



Highsted Grammar School

Admissions Policy

September 2026

ADMISSION POLICY AND OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA FOR HIGHSTED GRAMMAR SCHOOL, SITTINGBOURNE FOR SEPTEMBER 2026

Highsted Grammar School is the 11-18 selective grammar school for girls in the town of Sittingbourne. Boys are admitted into the sixth form.

1. Admission to Year 7

Girls who attain the required standard through the Kent PESE procedure for selection at eleven by reference to ability will be eligible to be considered for admission to the school. Girls who have taken part in the Kent PESE procedure will also be eligible for admission if they reach the required standard through the Highsted procedure, as set out in Section 3 of this Policy. The Highsted procedure is an optional, additional opportunity to assess eligibility.

The school has an agreed admission number of 150 for entry in to Year 7. The school will accordingly admit at least 150 pupils in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications for eligible girls are received. All eligible girls will be admitted if 150 or fewer apply.

Oversubscription Criteria

Note: There will be no differentiation between the two routes to eligibility with regard to application of the oversubscription criteria below.

Before the application of oversubscription criteria, children with a Statement of Special Educational Need or Education, Health and Care Plan which names the school will be admitted. As a result of this, the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly. If the number of preferences for the school is more than the number of places available, places will be allocated to eligible girls in the following order:

- a) **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) **Children in receipt of Pupil Premium** - A child is eligible for Pupil Premium where they have been registered for free school meals (FSM) at any point in the last 6 years. This does not include children who have only been eligible to receive Universal Infant Free School Meals. Pupil Premium is also afforded to Children in Local Authority Care or previously in Local Authority Care, however these children will be prioritised in the relevant

criteria above. Eligible girls who reside in the postal code areas beginning with the following: ME9, ME10, ME11, ME12. Parents wishing to apply under this criterion must ensure they complete the attached Supplementary Information Form and return it to the school by 31 January in the year of application. Parents must also complete an application (paper Secondary Common Application Form) naming the school, otherwise their child cannot be considered for a place.

- c) **Current Family Association** - a sister (or brother in the sixth form) attending the school at the time of entry. In this context sister or brother means child who live as sister or brother in the same house, including natural sisters or brothers, adopted siblings, stepsisters or brothers and foster sisters and brothers.
- d) **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. 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 on 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.

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 allocated a number and drawn randomly to decide which child should be given the place.

If a place cannot be offered parents have a statutory right to appeal. If parents wish to lodge an appeal they should write to the Clerk to the Governors, for the attention of the Admissions Co-ordinator at the school. Additional information can be found on the school's website. A Waiting List will be held for at least the first term of the academic year in oversubscription criteria order and will be re-ranked each time a child is added or before an offer is made.

Applications for Admission

Pupils admitted at the start of Year 7 will be those who have been judged suitable for grammar school education under the Kent selection procedure, or under the Highsted procedure and applications should be made via the Local Education Authority. The school accepts up to 150 pupils, plus additional pupils directed to the school by an Independent Appeals Panel.

All applications will be considered by the Admissions Authority which will apply the criteria set out above in the event of the school being over-subscribed.

A waiting list will be only maintained until 31 December 2026 and it will be re-ranked in line with the published oversubscription criteria every time a pupil is added.

Admission outside of the normal age group

Requests for admission for a pupil to be taught outside their normal age group must be made to the Headteacher. This request may be to defer their application or for an underage application. The request should be as early as possible in the admissions round. 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, however, where provided it must be specific to the pupil 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 the request. In the case of 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 in to Year 7 the following year. Deferred applications or those seeking underage entry to the school must be made via paper SCAF to the LA, with written confirmation from this school. All agreed applications will be processed in the same way as all applications for the cohort in the admissions round applied for and offers will be made in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria.

Appeals

Appeals should be addressed to the **Clerk to the Governors** at the school and should take the form of a letter setting out the grounds for the appeal. The Clerk will acknowledge receipt of the appeal and will initiate arrangements for the hearing of the appeal by an Independent Appeal Panel, as set out in the School Admissions Appeal Code 2022.

School visits

Official Open Evenings for prospective Year 7 pupils are held in June and October. Tours of the school are also arranged during school time by appointment with the school office.

2. Admissions after September for Year 7 and students of Year 8 to Year 11 age.

All other candidates for admission, In Year Casual Admissions (IYCA), will be assessed by the school if there is a place available in the appropriate school year. Application forms for casual admission are available from the school.

Parents will be notified within 15 school days of their in-year application of either the date for the assessment of ability or the reason for refusal with information about the right of appeal (where the admission authority chooses not to assess the child's ability because admitting an additional child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources).

Suitability for a grammar school place is decided by:

- Results of nationally recognised tests, or cognitive testing through verbal and non-verbal reasoning, together with written tests in at least one subject from English, mathematics and science.

- Where relevant, their level of attainment as shown by work done at their previous school.

Pupils seeking a transfer who are judged suitable for a grammar school place have a right of entry, providing there is suitable evidence of selective ability and places exist in the relevant year group.

3. The Highsted Procedure for Admissions to Year 7. (Optional) September 2026

The information below should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

'The Admission Policy and Oversubscription Criteria for September 2026'

'Kent County Council's Co-ordinated Scheme for Secondary Admissions - 2026/2027'

The school will admit girls through the Kent procedure for Education (PESE)

The school will also admit girls through success in the Highsted procedure where a girl has been unsuccessful in the Kent testing process.

All applicants complete their own Local Authority Secondary Common Application Form. (SCAF). No supplementary Information Form (SIF) is required unless the applicant is a Kent resident currently in receipt of Free School Meals.

If an applicant wishes their daughter to take the optional Highsted tests in addition to the Kent PESE tests they need to register to do so between **9:00 am Monday 2 June 2025 and 4:00 pm on Tuesday 1 July 2025**. The registration form will be available from the school office or can be downloaded for completion from the school website from **Monday 2 June 2025**. ***In exceptional circumstances*, which have been evidenced, late registrations will be accepted but only up to Tuesday 22 July 2025. (Please refer to section entitled Special Arrangements for Access to the Highsted Tests.)***

Registration is open to girls resident in the UK and the children of UK service personnel and other Crown servants returning to the UK who will transfer to secondary school in September 2025.

Testing will take place at Highsted Grammar School, Sittingbourne on the **Saturday following the Kent test in September 2025 (13 September 2025)**. (In the event of a national lockdown preventing the test taking place on this date we will post the revised test date on the school's website as soon as it is known.) The assessment tests will comprise of:

- A computer-based test which will assess verbal ability, numerical reasoning and nonverbal reasoning and which will be locally standardised.
- An English paper to assess Reading and Writing skills and which will be marked. (Not computer based or multiple choice)

Further details of the format of the tests will be published on the school website in May 2025 before registration for the tests opens.

The pass marks will depend on the range of the results the local children achieve on the tests and it is anticipated that this level will correspond approximately with that which would be attained or exceeded by 25% of the age group nationally.

****Special Arrangements for Access to the Highsted Tests***

Parents or carers must discuss with their primary school about requesting special arrangements. Requests can only be considered if supported in writing by a child's current school Headteacher. **Requests cannot be considered if received after Tuesday 22 July 2025.**

Only in exceptional circumstances will late testing be considered for applicants as admission to the school is not exclusively via the Highsted procedure and the Highsted procedure is not compulsory. If an applicant is unable to sit the test on the scheduled date due to

- (a) Religious observance, confirmed by a representative of the faith or
- (b) Illness, confirmed by a doctor's certificate or (c) Bereavement, confirmed by a death certificate.

Taking the Kent PESE or another Local Authority's test elsewhere on the same date will not be considered as an exceptional circumstance.

Results will be posted to parents by First Class post in line with the amended KCC PESE assessment process for 2026/27.

Withdrawal of offers

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

1. Where a parent/carer failed to respond to an offer within a reasonable time;
2. Where a parent/carer has failed to notify the school of important changes to the application information;
3. Where that place was offered on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent/carer.

4 Admission to the Sixth Form

Prospective Year 12 students who wish to take courses offered by the school must demonstrate motivation and ability appropriate to the course as measured by their performance at GCSE or equivalent. All students will be expected to follow a full programme of study.

Entry to A-level courses

Priority will be given to existing pupils transferring from Year 11 who meet the entrance criteria. Admission to the Sixth Form will be as a result of applicants obtaining a minimum of six GCSE passes at grade 5 or above including Mathematics and English and grade 6 or above in their preferred A-level subjects.

The admission number 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 figure for the year group, which is 150.

Students who meet the entry criteria and wish to transfer from other schools into the Sixth Form may make an application. In the event of over-subscription, priority will be given to those students transferring from lower years in Highsted Grammar School.

Over-subscription

Following the admission of internal students transferring from Year 11, all remaining places will be allocated to learners who have met the entry requirements for the particular course of study. Where there are more learners seeking places than the number of places available, the oversubscription criteria above will be applied to eligible students.

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

- a. When the parent or learner has failed to respond to an offer within a reasonable time; or
- b. When a parent or learner 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 the parent or learner.

Offers and Appeals

Offers will be made on the basis of predicted performance at GCSE, with the requirement that the above grades are achieved in the final examinations prior to entry to the Sixth Form and the pupil's approved chosen subjects being accommodated on the timetable, in feasible group sizes.

All offers made during Year 11 are conditional on pupils meeting the grade criteria specified and will only become firm offers upon confirmation of actual GCSE results. Offer letters will be made before the end of May 2026. Offers will be confirmed once the school has been notified of GCSE results in August 2026.

Where learners have achieved better result than the predicted grades they will be considered based on the grades achieved and ranked accordingly for any places that become available as a result of other learners failing to meet the required entry levels.

Parents have a statutory right of appeal, should an application for a place be refused, by writing to The Clerk to the Governors, care of the Admissions Co-ordinator at the school.

Late applications will be considered if places in appropriate subjects are still available after all other applicants have been considered.

A waiting list will be held, ranked according to the over-subscription criteria.

School visits

The official Open Evening for prospective Year 12 students is held in January. Tours of the school are also arranged during school time by appointment with the school office.

Numbers admitted

The Published Admission Number (PAN) for external applicants is 150.

Reviewed and updated January 2025



HIGHTSTED GRAMMAR SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM 2026

*This form only needs to be completed if your child is in receipt of **Pupil Premium** and your daughter has been registered for free school meals in the last 6 years. **This does not include children who have only been eligible to receive Universal Infant Free School Meals.***

This form **does not** constitute a valid application for a place. You **must** complete a Secondary Common Application Form (SCAF) either online via www.kent.gov.uk or by paper, or if applying in year complete a **Casual Admission Application Form**, available from our school website, naming Highsted Grammar School if you wish her to be considered for a place at the school.

This form must be sent direct to this school by Friday 31 October 2025 for September 2026 admission.

PUPIL INFORMATION

Forename(s) _____

Surname _____

Date of Birth _____

Permanent Home Address: _____

Current School _____

Parent / Carer Full Name _____

Telephone: Home _____ Mobile: _____

Has your daughter been in receipt of free school meals (other than *Universal Infant Free School Meals*) in the last 6 years **YES / NO**

Evidence of this must be provided to the school by Friday 31 October 2025.

If your answer to the above question is 'No' then please DO NOT complete this form.

If Yes please supply the date this first applied _____

☐ Please tick to give consent for the Local Authority or your child's current school to disclose pupil premium eligibility information for the purposes of this school application.

Signed _____ Date _____
parent / carer