St Mark's C E Primary School

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Dear Stakeholder

Consultation on the proposed permanent reduction in the school's Published Admission Number (PAN) from September 2028

The Tenax Schools Trust, as the admission authority for St Mark's Church of England Primary School, is consulting on a proposal to permanently reduce the Published Admission Number (PAN) for Reception (Year R) admissions from 60 places to 30 places, with effect from September 2028.

The proposed change relates only to the number of places available for admission to Reception (Year R). There is no proposal to reduce the number of places available in any existing year group, and pupils already attending the school would not be affected by this proposal.

Background

The Trust has previously agreed an in-year variation to the Reception PAN for the 2026/27 and 2027/28 academic years, reducing the PAN to 30 places.

This consultation is now being undertaken to seek views on making the proposed lower PAN permanent from September 2028 onwards.

Why is the Trust proposing this change?

St Mark's Church of England Primary School has a PAN of 60 Reception places. However, the number of children joining the school in Reception has fallen over recent years, with 29 Reception pupils on roll in 2026/27.

Local pupil forecasts indicate that the number of children seeking Reception places at the school is likely to remain below 60 for the foreseeable future.

The temporary reduction in the PAN has enabled the school to reflect the current level of demand. Following this, the Trust is now proposing to make the reduction permanent from September 2028.

The proposal is:

Current PAN: 60 places (2FE)
Temporary PAN for 2026/27 and 2027/28: 30 places (1FE)
Proposed permanent PAN from September 2028 onwards: 30 places (1FE)

The proposed reduction would better reflect the anticipated demand for Reception places and provide the school with a sustainable basis for planning and financial sustainability for the future.

No other changes to the school's admission arrangements are proposed as part of this consultation.

Consultation

The Trust is seeking views on this proposal before it determines the school's admission arrangements for 2028/29 onwards.

The consultation will run from:

Monday 9th November 2026 to Monday 21st December 2026

The consultation will remain open for a minimum of six weeks.

Copies of the proposed admission arrangements, including the proposed PAN, are available on the school's website at: St Mark's Church of England Primary School - Admissions

If you have any comments regarding the proposed change, please email them to office@st-marks.kent.sch.uk. Any comments should be submitted no later than 12 noon on 21st December 2026.

When responding, please make clear that your comments relate to the proposed permanent reduction in the Published Admission Number.

What happens next?

Following the consultation, the Trust will consider all responses received before making a final decision on the school's admission arrangements for 2028/29 onwards.

The Trust must determine its admission arrangements by 28 February 2027 and will publish the determined arrangements by 15 March 2027, in accordance with the School Admissions Code.

This consultation provides an opportunity for stakeholders to share their views on the proposed permanent reduction. The Trust will consider all representations received before making its determination.

Yours faithfully

Mr Simon Bird
Headteacher

St Mark's CEP School

Admissions Arrangements 2028-2029

Introduction

St Mark's CEP School is a one/two-form entry school for children aged 4 -11 in the Diocese of Rochester, and an academy within the Tenax Schools Trust, which is the Admissions Authority for the school.

At St Mark's CEP School we know how important it is for you to choose the right school for your child. We welcome visits and we look forward to welcoming you at any time to enable you to see lessons and learning - and experience the atmosphere of our school on a normal day. To book a visit to the school, please contact the school office on 01892 525402 or email office@st-marks.kent.sch.uk and an appointment for a tour with our Head or Deputy Headteacher will be booked for you.

School places other than in Reception (Years 1 to 6)

If you are looking for a place other than in the Reception class, please contact the school office on 01892 525402 or email office@st-marks.kent.sch.uk as there are occasionally spaces available in other classes. Where places are not available, we will maintain a waiting list which will be rank ordered using the oversubscription criteria below and places offered as they become available.

Admissions number (Years R to 6)

The school has a published admissions number (PAN) of 30. This means that up to 30 children may be admitted into Reception (Year R) each September. There are two classes in each year group form Years 1 to 6 as of September 2026. Class size for year R will be no more than 30, other than in the specific circumstances set out in the School Admissions Code.

The Local Authority Application

In September in the year before a child starts school, information is available from the Local Authority about admissions procedures and timescales. Our Local Authority is Kent County Council. Information for parents is available at Primary school places - Kent County Council

To apply for a place at St Mark's CEP School, all applicants must complete an application form. This can be done online at Primary school places - Kent County Council Parents must name three schools in order of preference on the online application form which is then returned to the Local Authority (LA). This should be done by mid-January for starting in Year R the following September.

For more information, including deadlines for applications, please visit Kent County Council's Admissions Website at https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/primary-school-places

Please ensure that you return your application and appropriate forms by the mid-January deadline as all applications received after this date are considered late and ranked below other applications.

Families find out which school their child has been successful in securing a place in during April.

If you have any questions or would like support completing the application form, please do not hesitate to contact the school office on 01892 525402 or email office@st-marks.kent.sch.uk

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Oversubscription Criteria

These will be used to rank order applications if more than 30 are received, after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan naming the school. As a result of this the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly.

1. **Looked after children and all previously looked after children**:
   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.
2. **Siblings**. Children who, when they start school, have siblings attending the school at the time of admission. A sibling is a full, half or step brother or sister living permanently in the same household, including an adoptive or foster brother or sister. This applies where the family continue to live at the same address as when the sibling was admitted. It must be noted that if they move house before an application for a place for a sibling is made, the new property must be within 2 miles of the school, or nearer to the school than the previous property as defined by the distance measurement criterion, in order for this link to be maintained.
3. Children who need to attend for **compelling medical or social reasons**. Such applications should be accompanied by evidence from a doctor or social worker which demonstrate that the needs of the child can only be met by attendance at St Mark's CEP School.
4. Distance – Children living nearest the school will be given highest priority. The distance between the child's permanent home address and the school is measured in a straight line using the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NPLG) address 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 NLPG. The same address point on the school site is used for everybody. All above criteria will be ordered by distance.

Tiebreaker

When deciding between applicants who have equal entitlement under any of the above criteria, priority will be given to those in order of distance from their home to the school measured by a straight line, the nearest being accepted first. 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.

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Deferred entry

Parents of Reception age children have a right to defer entry, or to take the place up part-time, until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age. Compulsory school age is set out in section 8 of the Education Act 1996 and the Education (Start of Compulsory School Age) Order 1998.

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.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group. Requests for admission outside of the normal age group should be made in writing to the Headteacher as early as possible in the admissions round associated with that child's date of birth. This will allow the school and admissions authority sufficient time to make a decision before the closing date.

Parents are not expected to provide evidence to support their request to defer their application, however where provided it must be specific to the child in question. This might include medical or Educational Psychologist reports. There is no legal requirement for this medical or educational evidence to be secured from an appropriate professional, however, failure to provide this may impede the school's ability to agree to deferral.

Parents are required to complete an application for the normal point of entry at the same time, in case their request is declined. This application can be cancelled if the school agrees to accept a deferred application for entry into Year R the following year. Deferred applications will be processed in the same way as all applications for the cohort in the following admissions round, and offers will be made in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria. Parents can contact primaryadmissions@kent.gov.uk for advice on how to apply for out of year group admission.

Parents must not assume that the decision of one school will transfer with the child to a different school as the decision rests with the individual admission authority.

Waiting lists

St Mark's CEP School operates a waiting list for each year group. Where in any year the school receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate. Applications will be removed from the waiting list at the end of the academic year. The waiting list will be maintained by the Tenax Schools Trust and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application. Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. The waiting list will be reordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever anyone is added to or leaves the waiting list.

Appeals

If you have not been offered a place at St Mark's CEP School, the law entitles you to appeal against the decision to an Independent Appeal Panel. This panel is completely independent of the school and Local Authority. The school will make suitable arrangements for any appellants without access to the necessary technology.

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If you wish to appeal, please notify the Tenax Schools Trust (which is the Admissions Authority for the school) via enquiries@tenaxschoolstrust.co.uk and further details will be provided.

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