

Westlands School

Expect More

Executive Headteacher: Mr S COX MA
Headteacher: Miss C HONESS BA
Westlands Avenue Sittingbourne
Kent ME10 1PF



Tel: 01795 477475
Email: westlandsoffice@swale.at
Website: www.westlands.org.uk

Consultation on Admission Arrangements for 2025/2026 – Westlands School

I am writing to notify you of the upcoming consultation on Westlands School's admissions policy. The consultation period will run from Thursday 9 November 2023 until Thursday 21 December 2023; during this time, parents are invited to express their views and any concerns about admission arrangements at Westlands School.

In accordance with the DfE's 2021 statutory 'School Admissions Code' guidance, as a school we must consult on our admission arrangements when changes are proposed, and at least once every seven years.

Westlands School is proposing the following changes to its admission arrangements:

We are consulting to amend our admissions oversubscription criteria. We propose to add a criterion which would place the staff of children as part of the application of our admissions policy. The proposed wording is as follows:

- Children of staff: priority will next be given to children of staff at the school, in either of the following circumstances:
 - The member of staff has been employed at the school for 2 or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, or
 - The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage

Please find the full policy and admissions arrangements attached. The applicable section can be found on pages two to four and has been highlighted for ease in finding it.

A full version of the proposed changes to the admission arrangements, is available to view on the school website <https://www.westlands.org.uk/page/?title=Joining+Westlands&pid=36> in hard form from reception, at the address above.

In accordance with statutory DfE guidance, the consultation will run for at least six weeks and, as an interested party, we are keen to hear your views on the current admission arrangements. Therefore, we invite you to participate in the consultation if you have any concerns regarding the matter.



All responses to the consultation should be made in writing and submitted before 3.00pm on Thursday 21 December 2023 to wss-consultation@swale.at. Please label the email's subject as "Admissions Consultation".

Please note that written responses should outline your personal details, including your name, address, and relationship to the school. You are also encouraged to provide feedback to the Kent County Council here: kentonlineadmissions@kent.gov.uk.

At the end of the consultation period, the Local Governing Body will meet to consider responses. The outcome of the consultation will be published on the school website as soon as possible following a decision being reached by the Local Governing Body. Hard copies of the final report will be made available on request to all respondents of the consultation.

For further information regarding the consultation process, please refer to our proposal document, copies of which can be located on the school website or in hard copy from our main reception. If you wish to further discuss this matter, or anything mentioned in this letter, please contact Mrs Apps via email at wss-consultation@swale.at or by calling the school.

Yours faithfully



Miss C Honess
Headteacher



Admissions Policy 2025 onwards - Proposal

Proposal

Consultation

Start:	9 November 2023
End:	21 December 2023



1. ADMISSION TO THE SEPTEMBER YEAR 7 ENTRY

i. Numbers Admitted

The Planned Admissions Number for the school is 285.

ii. Applications for Admission

- a) Applications for admission to Westlands School should be made on the Local Education Authority's "Common Application Form." Parents only need to make a separate application to Westlands School if they are applying for admission based on their child's aptitude in mathematics. Application forms for admission by aptitude are available from the Headteacher and should be returned to the school when completed. The "Common Application Form" should be returned to the Local Authority by the agreed published date. The aptitude test for Westlands School will be taken after the "Common Application Form" has been lodged with the Local Authority (LA).
- b) The Governors will follow the Local Authority's timetable for applications.
- c) In the event of the school being over-subscribed, all applications for admission will be considered according to the criteria set out below.
- d) The Local Authority will contact parents on the agreed published date advising them whether or not they have been allocated a place for their child at Westlands School. Parents have to accept the offer of a place by the agreed published date.

iii. Late Applications

- a) The deadline for the return of the "Common Application Form" is the agreed published date.
- b) Late "Common Application Forms" received by the Local Authority after the published return date, but before the published end of scheme date will be processed.

iv. Applications Out-of-Chronological Age Group

In rare circumstances, parents/carers may choose to seek a place for their child outside of their chronological age group for a variety of reasons (e.g. the child is summer-born, is considered gifted and talented, has experienced problems such as ill health, or has had an interrupted education through residency abroad).

The decision to admit a child out-of-year group is rare. It will always be made on the basis of the unique circumstances for each specific case and what is best for that individual child. The decision will be made by the Executive Headteacher of the school and will take into account the following:

- parents'/carers' views;
- expert advice from relevant social, educational and medical professionals;
- whether the child has previously been educated out of their normal age group;
- any evidence that the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely;
- the long-term impact of the decision on the child.

Applications for a child to be admitted to a year group outside of their chronological age group should be made through the same process set out in this policy for both 'normal round' and 'in-year' applications. However, in addition to the standard application form further documentation should be provided to support the request for a place out of chronological year group. This applies regardless of whether it is for a higher or lower year group.



The Executive Headteacher may request additional information after the submission of an application for an out-of-year group place, if necessary.

Each application will be considered on the individual circumstances of each case. Applicants will be notified in writing of the decision, including the reasons for it.

Unsuccessful applicants have the right to appeal if they are refused a place at the school. However, this right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group.

Casual Admissions

- c) "Common Application Forms" received by Westlands School after the agreed published date, and also applications for places in year groups other than the normal year of entry, will be treated as "in year admissions". The Governors will send the form to the Local Authority along with their decision on the application. The Governors will also notify the parent of their decision at the same time. If the parent is refused a place they will be advised of their right of appeal.

v. Admission of pupils with Statements for Dyslexia and Physical Difficulties

The local authority has commissioned 34 places in the resourced provision for pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties and 6 in the resourced provision for Physical Disabilities. The local authority manages admissions to these units in close liaison with the school. The local authority will only consider pupils who already have a Statement of Special Educational Need or an Educational, Health and Care Plan.

vi. Oversubscription

Before the application of oversubscription criteria, children with an EHCP which names the school will be admitted. As a result of this, the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly.

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 means 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.

Where applications for admission exceed 285, the following criteria will be applied, in the order set out below, to decide which children to admit:

- a) places will firstly be offered to children in Local Authority care i.e. a child under the age of 18. Looked After Children and 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.

- b) places will then be offered to children who score highest on the school's test of aptitude in mathematics. Places offered under this criterion will not exceed 10% of the school's planned admission number, i.e a maximum of 29 places for the Year 7 intake. Places will only be offered under this criterion if the parent has expressed a preference on the "Common Application Form" for Westlands School. The "Common Application Form" is a Google Form and can be found on our school website during the month of September.
- c) places will then be offered in the following order, using the criteria below:
- i. A brother or sister attending the 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.
 - ii. Children of staff: priority will next be given to children of staff at the school, in either of the following circumstances:
 - The member of staff has been employed at the school for 2 or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, or
 - The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage
 - iii. Pupils in Year 6 at Westlands Primary School and Regis Manor Primary School;
 - iv. Residence in the parishes of Bobbing, Borden, Bredgar, Hartlip, Iwade, Lower Halstow, Newington, Stockbury, Tunstall, Upchurch;
 - v. Nearness of children's homes to school – we use the distance between the child's permanent home address and the school, measured in a straight line using the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) 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.

A pupil's home address 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 your own domestic or special arrangements.

The address must be the pupil's home address on the day you completed your application form and which is either

- Owned by the child's parent, parents or guardian, OR
- Leased to or rented by the child's parent, parents or guardian under a lease or written rental agreement.



If you live separately from your partner but share responsibility for your 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 weekdays.

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 school, the names will be issued a number and drawn randomly to decide which child should be given the place.

- d) places will then be offered to any additional applications.

vii. Waiting List

Parents may ask to be kept on a waiting list; this list will be re-ranked in accordance with the schools oversubscription criteria each time a child is added.

viii. Appeals Against the Decision not to Offer a Place at the School

On the agreed published date parents will be notified by the Local Education Authority that they are being offered a place at the allocated school. This letter will give information about their statutory right of appeal.

viii. The School's Open Evening

The Open Evening for prospective Year 7 pupils will be held in Term 1 of 2024 on a date yet to be decided.

2. ADMISSION TO THE SIXTH FORM

Places will firstly be offered to children in Local Authority care. i.e. A child under the age of 18 years for whom the Local Authority provides accommodation by agreement with their parents/careers (Section 22 of the children Act 1989) or who is subject of a care order under Part IV of the Act.

Priority will be given to existing pupils transferring from Year 11. The PAN for external candidates will be 20 but this figure may be exceeded in the event that this and the number of internal pupils transferring into Year 12 is less than the overall total figure for the year group, which is 160.

Pupils are admitted to the Sixth Form subject to the following:

- a) a formal application by pupil and parent and a pupil interview to determine the courses to be studied;
- b) availability of a specific course or combination of courses;
- c) minimum entry requirements for specific courses, as published on the school's website.

Please note that the Governors reserve the right to withdraw courses if there is insufficient student demand.



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

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

Proposal