



Admissions Policy Consultation Letter

Consultation on admission arrangements for 2026/2027 – The Holmesdale School

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to notify you of the upcoming consultation on the Academy's admissions policy. The consultation period will run from Tuesday 1st October 2024 until Friday 31st January 2025; during this time, parents are invited to express their views and any concerns about admission arrangements at The Holmesdale 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.

The Holmesdale School is not proposing any changes to its admission arrangements.

However, in line with the statutory requirement to consult every seven years, The Holmesdale School is inviting interested parties to express their views and any concerns about admission arrangements at The Holmesdale School.

A full version of The Holmesdale School's admissions policy is available on the school website <https://www.holmesdale.kent.sch.uk>. A hard copy can be obtained from the Admissions Manager, Vicki Ross at the address above.

In accordance with statutory DfE guidance, the consultation will run for at least six weeks and, as an interested party at The Holmesdale School, 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 Friday 31st January 2025 to ths_office@swale.at

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 on the LA's website here: www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/secondary-school-places

A member of Swale Academies Trust

Registered Office: Ashdown House, Johnson Road, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1JS

Registered in England No. 07344732



Executive Headteacher: Mrs N Hodges BA (Hons) MA
Head of School: Mr L Downey BSc (Hons)



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.

Yours faithfully

Mr G Prebble
Headteacher

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The Holmesdale School

Admissions Policy

PERSON RESPONSIBLE	Mr Lee Downey, Head of School
DATE LAST REVIEWED	October 2023
DATE NEXT REVIEW	October 2025
DATE LAST APPROVED BY LGB	31/01/2024

In our Trust we work to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all members of our community who hold a range of protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, as well as having regard to other factors which have the potential to cause inequality, such as socio-economic factors. For further information, please see our Equalities Policy.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the DfE School Admissions Code 2021

The PAN is the maximum number of pupils that the admission authority will admit to each year group. The Holmesdale School has a PAN of 180. This number has been agreed with the Local Authority. The published number is divided evenly into each year group to arrive at the PAN for each year group.

Oversubscription Criteria

If the number of preferences for the school is more than the number of places available, places will be allocated in the following priority order:

- 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.
 - 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.
 - The school's waiting list will be re-ranked, in line with the published oversubscription criteria, every time a child is added.
- 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) **Current Family Association** - a brother or sister in the same school at the time of entry. In this context brother or sister means child who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters.
 - c) **Health and Special Access reasons** – Children for reasons of health or physical impairment require them to attend The Holmesdale School. Medical/Health and Special Access Reasons will be applied in accordance with the school's legal obligations, in particular those under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Priority will be given to children under this criterion whose health or physical impairment means they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Medical/Health and Special Access Reasons must be supported with written evidence from an appropriately qualified medical practitioner. The evidence must demonstrate a special connection between the child's needs and the particular school.
 - d) **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.

Sixth Form Admission Arrangements

Students should apply for sixth form places via www.ucasprogress.com All applications are made online.

Provided enough students choose the given course to make it viable (usually greater than 12 students) places in the sixth form will be given to students who meet the entrance requirements for courses offered at The Holmesdale School.

Entrance requirements vary according to subject, but general requirement at least:

- 5 9-4 GCSE grades or equivalent to study A level and level 3 courses (some A level subjects may require grade 6 or above at GCSE)
- Individual subject prior attainment entry requirements

If The Holmesdale School is over-subscribed, in addition to the above criteria, the following will also be applied in priority 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.
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demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Medical/Health and Special Access Reasons must be supported with written evidence from an appropriately qualified medical practitioner. The evidence must demonstrate a special connection between the child's needs and the particular school.

- d) **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.

Admissions Criteria - The Holmesdale School sixth form courses seeks applications from students who can demonstrate they possess the appropriate levels of academic readiness (typically average to above-average), as well as the excellent attitudes and interpersonal and academic skills required for successful learning in the school. Students should have 5 GCSEs grades 9-4 and have the academic, social and emotional potential to make positive contributions to the school community. Some courses entry requirements may vary according to the demands of the course.

In Year Admissions

Applications for admission to the school In-Year or outside the normal admissions round must be made in writing, and by completing the school's In-Year Application Form. This is available on the school website:

<http://www.holmesdale.kent.sch.uk/uploads/Admissions/IYAF%20updated%2016-9-2021.pdf>

Admissions for each year group are allocated in accordance with the aforementioned over subscription criteria.

It is important to note that paragraph 3.10, Page 32 of the School Admissions Code states:

"Where an admission authority receives an in-year application for a year group that is not the normal point of entry and it does not wish to admit the child because it has good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour, it may refuse admission and refer the child to the Fair Access Protocol."

In order to comply with the Admissions Code, the Local Authority will be informed of every application and its outcome.

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 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 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.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored by the Headteacher and reviewed annually using any guidance from the local authority.