

FOUNDED 1789



St. Mary's Church of England Primary School

Admissions Policy 2026-2027

Date: March 2025

Due to be Reviewed and Ratified by Governing body on 18th March 2025

Review Date: March 2026

Signed : _____ Rev'd Melissa Carter, Chair of Governors

Signed : _____ Helen Comfort, Executive Headteacher

Policy for Admissions – School Year 2026-2027

Equality

We recognise our duty and responsibility to establish equality for all pupils, staff, other members of the school community and service users regardless of their ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or beliefs as defined within existing equalities legislation (please see ‘Single Equality Scheme’).

Earliest Starting Date: The law does not require a child to start school until the start of the term following the child’s fifth birthday. However, children are admitted to St Mary’s from the autumn term immediately following their fourth birthdays.

Admission Numbers: Our school Pupil Admission Number (PAN) is 30. 30 places will be made available for children who wish to enter primary school for the first time aged 4 or 5 at the start of the Autumn Term 2026, subject to the limits imposed under regulations governing infant class sizes and the maximum capacity (210) of the school building. An application for a place for an older child of infant or junior school age, for instance to accommodate a family moving into the area, will be considered under the same conditions but subject additionally to the number of children already registered at St Mary’s in the relevant school year. The Local Authority requires an In Year Common Application Form to be completed in this instance. This form can either be downloaded from <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/move-to-a-different-school> or is available from the school office.

Deferred Entry:

Parents have a right to defer their child entry into Reception year. The only restriction is that children must secure the offered place by starting school on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day), but not beyond the beginning of the final term. The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

This means that children born between the 1 April and 31 August (also known as “summer born”) must start school at the beginning of the April term if they wish to keep their offer. Where parents 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 reapply through the In Year process. These applications should be made during the last month of Reception Year.

Admission of children outside 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.

Application Timetable: The Local Authority requires a Common Application Form to be completed online. Details of this admissions procedure are available from Kent County Council and from the school. IN ADDITION St Mary’s School requires completion of a Supplementary Information Form if you are a regular worshipper at St Mary the Virgin Church in Dover or any other church belonging to the Church of England, or another denomination belonging to the Churches Together in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This is available from the school office during normal opening hours, and from the school website.

Late Applications: For further information see the procedures for admissions to primary schools.

Over-Subscription Criteria:

Before the application of over-subscription criteria, children with a statement of special educational need which names our school will be admitted. As a result of this the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly.

The School will offer places in accordance with the following criteria in this order:

1. Looked after children and 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 under the age of 18 years for whom the local authority provides accommodation by agreement with their parents/carers (Section 22 of the Children Act 1989) or who ceased to be so because they were adopted or subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order immediately following having been looked after and those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
2. Children from families who are regular worshippers at St Mary the Virgin Church in Dover. "Regular worship" is defined as attendance at services at St Mary's Church on at least a monthly basis over the last 12 months. Written confirmation from the Vicar of St Mary's Church will be required by the Governors. 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 arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship.
3. Children with a sibling attending the school when the child starts. In this context sibling means children in the same house including natural brothers and sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers or sisters. The sibling link is maintained as long as the family lives 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/nearness of children's home to school criterion.
4. Children from families who are regular worshippers at any other church belonging to the Church of England, or another denomination belonging to the Churches Together in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Written confirmation from the clergy of the relevant church will be required by the Governors.
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. Nearness of children's homes to 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.

7. 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.

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

7. In-Year Casual Admissions:

1. If your child is at a primary or junior school and you want to move them to St. Mary's Church of England Primary School, you need to apply. This is called an in-year admission. Parent/Carers must complete the [in-year application form](#) and send it to the school. You need to fill in a separate form for each child. There is no guarantee that we will be able to offer your child a place. You should not remove your child from their current school before you have an offer of a place.
2. If you are moving into Kent, please complete the [in-year application form](#) and send it to the school. You need to fill in a separate form for each child. You should also contact your own local authority to keep them informed.
3. For children in care with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) being placed with carers in Kent, it is important the social worker contacts the relevant [Special Educational Needs area team](#) if the child is moving to a different school.
4. If you are a member of the UK Armed Forces or a Crown Servant, with a confirmed posting to Kent, you can apply for an in year admission to a Kent school by completing an [In Year Casual Admissions Form \(IYCAF\) \(PDF, 64.0 KB\)](#) and sending it direct to your preferred schools. You must include an official letter that declares a relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address with your application. Where our school is able to offer a place, we will honour that place for 3 months. This can mean that a place can be kept open for the next academic year providing your child/children will start within the 3 month period. If the place has not been taken up at the end of the 3 months, the school may offer it to another child. If this happens, the school will inform you that the place is no longer available and you will need to make a new application for a school place. The school may choose to add your child's name to their waiting list if they have one.
5. St. Mary's CofE (Aided) Primary School will offer you a place within 5 days if:
 - we have all the information we need
 - we have a place available
 - no other child has a higher priority for the place.

- If your child has been permanently excluded from more than 2 schools, we may refuse to offer a place. Please contact KCC Admissions 03000 41 21 21 (9am to 2pm and 4pm to 5pm Monday to Friday) or email kentinyearadmissions@kent.gov.uk for help if this applies to you.
- Once a place is formally offered, in the interests of fairness, it cannot be held open for more than 10 school days.

8. Waiting List: If there is no place available for a child for whom an application has been received, the child's name will, at the request of the parents, be added to the school's waiting list for a maximum period of six months from the date of initial refusal. If a place subsequently becomes available at St Mary's School, the child to be offered the place will be selected in accordance with the Over-subscription Criteria detailed above.

9. Appeal Arrangements: In the event of an unsuccessful application parents have the right to appeal. This will be considered by a Governors Sub-Committee and if still unsuccessful it can be taken to an Independent Appeals Committee of the Diocesan Board.



ADMISSION TO
ST MARY'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND (AIDED)
PRIMARY SCHOOL, DOVER

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM
ADDITIONAL FORM—FAITH

PLEASE PRINT

Surname of child _____

First Name _____

As part of our Admissions policy the school offers places following clear criteria. The full policy is published on the school website www.st-marys-dover.kent.sch.uk however point 2 and 4 relate to regular worshippers at either St Mary's the Virgin Church in Dover or at any other church belonging to the Church of England. As stated in our policy we require written confirmation in order that we can apply this.

2 Children from families who are regular worshippers at St Mary the Virgin Church in Dover. *"Regular worship" is defined as attendance at services at St Mary's Church on at least a monthly basis over the last 12 months. Written confirmation from the Vicar of St Mary's Church will be required by the Governors.

Name/s _____ regularly attend St Mary the Virgin Church in Dover.

Signed _____ Date _____

Printed name _____ Role in Church _____

4 Children from families who are regular worshippers at any other church belonging to the Church of England, or another denomination belonging to the Churches Together in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Written confirmation from the clergy of the relevant church will be required by the Governors.

Name/s _____ regularly attend _____ church.

Signed _____ Date _____

Printed name _____ Role in Church _____

* 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 arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship.