

HIGH WYCOMBE CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

ADMISSION POLICY FOR SEPTEMBER 2026 - AUGUST 2027

High Wycombe Church of England School has a distinctive Christian ethos, which is at the centre of school life. We provide an inclusive, supportive and caring environment, shaped by Christian values in which children can learn and flourish. We welcome applications from all members of the community without reference to ability or aptitude, and irrespective of whether they are of the Christian faith, other faiths or no faith, but we expect parents to respect the Christian ethos of our school and its importance to our community.

High Wycombe Church of England School is a voluntary aided primary school admitting children between the ages of four and eleven years old. Admission to the school is the direct responsibility of the Governing Body.

Full Consultation took place on this policy between 12th December 2018 and 31st January 2019.

This policy sets out the admissions arrangements for (1) Reception in September 2026 and (2) Casual Admissions. In all cases the Oversubscription criteria described below will be applied.

(1) Admission arrangements to the Reception Year in September 2026

To express your preference for a place at this school you will need to complete the Common Application Form (CAF) on-line or on paper of the Local Authority in which you live at the time of application (the home LA), which may be Buckinghamshire or another Local Authority (LA).

For Buckinghamshire residents the process is as described in the “Guide for Parents” for admissions to Buckinghamshire Primary Schools.

Parents naming High Wycombe Church of England School on the CAF of their home LA may also complete the school’s supplementary form, available from the school, in order to assist in determining their correct over-subscription category if the application is based on denominational criteria.

The timetable for applications for entry to reception is given in the Buckinghamshire “Guide for Parents” or the equivalent from other Local Authorities. The closing date for receipt of applications is 15th January 2026.

The CAF should be submitted to the Admissions Team of the home LA.

The Supplementary form, if you choose to complete this, must be returned directly to the school.

Applications (the CAF) received after the first round closing date will only be considered **after** all of those received by the deadline.

Offers of a place will be made in writing by the home LA on behalf of the School’s Governing Body.

The dates and process of each stage of the application will be in accordance with the home LA’s Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme, which is common to all schools within that LA.

The admission number of children for the year commencing 1 September 2026 is 30.

At High Wycombe Church of England School in accordance with the School Admissions Code, children can be admitted to the school in the September following their fourth birthday. Children who reach five during the school year 2026-27 will be considered for entry in September 2026.

Parents of a child whose fifth birthday falls between 1st September 2026 and 31 March 2027 may request that their child is not admitted until later in the school year 2026/27, (no later than the term [using the three term year] after the child's fifth birthday, when s/he reaches compulsory age). The school will hold any deferred place for the child, although, in the majority of cases, we find that children benefit from starting at the beginning of the school year, rather than part way through it.

For children whose fifth birthday falls between 1st April 2027 and 31st August 2027, parents who do not wish them to start school in school year 2026-27, but to be admitted in September 2027 for school year 2027-28, should discuss this with the school at an early stage. They may decide not to apply for a Reception place in the school but to apply in the second half of the summer term 2027 for a Year 1 place in September 2027. Parents should be aware that the Year 1 group may have no vacancies as it could be full with children transferring from the 2026-27 Reception year group. Alternatively, they may decide to apply in the normal round (no later than 15th January 2027) for a Reception Year place in September 2027, but would need to provide strong supporting reasons for seeking a place outside the normal year group.

It is assumed that children will attend full-time, but parents can request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. If parents choose this option, and then wish to increase to full-time before their child reaches statutory school age, the parents must discuss this with the Headteacher to agree the date this change between part-time and full-time will commence.

Early admission: The governors have agreed that children will not be admitted to Reception earlier than the school year in which the child becomes 5.

In the event of there being greater demand for admission than there are places, the oversubscription criteria will be applied in order.

(2) Casual or In Year admissions

Admissions to (a) other year groups at the school, or (b) to the Reception year once offers of places have been made depends on whether or not there are places available in the appropriate year group.

All year groups have 30 places.

Information on the school and application forms can be obtained by contacting the Admissions Secretary at the school. Applications should be made direct to the school. You may also complete the school's supplementary form available from the school in order to assist in determining the correct over-subscription category if the application is based on denominational criteria.

Your application will be managed by the Admissions Committee of the Governing Body. If there is a vacancy, and there is no child on the waiting list for the relevant year group with a higher priority, offers of a place will be made in writing by the School's Governing Body.

The Oversubscription criteria will be applied where there are more applications for a place or places than are available.

In-year admissions or admissions at the beginning of school years other than Reception will only be considered by the Governing Body up to half a term in advance of the desired date for entry. For example for entry in January, the application will not be considered until after the October half term break.

For further information about defining the meaning of a normal home address and the evidence required about your address, including the situation when you are moving house, returning to the area, living at a second home or changes in family situation please see Note 3.

Over-subscription criteria

In the event of there being a greater demand for admission than there are places available, children with Statements of Special Educational Need or with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan naming High Wycombe Church of England Combined School will always be offered places.

If there is then greater demand for admission than there are places available, the following criteria or rules will be applied in the order set out below:

1. **Looked after children** and children who were previously looked after, including those children who appear to have been in state care outside England, but ceased to be so because, immediately after being looked after, they became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order. (See Note 5)
2. Children with at least one parent being a regular worshipper at one of the following High Wycombe Team Ministry parishes ¹.

All Saints', High Wycombe

St Andrew's, Hatters Lane

Christ the Servant King
(was St Birinus' and St John's)

St Mary's and St George's, Sands

St Anne's and St Peter's

St James', Downley

St Francis of Assisi, Terriers

(The supplementary form should be completed by your vicar. During an interregnum, the form may be completed by a Church Warden if no vicar is able to complete the form. This is essential for this criterion to be considered.)

3. **Children with a sibling on the roll of the school at the time of application and who is expected still to be in attendance at time of entry, or whose parent has accepted an offer of a place at the school and who is expected still to be in attendance at the time of entry to the school.**
4. Children or a parent who have **exceptional medical or social needs** that make it essential that they attend High Wycombe Church of England Combined School rather than any other. These needs must be fully supported by written evidence from the appropriate professional person involved with the family. (See Note 6)
5. **Children resident in the "Benefice² of High Wycombe" with at least one parent being a regular worshipper at another Christian church within the benefice.**
(The supplementary form should be completed by your minister of religion. This is essential for this criterion to be considered.)
6. **Children who live within the Benefice² of High Wycombe with at least one parent being a regular worshipper at another Christian church outside the benefice.**
(The supplementary form should be completed by your minister. This is essential for this criterion to be considered.)

¹ Other Anglican places of worship, where the Priest is licensed by the Bishop that is within the Benefice of Wycombe, will be considered equivalent to High Wycombe Team Ministry parishes.

² A map that defines the benefice boundary can be viewed in the school office

7. Children who do not live within the benefice² with at least one parent being a regular worshipper at another Christian church.

(The supplementary form should be completed by your minister. This is essential for this criterion to be considered.)

8. Other Children: An application will be welcomed for any child not meeting the above criteria.

If no supplementary form is completed or the applicant does not meet over-subscription criterion 3, over-subscription criterion 8 will be applied.

The shortest straight line distance from home to school will serve to differentiate between applicants in the event of over subscription in any one of the above categories. The distance will be measured by the Buckinghamshire LA's method and is described in the Guide for Parents. In all cases, including flats and apartments, where addresses are equidistant, the school will use random allocation in the presence of an independent witness to decide which child should be offered the place.

Note 1: By regular worship, we mean attendance at the named church, at least once a month, for at least one year before the date of application. The Governing Body will ask the vicar/minister to confirm the level of the parent's church commitment. The attached school's supplementary form has a section for the vicar/minister to sign.

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 admission arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

Note 1a: Where a family has joined a church from another church within the last year, the Governors are willing to consider evidence about previous regular worship and not to penalise a family for moving home or church. In order for this continuous regular worship to be considered, the parents must give details of their attendance at a previous church, which will need to be verified by the vicar/minister of that previous church in the form of a letter; a similar level of attendance is required at the previous church as described in note 1 above. The Governors also need to receive details of the church the family has joined and the family should ask this vicar/minister to confirm the level of the parents' church commitment at the time of application using the supplementary form. The over-subscription criteria that will be applied by the Governors will depend on the denomination and location of the church that the parent currently attends.

Note 1b: A Christian church is defined as one which ascribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. For churches other than those in the High Wycombe Team Ministry, the vicar/minister is required to confirm this on the supplementary form.

Note 2: By parent, we mean any person who has "parental responsibility" (as defined in the Children Act 1989) for, or has care of, the child. This is as defined in law in the Education Act 1996.

Note 3: By normal home address, we mean your child's home address. This must be where the parent or legal carer of the child lives with the child unless it is proved that the child is resident elsewhere with someone else who has legal care and control of the child. The address should be a residential property that is owned, leased or rented by the child's parent/s or person with legal care and control of the child.

To avoid doubt, where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week or month, the address where the child lives will be determined having regard to a joint declaration from the parents stating the exact pattern of residence. If the residence is not split equally, then the

relevant address used will be that at which we are satisfied that the child spends the majority of the school week. Where there is an equal split or there is any doubt about residence, we will make the judgment about which address to use for the purpose of determining whether or not to offer a place. We will take into account, for example, the following:

- any legal documentation confirming residence
- the pattern of the residence
- the period of time over which the current arrangement has been in place
- confirmation from any previous school of the contact details and home address supplied to it by the parents
- where the child is registered with his/her GP
- any other evidence the parents may supply to verify the position.

We require evidence of the normal home address in the form of a recent bill; this should be sent with the CAF to your Local Authority. This could be, for example, the most recent Council Tax bill, utility bill no more than three months old, a current TV licence, buildings and contents insurance, mortgage statement or rent book which shows the address concerned. A mobile phone bill is not acceptable. Parents who are unable to provide this evidence should contact the school to discuss what evidence might be acceptable. If it becomes clear or if there is any doubt that the parents and child are not living at the address given on the application form, the school may seek further evidence. The school works closely with the LA to ensure that places are not obtained at the school on the basis of false addresses, and, in cases of doubt, will take steps to verify the information provided. If a place at the school is offered, and it later becomes clear that the offer was made on fraudulent or misleading information (e.g. a false claim to living in the catchment area), and the school has denied a place to a child with a stronger claim, the school will withdraw the offer of a place. The offer can also be withdrawn even after the child has started at the school.

We regard a child's home address to be where he or she sleeps for the majority of the school week (Monday to Friday). We may ask to see official documentation, such as a child benefit book or medical card if there are reasons why a child does not live at his or her parent's address. For example, if he or she is resident with a grandparent, this needs to be made clear on the application form. If such arrangements are not declared or a relative's address is used on the application, we may consider that a false declaration has been made, and withdraw the offer of a place. Childcare arrangements are not sufficient reason for listing another address.

If parents move house after the application has been made, but before any offer of a place has been made, the home LA must be informed.

If parents are moving, we will ask for evidence of the move, before considering any application for a place under the co-ordinated scheme.

We would not accept an address where the one given is that of a second home with the main home being elsewhere. If there are two or more homes, we will check which is the main home, and may refuse to base an allocation of a place on an address which might be considered only temporary. Nor would we accept an address where the child was resident other than with a parent or carer unless this was part of a fostering or formal care arrangement. We would not normally accept an address where only part of a family had moved, unless connected with a divorce or permanent separation arrangement, in which case we would require proof.

If you are not sure if you live in the benefice of High Wycombe please ask the school to confirm this for you.

Note 4: By sibling we mean a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, foster brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for

whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling. It is helpful if parents make it clear on the application form where the sibling has a different family name. Where there is more than one sibling at the school, only the youngest should be listed on the application form.

Note 5: By a “looked-after child” we mean one in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services function. Adopted children are those for whom an adoption order is made under the Adoption Act 1976 (Section 12) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Section 46). A ‘child arrangements order’ is one setting the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live (Children Act 1989, Section 8, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014, Section 14). A ‘special’ guardianship order’ is one appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian/s (Children Act 1989, Section 14A). Applicants under this criterion must be accompanied by evidence to show that the child is looked after or was previously looked after (e.g. a copy of the adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order). Evidence that a child from outside England was previously in state care will be required to come within this criterion. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside 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.

Note 6: When applying under the criterion **exceptional medical or social needs**, you must include supporting evidence from an independent professional person who is aware of the situation and supports your reasons for preferring High Wycombe Church of England Combined School. This supporting evidence must clearly demonstrate why the school is the most suitable and must illustrate the difficulties that would be caused if your child had to attend another school. The person supplying the evidence should be a doctor, health visitor, social worker, etc. who is aware of your child’s or your own case. The school reserves the right to ask for further evidence or clarification where necessary and may seek the advice of appropriate educational professionals where necessary.

Note 7: Offers of a place will only ever be made by the School in writing

Admission outside normal age group

Requests from parents for places outside a normal age group will be considered carefully e.g. for those who have missed education due to ill health. Each case will be considered on its own merits and circumstances. However, such admissions will not normally be agreed without a consensus that to do so would be in the pupil’s interests. The governors will ask relevant professionals for their opinion on the case. Those refused places outside the normal age group will be informed of their statutory right to appeal.

Expressed Interest / Waiting Lists

The Local Authority in conjunction with the school maintains a waiting list for those children who are not offered a place in the Reception Year and parents are required to request a place on it. For other year groups and the Reception Year once the school year has started the school keeps a waiting list. **Children are not automatically placed onto this list.** The position on the waiting list is determined according to the over-subscription criteria above, and does not depend on the date on which an application is received. No account is taken of length of time on a waiting list. Each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria. The school may periodically seek confirmation that parents wish a child to be kept on the waiting list.

Multiple births

In cases where there is one place available, and the next child on the list is a twin, triplet etc., we would admit both twins (or all the children in the case of other multiple births) even if this meant exceeding the admission number of 30 or the number of places in the relevant year group. This is in accordance with the School Admissions Code.

Fair Access Protocol

The school observes and operates the fair access protocol in consultation with the Local Authority. This protocol is designed to ensure that there is access to education for children who have no school place.

Appeals

It should be noted that the only way that a place can be offered once the admission number of 30 is reached for any year group is by appealing to an independent panel arranged by the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education.

There are established arrangements for appeals against non-admission. In the event of an unsuccessful application, parents have the right to appeal against non-admission. Details are available from the school, including the date by which an appeal should be submitted. It should be noted that, in the event of an unsuccessful appeal against non-admission to the school, the school does not consider any further application in the same school year (1 September – 31 August) unless there is a material change in circumstances e.g. change of address.

Applications received and places offered 2024/2025 for Reception

Applications for places at Reception were processed in accordance with Buckinghamshire County Council's coordinated Admissions Scheme. Out of the initial applications for admission 30 places were offered. The Admissions Numbers for that year were 30. The criteria applicable to the applications and the result of the applications were as follows (children who started HWCE in September 2024):

Criteria	0*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Applications in 1 st round – 113	0	2	8	8	0	7	2	0	86
Offers accepted and taken up in September 2024	0	0	5	8	0	5	2	0	10

** Children with Statements of Education Need naming the school*

It should be noted that this does not necessarily reflect the pattern of previous years and is not a guide to future admissions. Following the 2024/2025 admissions round there were 0 appeals for entry to Reception with 0 appeals being upheld.

All applications will be treated equally, irrespective of need or ability.

The Governing Body has made every effort to ensure that this policy complies with all relevant legislation, including that on infant class sizes and equal opportunities.

For further information, please contact:

**The School Administrator
High Wycombe Church of England School
Loakes Road
High Wycombe
Bucks, HP11 2JU
Telephone: 01494 524220**

e-mail: office@highwycombecombined.bucks.sch.uk