



SHELDWICH PRIMARY SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS POLICY 2026



Admission to Pre-school

Sheldwich Primary School is responsible for the admission arrangements of the pre-school class. We accept children into the pre-school who are aged two years and six months to four years old. Funded hours are available and start the term after a child's third birthday. Parents and carers can obtain further information about the admissions process from the school office.

Where applications for admission exceed the number of places available, the following criteria will be applied, in the order set out below.

1. **Children in Local Authority Care or Previously in Local Authority Care**
2. **Sibling / Current Family Association**
3. **Medical / Health and Special Access Reasons**
4. **Children of Staff at the School**
5. **Distance / Nearness of Child's Home to the School**

(A detailed explanation of these headings can be found on page 2 of this policy).

Applications

To apply for a place in the pre-school class, an application form should be completed detailing what sessions are required and a start date. Applications are ranked using the criteria above and sessions offered when available.

Places will be confirmed a minimum of six weeks prior to your requested start date.

If your child attends the pre-school class, it will not guarantee a place in the Reception class when they are four years old.

Admission to Primary School

Sheldwich Primary School became an academy on 1st September 2011 and has adopted the following arrangements with respect to the admission of pupils to the primary school.

Pupils will be admitted to the Reception Year before their fifth birthday, usually entering at the start of the academic year (September 2026–July 2027). The Published Admission Number to the Reception Year in September 2026 will be 30.

Where applications for admission exceed the number of places available, the following criteria will be applied, in the order set out below, to decide which children to admit. However, before the application of oversubscription criteria, children with an Education, Health and Care Plan will be admitted. As a result of this, the published admission number (30) will be reduced accordingly.

1. Children in Local Authority Care or Previously in Local Authority Care

A 'looked after child'; all previously looked after children, including 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 who was previously look after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, 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).

2. Sibling / Current Family Association

A brother or sister attending Sheldwich Primary School when the child starts; 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.

3. Medical / 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 Sheldwich Primary School. Equally this priority will apply to children whose parents'/guardians', physical or mental health or social needs means that they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend Sheldwich Primary 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 Sheldwich Primary School.

4. Children of Staff at the School

Priority will be given to children of a member of staff who have been recruited or are being retained to fill a demonstrable skill shortage.

5. Distance / Nearness of Child's Home to the School

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. 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 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 parent, 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 week days. 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 academy, the names will be allocated a number and drawn randomly to decide which child should be given the place.

In the event of a 'tie breaker' situation, the nearness of an applicant's home to school will be the decider. In the event that more than one applicant has the same distance from home to school (as measured by the local authority), a random selection will be applied.

Applications

Applications for entrance into Sheldwich Primary School should be made through the local authority in which you and the child live. You will be required to complete a Reception Common Application Form (RCAF). If you live in Kent, applications can be made online through the KCC website www.kent.gov.uk/ola. The application process will open in early November 2025.

Late applications will be placed on a waiting list and places allocated based on the above criteria.

Appeals

Parents have the right to appeal against any refusal to admit their child. Appeals should be directed to an Appeals Committee established within the terms of the Education Act 1996. Details of the appeals procedure can be obtained from the Clerk to the Governors at Sheldwich Primary School. The Appeals Committee will notify the Appellant of the outcome:

- Appeals must be lodged in line with the academy's date, except where the initial application was a late application, in which case the appeal must be lodged within 21 days of the allocation decision being sent to the parents.
- The school will acknowledge an appeal within seven working days of it being lodged.
- Appeals relating to other admissions can be made at any time.

Right to Withdraw a Place

After a place has been offered the school reserves the right to withdraw the place in the following circumstances:

- When a parent has failed to respond to an offer within a reasonable time; or
- When a parent has failed to notify the school of important changes to the application information; or
- The admission authority offered the place on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent.

Waiting Lists

Parents of children who have not been offered a place at the school may ask for their child's name to be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list, which will be maintained until 31 July 2027, will be operated using the same admissions criteria listed above. Placing a child's name on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place. It is possible that when a child is directed under the LA's fair access protocol they will take precedence over those children already on the list.

In-Year (Casual) Admissions

Applications for a place at the school in-year must be made through Sheldwich Primary School. An offer for a place will be made if one is available and their child meets the criteria for admission. If a place cannot be offered, parents will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on a waiting list. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

Children to be taught outside their expected year group

Children are entitled to a full-time place in September following their fourth birthday. Parents are able to defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made. Where 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.

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.

Parents of a summer born child (1 April to 31 August) may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to Reception rather than Year 1.

The Headteacher will consider such requests on a case by case basis.

Parents should apply in the usual way in the year when their child would be expected to start school and then request to defer entry to the following year. Following receipt of the school's decision, parents should apply again the following year providing the evidence that deferral was agreed. There is no guarantee of a place at a specific school in the following year as this is subject to the usual over subscription criteria.

Repeating a Year

Sheldwich Primary School seeks to meet the individual needs of pupils by using a range of teaching strategies, calling on additional support and advice as appropriate from qualified staff and external support services.

The effective use of differentiated teaching programmes should ensure that back-classing only needs to be considered in very unusual circumstances such as when a child's education has been severely disrupted by a long-term absence through illness.

If it is apparent that the pupil is not making appropriate progress, or is experiencing significant learning difficulties in achieving objectives, the school should implement a programme of support. A full record of the child's needs and the effectiveness of the action taken to meet them will be kept. It is expected that special educational needs will be addressed by providing additional support from within the school with the assistance of external support agencies, without the need for repeating a year.

To hold back a pupil for a further year, whilst their former classmates move on, may have significant implications for the child which could have a detrimental effect on their overall progress. A school must take account of their PAN and whether the pupil can be accommodated. Also, the school must consider the movement of the pupil could prevent another prospective pupil from joining the school.

The full implications of any proposals must be considered before they are finalised, particularly as action taken for a child at primary school may well have consequences at the time of transfer to secondary school. An 'out of year group admission' application would need to be made to a secondary school for the affected pupil to join with their current cohort (Year 7) and the secondary school may refuse.

Where the pupil's progress is being affected by factors outside the school, such as difficult home circumstances, parents /school should seek support from external agencies.

Before a decision is reached, it is essential that the full implications of possibly repeating a year have been taken into account. In order that all relevant information may be considered, the Headteacher of the current school ought to seek the views, as appropriate, of the following:

- SEN Coordinator for the school
- Teaching staff
- Educational Psychologist
- Parents (if instigated by the school this must be in agreement with the parent)
- Any other external agency working with the pupil/family

A record is to be made of all enquiries/meetings held.

If a pupil repeats a year they will be treated as part of their new cohort for **all** educational assessments and examinations.

The process to consider a pupil repeating a school year is as follow:

- Stage 1:** Headteacher to have a meeting between parents, all professionals involved, and including class teachers of both year groups affected. If determined it is in the best interests of the pupil to repeat a year, **move to Stage 2.**
- Stage 2:** Request for a placement outside the normal age group in writing to the Governing Body from the Headteacher including a report of the findings of enquiries/meetings held in arriving at the decision.
- Stage 3:** Governing Body to agree/refuse movement of pupil.
- Stage 4:** Headteacher to write to parents to inform them of outcome and requesting acknowledgement of the result.

Reviewed by SG/Trustees – January 2025
To be reviewed: January 2026