoned to ask whether they still wish to remain on the list. If a place is offered and the parents do not accept it, they need to request in writing that they still wish to remain on the waiting list.

**6.9** If and when a place becomes available, the school will use its over-subscription criteria to determine who, from the waiting list, will be offered a place.

**6.10** Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted or talented or if they have experienced problems such as ill

health. (Please also see section 6.5 for how this related to summer born children and entry into the reception classes).

If a parent makes this request, the Headteacher will meet with them to discuss this. Parents may find it useful to submit evidence to support their request but are not obliged to do so. Decisions will be made by the Headteacher on the basis of the individual circumstances of each case and the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking into consideration parents views, information about a child's academic, social and emotional development, where relevant their medical history and the views of medical professionals and in what year group a child has previously been educated. Parents will be informed as to the outcome of the decision and in the event that their request is not granted, details of why this is the case.

6.11 Where a Local Authority considers that an academy would be the best school to meet the needs of a particular child, for example a child who has been excluded from other local schools, it can ask the academy to admit that child but usually has no power to direct it to. In these cases the school will consider the request and the impact that this may have on other pupils in the school. If the school declines to admit the pupil then the Local Authority can ask the Secretary of State to intervene. They have power under an academy's funding agreement to direct an academy to admit a child. Both parties can seek advice from the Schools Adjudicator.

## **7. Admission Appeals**

### **Appeals for a place at the start of the Reception Year**

**7.1** Parents who are refused a place at a school for which they have applied, have the right of appeal to an independent admission appeal panel. For entry to school at the start of the reception year, information about the appeal process is outlined in the letter sent to parents by the Local Authority on Primary National Offer Day.

**7.2** As the purpose of the appeals process is to consider whether a child should be admitted to a particular school, parents do not have a right of appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like e.g. parents of a 'summer born' child requested that their child be admitted into Year R when children of similar age are due to start in Year 1. In these circumstances, however, parents may use the school's complaints process to make a complaint about the school's decision not to admit their child outside their normal age group.

### **Appeals for In Year Admissions**

**7.3** If a place is not offered at Godinton Primary School, it is because to do so would prejudice the education of other children by allowing the numbers of children in the school to increase to beyond PAN.

**7.4** If parents wish to appeal against a decision to refuse entry, they have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeals panel. Parents should write to the clerk of the Governing Body outlining the reasons for their appeal. This is then passed on to the Local Authority who process the appeal. The appeals panel's decision is binding for all parties concerned. Where the panel upholds the appeal, the school is required to admit the child.

## **8. Withdrawing an Offer or a Place**

**8.1** The offer of a place at Godinton Primary School may be withdrawn due to the following:

- it has been offered in error
- parents have not responded within a reasonable period of time
- it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application

**8.2** Where a parent has not responded to the offer the admission authority must give the parent a further opportunity to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not.

**8.3** A place will not be withdrawn once a child has started at the school except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In deciding whether or not to withdraw the place, the length of time that the child has been at the school will be taken into consideration.

## **9. Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually.