




HORNCHURCH ACADEMY TRUST

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www.hornchurchacademy.org

		Hornchurch Academy Trust
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Admissions Policy (Kent based Schools)¹

Determined Admissions Arrangements for the Academic Year 2024/25

¹ Admissions Policy for Havering schools can be found by visiting www.hornchurchacademy.org.uk

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Introduction

Hornchurch Academy Trust is an Multi Academy Trust (MAT) of 6 schools and the Directors of the MAT are its admission authority. The Directors apply the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend a Trust school. All 6 schools will comply with the provisions within the Department for Education's School Admissions Code and the School Appeals Code.

There is 1 Kent based school within Hornchurch Academy Trust. The Kent based school within the MAT is:

- Shears Green Infant School

Shears Green Infant School is an inclusive schools that welcome children from all backgrounds and abilities. The only restriction placed on entry is number. If the number of children applying exceeds the places available, we enforce the oversubscription criteria set out below in order to determine whether a child is accepted or not. It is our wish to allow parents the right to have the place at the school of their preference. However, this is not always possible, due to the excess demand on the school places available.

- Shears Green Infant School has a published admission number of **120** for the reception applications in 2024.

How parents can apply to be admitted to our schools

Reception and Junior Admissions

The admissions arrangements outlined in this document apply to children starting Reception for the first time in 2024/2025 and those applying to transfer from an infant or primary school. The Local Authority will co-ordinate Admissions on behalf of Hornchurch Academy Trust and will follow the Kent County Council's co-ordinated Primary / Junior admissions scheme which is available from <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/primary-school-places>.

The closing date for applications will be 15 January 2024 and parents will be notified of the outcome of their application during the evening of 16 April 2024.

All applicants must complete the Common Application Form available from their home local authority.

Admission Criteria for Reception and In-year admissions

Where there are less applicants than the published admissions number, all children will be admitted unless they are offered their first or higher preference. In the event the school is oversubscribed, the admission authority will apply the following oversubscription criteria in order of priority:

Before the application of oversubscription criteria, children with a statement of special educational need or Education (SSEN), Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which names the school will be admitted. **As a result of this, the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly.**

1. Looked after children and all children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after, 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.
2. A child whose brother or sister (sibling) currently attends the school or partner infant / junior school (not a nursery class attached to the school), and is expected to still be attending that school at the intended date of admission.
3. Children of staff at the school. Children of staff (full time, part time and both teaching and non-teaching) who have been employed as a member of staff at Shears green Infant School by the Hornchurch Academy Trust.
4. The distance of the home address from the school, as measured by a straight line from the school, those pupils living nearer the school being given higher priority.

A full definition of the above criteria can be found on page 8-9.

Tie-breaks

If, because of oversubscription in any of the criteria above, it is necessary to distinguish between applicants, the distance of the applicant's home address from the School, as measured by a straight line from the School, will be used with those pupils living nearer the School being given higher priority.

Where two or more children share priority for a place, e.g. where two children live equidistant from a school, Kent County Council, (who are independent of the Hornchurch Multi Academy Trust), will use random allocation to determine which child should be given priority.

Reception Applications

Starting School

Schools in Kent have a single intake into Reception. All children whose date of birth falls between **1 September 2019** and **31 August 2020** will be eligible to apply for a full time place in Reception for September **2024**.

Local authorities and schools must provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. However a child does not reach statutory school age until the beginning of the term after they turn five years old.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may request that their child is admitted to a year group outside their normal age range, for instance where the child is gifted or talented, is Summer born, or where a child has suffered from particular social or medical issues impacting his or her schooling. All such requests will be considered on their merits and either agreed or

refused, on that basis. If a request is refused, the child will still be considered for admission to their normal age group.

The process for requesting such an admission is as follows:

Immediately after submitting the application to the Local Authority, parents should contact the school in writing and request that the child is admitted to another year group (state which one), and the reasons for that request.

Parents will need to submit any evidence in support of their case with the request, for instance from a medical practitioner, head teacher etc. Some of the evidence a parent might submit could include:

- 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; and
- whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

The school will consider each case on its merits, taking into account the individual circumstances of the request and the child's best interests. The school will also ensure the parent is aware of whether the request for admission out of age group has been agreed through written correspondence before final offers are made, and the reason for any refusal.

Requests for admission out of the normal year group will be considered alongside other applications made at the same time. An application from parent(s) for a child wanting year R, but who would 'normally' be a year 1 child, will be considered alongside applications for year R. If the request is agreed by the school then the parent can apply during the following year's admissions round.

Infant Class Size

Infant classes, (those where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6, or 7 during the School year) must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single teacher as this is a legal limit in line with the School Admissions code 2021. Additional children may be admitted under very limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an "excepted pupil" for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit. The excepted children are:

- a) children admitted outside the normal admissions round with Education, Health and Care Plans specifying the school;
- b) Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children admitted outside the normal admission round;
- c) Children admitted, after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the Admission Authority or Local Authority in the original application process;
- d) Children admitted after an Independent Appeals Panel upholds an appeal;

- e) Children who move into the area outside the normal admission round for whom there is no other available School within reasonable distance;
- f) Children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admission round;
- g) children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil;
- h) Children with SEN who are normally taught in a SEN unit attached to the School, or registered at a Special School, who attend some infant classes within the mainstream School.

Information relevant to Reception applications.

Twins and multiple births

In the normal admission round, if the last child to be offered a place is a twin, and their sibling cannot be offered a place, the trust have agreed that the Local Authority will ensure that both twins are offered a place together. In the case of other multiple births, if the majority of children can be offered a place, places to the remaining children will be offered. For example if two triplets can be offered a place, the remaining child will also receive an offer of a place.

Appeals

All applicants refused a place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code.

For information on the timetable for the appeals process and to lodge an appeal online parents should visit

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/appeal-a-school-offer>

within 27 days of being notified that their application has been unsuccessful.

Further Appeals

The trust can only consider one appeal per school per application during each Academic year. In normal circumstances, there is no right to a second appeal for the same School within the same School year. However, if there has been a significant and material change in the family's circumstances which they believe affects the level of priority under which the application was processed, for example, if the family had moved house, the trust may consider a second application as long as a parent/carer can provide evidence of the changed circumstances. If the second application is accepted but a place is still not available at the school requested, parents/carers will be given the right to a second appeal hearing.

Waiting Lists

The School Admissions Team will operate 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 until the end of the first academic term. This will be maintained by the school and the child's name will be placed on the waiting list at the request of the parent. The waiting list will also 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.

A child's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the admissions criteria as set out above. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the admissions criteria. The waiting list will be reordered in accordance with the admissions criteria whenever anyone is added to or leaves it. Priority cannot be given to children based on the date that their application was received or their name was added to the waiting list.

A child's position on the waiting list can move up as well as down.

In-Year Admissions

The school will administer and co-ordinate In Year applications.

Parents/carers including out of borough residents, requesting a school place should submit an application to the school Admissions Team using the online In Year Common Application Form (ICAF) which is available from the Kent website.

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

Further information regarding In Year admissions is available by emailing:

kentinyearadmissions@kent.gov.uk

and including your child's name, DOB and current address including postcode.

The school will process the application. If there are no vacancies at the school, the parent will be informed in writing and they will be offered the opportunity to have their child put onto the waiting list.

Home Address

The home address excludes any business, relative's or childminder's address and must be the child's normal place of residence. Where the child is subject to a child arrangements order and that order stipulates that the child will live with one parent/carer more than the other, the address to be used will be the one where the child is expected to live for the majority of the time. For other children, the address to be used will be the address where the child lives the majority of the time. In other cases, where the child spends an equal time between their parents/carers, it will be up to the parent/carers to agree which address to use. Where a child spends their time equally between their parents/carers and they cannot agree on who should make the application, we will accept an application from the parent/carer who is registered for child benefit. If neither parent is registered for child benefit we will accept the application from the parent/carer whose address is registered with the child's current school.

We will not generally accept a temporary address if the main carer of the child still possesses a property that has previously been used as a home address, nor will we accept a temporary address if we believe it has been used solely or mainly to obtain a school place when an alternative address is still available to that child.

The address to be used for the initial allocation of places will be the child's address at the closing date for application. Changes of address may be considered in accordance with Kent's coordinated scheme if there are exceptional reasons behind the change. Any offer of a place on the basis of address is conditional upon the child living at the appropriate address on the relevant date. Applicants have a responsibility to notify the Kent County Council's School Admissions Team of any change of address and must provide verification of the new address immediately. This should be supported by evidence from a solicitor regarding the date of exchange of contracts if parents/carers are purchasing a new home or the signed tenancy agreement if they are renting a

property. The length of a tenancy agreement from the letting agent should be sufficient to cover the date on which their child would start attending their preferred School.

If a parent/carer is found to have used a false address or deliberately provided misleading information to obtain a School place, the offer will be withdrawn (or if before the allocation of places, the application will be cancelled).

With regards to how the information provided by parents/carers is handled by the Local Authority, the following statement is detailed on their application form:

“Kent County Council will handle information you have provided in line with the Data Protection Act (DPA) and will be used for school admission purposes. The information will be held in confidence with only the necessary people working within the combined children’s services able to access and handle it. The Council has a duty under the Children Act 2004 to work with partners to develop and improve services to children and young people in the area. As such, the Council may also use this information for other legitimate purposes and may share information (where necessary) with other Council departments and external bodies responsible for administering services to children and young people. For the purpose of validating proof of address the admissions team may refer to data held by Council Tax records. The Council also has a duty to protect the public funds it administers, and to this end it may use the information you have provided on this form for the prevention and detection of fraud. Under the DPA you have the right to make a formal written request for access to personal data held about you or your child. For further information please contact the School Admissions Team”

UK Service Personnel and Crown Servants

We will not refuse to process an application solely because the family do not yet have an intended address. We will:

- a) allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area (as long as one is available), provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date.
- b) use the address at which the child will live when applying their oversubscription criteria, as long as the parents provide some evidence of their intended address.
- c) use a Unit or quartering address as the child’s home address when considering the application against their oversubscription criteria, where a parent requests this.
- d) **not** reserve blocks of places for these children.
- e) ensure that arrangements support the Government’s commitment to removing disadvantage for service children.

Definitions of Admissions Criteria

Looked after children / Previously Looked after Children / Children adopted from state care outside of England

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 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.

Adoption includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders).

Child arrangements orders are defined in Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.

Sibling (brother or sister)

A sibling will be considered to be:

A brother or sister (that is, another child of the same parents, whether living at the same address or not), a half-brother or half-sister or a step-brother or step-sister or an adoptive or foster sibling, living as part of the same family unit at the same address.

Children of Staff

Children of staff at the school (full time, part time and both teaching and non-teaching) who have been employed as a member of staff by the Hornchurch Academy Trust for two or more years at the time at which the application of admission to the school where the staff member is based is made, and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

Distance of the home address from the School

The distance between the home address and the preferred school is measured in a straight line, not by the shortest walking or bus route. The measurement is taken between predetermined point for the school and the address point of the child's normal place of residence.

Address points are located in the centre of the child's home, or in the centre of a block of flats.

In the event that two or more applicants apply for a single place at the school live at addresses that are located at exactly the same distance from the preferred school, or live in the same block of flats, the place will be offered on a random basis drawn by an officer of the Local Authority who is not involved in the admissions process.

Partner School

Partner schools relating to the Hornchurch Academy Trust are:

- Shears Green Infant School and Shears Green Junior School.