

PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICY 2026-2027

December 2024

We consider equality implications before and at the time that we develop policy and take decisions, not as an afterthought, and we keep them under review on a continuing basis. All policies are approved by the governing board and reviewed annually.



But the plans of the Lord stand firm for ever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.

Psalm 33:11

New International Version

1.0 POLICY OUTLINE:

- 1.1 Northaw Primary is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School. The governors will admit up to 15 children to the Reception group each academic year, without reference to ability or aptitude. The school has a PAN - Published Admissions Number - of 15 children.
- 1.2 The Local Authority (LA) Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) operates an agreed co-ordinated admissions scheme for Reception in line with government legislation. The LA will manage the process on behalf of the school according to the scheme published each year. The Governing Body, as the Admission Authority, will allocate the available places in line with this policy. However, applications for admission to Reception in September 2026 must be made to the child's home local authority.
- 1.3 The admission arrangements detailed in this document do not apply for those being admitted into the Nursery. A separate policy is available for this. Parents/carers of children who are admitted to the Nursery must apply in the normal way for a place at the school if they want their child to transfer to the reception class. Attendance at the Nursery does not guarantee admission to the school.
- 1.4 Successful applicants are entitled to a full-time place in the reception class from the September after their fourth birthday. The school prefers children to attend full time in their chronological year group from the September after their fourth birthday as we believe that this is best for the social, emotional, spiritual and educational development of our children. However please note the following:

a) Deferment within the academic year: Parents/carers can defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the same academic year. The latest they can defer to is when their child reaches compulsory school age. For summer born children the latest they can defer to is the beginning of the final term (summer term). See DEFINITIONS

b) Part time attendance until compulsory school age: Where parents/carers so wish, a child can attend school part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age (when they must start full-time attendance). Parents/carers are encouraged to discuss their child's individual needs with the headteacher at the earliest possible stage.

c) Request for Summer Born child to delay starting Reception until the autumn term following their fifth birthday: Parents/carers who do not wish their summer born child to start school until the September after their 5th birthday must normally make an in-year application for a place in year 1. However they may instead request that their summer born child starts Reception in the autumn term following their fifth birthday. Each request will be considered by the Governing Body on a case by case basis. Each case will be judged on its individual merits taking into account the views of the headteacher and the best interests of the child (please also see 1.5). Parents are advised to make an on time application for a Reception place in the child's normal age group and at the same time make a request for admission out of year group, in the Reception class starting in September 2027. If the request is accepted, parents/carers can withdraw their application for a reception place for the child's normal year group and must submit a new application for a reception place as part of the following year's admission round. Please note that there is no guarantee that the child will be successful in obtaining a reception place in that age group if the school is oversubscribed. If the request is refused then parents must decide whether to take up any offer of a reception place in the child's normal age group; if so, this place must be taken up by the start of the summer term or the child's place will be withdrawn. Parents/carers would then have to make an in-year application for a place for their child in Year 1. There is no guarantee that a year 1 place will be available and any application will be considered in line with this admission policy. See DEFINITIONS.

Parents need to fill in the common application form available from HCC (or the child's home local authority) for all main admission round applications for Reception.

- 1.5 A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside of their normal age group, for example if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. Each request will be considered by the Governing Body on a case by case basis. Each case will be judged on its individual merits taking into account the views of the headteacher and of the child's parents and the best interests of the child. Applicants will be required to provide supporting evidence explaining why the child's needs cannot be met in the chronological year group. Relevant information may include, for example, information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, the child's medical history and the view of a medical professional; whether the child has previously been educated out of year group; and whether the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if not for being born prematurely. Agreement by the school that the child can be educated outside of their year group does not guarantee a place in the year group requested; the application for that place will be considered in accordance with the admission policy. See 2.3 below.
- 1.6 In the case of in year applications, admission will be on the basis of places being available in the relevant year group. Admission of a child or children to a class or relevant year group must not prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources. If there are more applicants for places than places available, then the criteria detailed in sections 2.0 and 3.0 below will be applied. In Year Application Forms are available by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043.

2.0 HOW TO APPLY:

- 2.1 Applications for admission to Reception starting in September 2026 must be made to the child's home local authority by the closing date of 15th January 2026. Information for Hertfordshire residents on the application process and the Hertfordshire common application form can be found at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions. All in year applications must be made to Hertfordshire County Council via www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions.
- 2.2 For all applications under categories 5 or 6 parents/carers are also requested to complete our school **Supplementary Information Form** (SIF) and return it to the school office by the closing date of 15th January 2026. A SIF is also required for in-year applications under categories 5 or 6. If a SIF is not completed the Governing Body will apply their admission arrangements using the information submitted to HCC on the Common Application Form only, which may result in your application being given a lower priority.
- 2.3 All requests for education outside of the normal age group (including applications for deferred reception entry for summer-born children) must be made in writing to admin@northaw.herts.sch.uk so that the application can be formally considered by the Governing Body in line with this Admission Policy. We would encourage parents/carers to contact the school at the earliest possible opportunity and to discuss the matter informally with the headteacher before lodging a formal request to the Governing Body. Reasons will be given for the Governors' decision.
- 2.4 Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the governing bodies of all maintained schools to admit a child with an EHC (Education, Health and Care) Plan that names the school. Such children will be admitted before any oversubscription criteria are applied.
- 2.5 The school co-operates with the LA's Fair Access Protocol. Children identified under this protocol will be admitted before others on the waiting list even if the school is full. Parents of children entitled to be considered under the Fair Access Protocol may also make an in year application to the school.
- 2.6 In the event of there being more applicants than there are places available, the governors will apply the following criteria in the priority order of categories as listed:

Category 1: Looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because of being adopted (or becoming subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order). See DEFINITIONS

Category 2: Siblings of children already at the school at the time of entry. See DEFINITIONS

Category 3: Children of staff employed on a permanent contract at Northaw CoE Primary School. See DEFINITIONS

Category 4: Children who at the time of application are living within the Ecclesiastical Parish of Northaw and Cuffley. Click [here](#) to see a map of the parish.

Category 5: Children one or more of whose parents/carers have, at the time of application, and for a period of six months previously, at least once in each calendar month, attended public worship at a Church which is a member of Churches Together in England or Evangelical Alliance. Applicants in this category will be required to provide written evidence of attendance from their parish priest in the form of a signed letter.

In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these admissions arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

Category 6: Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school. The final decision in this category lies with the school's governors. See DEFINITIONS

Category 7: Any other children.

3.0 PROXIMITY:

- 3.1 In the event of categories 1 to 7 being oversubscribed the determining factor will be the proximity to the child's home to the school as defined by the LA (HCC). The school uses a straight line distance measurement system provided by HCC: Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences. If a final tiebreak is needed where two different addresses are the same distance from a school, in the case of a block of flats for example, the lower door number will be deemed nearest as logically this will be closest to the ground and therefore closer. If there are two identical addresses of separate applicants, the tiebreak will be random allocation. Every child entered onto the HCC admissions database has an individual random number assigned between 1 and 1 million, against each preference school. When there is a need for a final tie break the random number is used to allocate the place, with the lowest number given priority.
- 3.2 The address provided on the application form must be the child's current permanent address at the time of application.

- "At the time of application" means the closing date for applications.
- "Permanent" means that the child has lived at that address for at least a year.

Where a family has not lived at an address for a year at the time of application, they must be able to demonstrate that they own the property or have a tenancy agreement for a

minimum of 12 months and the child must be resident in the property at the time of application. If, because of the nature of the agreement, it is not possible to provide a 12-month tenancy agreement, alternative proof of address will be requested.

It is for the Governing Body (as the admission authority) to determine the address to be used for admission purposes.

The application can only be processed using one address. If a child lives at more than one address (for example due to a separation) the address used will be the one where the child lives for the majority of the school week. If a child lives at two addresses equally, parents/carers should make a single joint application naming one address.

If the child's living arrangements change after you apply and they now spend the majority of the school week living at a different address, you must provide evidence of the new permanent address.

Addresses will be verified as necessary with Hertfordshire County Council's Shared Anti-Fraud Service.

Applications made as part of the main Reception admissions round and in-year admission applications are processed by Hertfordshire County Council ("HCC") on behalf of the Governing Body, in accordance with HCC's published coordinated admission schemes.

If a child's permanent residence is disputed, parents/carers should provide court documentation to evidence the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes. If two applications are received, with different addresses, neither will be processed until the address issue is reconciled.

If HCC receives two different applications for the same child from the same address e.g. containing different preferences, parents/carers will be invited to submit a joint application or provide court documentation to evidence the preferences that should be used for the admission process. Until the preference issue is reconciled, neither application will be processed.

For the main Reception admission round, if the initial differing applications (one or both) were received by HCC "on-time", an amended joint application will also be considered "on-time" if received before 2nd February 2026 (the late deadline). If the amended joint application is received after 2nd February, it will be treated as "late".

4.0 DEFINITIONS:

4.1 Category 1 Children looked after:

Places are allocated to children in public care according to Chapter 2, Section 7 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012. These children will be prioritised under Category 1.

Highest priority will also be given to children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order. Internationally adopted previously looked after children (IAPLAC) will also be prioritised under Category 1.

A "child looked after" 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 (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989).

All children adopted from care who are of compulsory school age are eligible for admission under Category 1. Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under Category 1. Children who were not "looked after" immediately before being adopted, or made the subject of a child arrangements order or special guardianship order, will not be prioritised under Category 1. Applications made for these children, with suitable supporting professional evidence, can be considered under Category 6.

A child arrangements order is an order under section 8 of the Children Act 1989 (as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014) settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom a child is to live.

A special guardianship order is an order under section 14A of the Children Act 1989, appointing one or more persons to be a child's special guardian or guardians.

In determining whether a child is eligible for IAPLAC priority, the admissions authority will have regard to Government Guidance including seeking the advice of the Virtual School Head when determining eligibility.

4.2 Category 2 Siblings:

A sibling is defined as: the sister, brother, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent/carer or partner or a child looked after or previously looked after and in every case living permanently in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of this application. A sibling must be on the roll of Northaw CE Primary at the time the applicant child starts. If a place is obtained for an older child using fraudulent information, there will be no sibling connection available to subsequent children from that family. A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement. If an applicant lives at more than one address, the sibling must also reside at the same address for the majority of the school week. The sibling's address will be verified by the school.

We will admit over the school's published admission number when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated a place at a school and the other twin/multiple birth child has applied but not been allocated.

4.3 Category 3 Children of Staff:

Priority will be given to children of staff where either or both of the following circumstances apply:

(a) the member of the staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made; and/or

(b) the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

"Children of staff" includes any child who is the staff member's child by blood or adoption or for whom the member of staff has legal parental responsibility and also includes the child of a staff member's partner where the child is living permanently with the member of staff as part of the same family unit.

Members of staff can request a list of roles for which the Governors have determined there to be a demonstrable skills shortage from the school business manager.

4.4 Category 6 Medical or Social need:

Category 6 applications will only be considered by the Governing Body at the time of the initial application, unless there has been a significant and exceptional change of circumstances within the family since the initial application was submitted. All schools in Hertfordshire have experience in dealing with children with diverse social and medical

needs. However in a few very exceptional cases, there are reasons why a child has to go to Northaw CE Primary School.

Few applications under Category 6 are agreed.

All applications are considered individually but a successful application should include the following:

- Specific recent professional evidence that justifies why only Northaw CE Primary School can meet a child's individual needs, and/or
- Professional evidence that outlines exceptional family circumstances making clear why only Northaw CE Primary School can meet the child's needs.
- If the requested school is not the nearest school to the child's home address clear reasons why the nearest school is not appropriate.
- For medical cases – a clear explanation of why the child's severity of illness or disability makes attendance at only Northaw CE Primary School essential.

Evidence should make clear why only Northaw CE Primary School is appropriate.

Applications under Category 6 can only be considered when supported by a recent letter from a professional involved with the child or family, for example a doctor, psychologist or police officer. The supporting evidence needs to demonstrate why only Northaw CE Primary School can meet the social/medical needs of the child.

Applications for children previously "looked after" but not meeting the specific criteria outlined in Category 1, may be made under this rule.

4.5 Summer Born Children / Child:

The term 'summer born' children/child relates to all children born between 1 April and 31 August.

4.6 Compulsory school age:

Your child must start full-time education once they reach compulsory school age. This is on 31 December, 31 March or 31 August following their fifth birthday – whichever comes first. If your child's fifth birthday is on one of those dates then they reach compulsory school age on that date. (For example, if your child reaches compulsory school age on 31 March, they must start full-time education at the beginning of the next term (summer term that year)).

5.0 FRAUDULENT APPLICATIONS:

5.1 Address evidence is frequently requested, monitored and checked and school places will be withdrawn when false information is deliberately provided. Action will be taken in the following circumstances:

- When a child's application address does not match the address of that child at their current school;
- When a child lives at a different address to the applicant;
- When the applicant does not have parental responsibility;
- When a family move shortly after the closing date of applications when one or more of the following applies:
 - The family has moved to a property from which their application was less likely to be successful;
 - The family has returned to an existing property;

- The family lived in rented accommodation for a short period of time (anything less than a year) over the application period;
 - Council tax information shows a different residence at the time of application;
- When a child starts at the school and their address is different from the address used at the time of application.

6.0 SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS:

Notification of the places to be offered will be confirmed by the LA. Parents/carers must inform the LA of their decision to accept / reject the place offered by the date set by the LA.

7.0 UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS AND APPEALS:

- Parents/carers wishing to appeal who applied through Hertfordshire's online system should log in to their online application and click on the link "register an appeal".
- Out of county residents and paper applicants should call the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request their registration details and log into www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals and click on the link "log into the appeals system".
- In Year Admission Appeals - If your in year application is unsuccessful the county council will write to you with registration details to enable you to login and appeal online at **www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals**
- There is no right of appeal against a decision relating to admission out of chronological age.

8.0 CONTINUING INTEREST (WAITING) LIST:

After places have been offered, Hertfordshire County Council will maintain a continuing interest (waiting) list. A child's position on a CI list will be determined by the oversubscription criteria outlined above and a child's place on the list can change as other children join or leave it. The list will be re-ranked each time a new name is added to the list. The County Council will contact parents/carers if a vacancy becomes available and it can be offered to a child. Continuing Interest lists will be maintained for every year group until the summer term (date to be specified and confirmed to parents at the time of allocation). To remain on the CI (waiting) list after this time, parents must confirm they are still interested in a place by completing an In year Application Form.

Please note that the information in this policy is correct for the year shown. Policies for future years may well be different.