



Kimbolton St James CE Primary School

ADMISSIONS POLICY SUITE

This policy will be reviewed and updated by the Governing Body at least annually.

Date signed off by Full Governing Body: November 2021

Signed Adam Breakwell, Headteacher

Gill James, Kimbolton Chair of Governors

Date next review due: November 2022

Introduction

Our vision is rooted in 1 Corinthians 16:13-14: 'Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.' To this end, we value the different backgrounds and perspectives of the children in our school and their families, and the ways in which these differences can be celebrated and lead to mutual respect and happiness.

This suite of policies aims:

- to clarify the admissions criteria in the event of over-subscription
- to clarify the appeals process in the event that a place is not offered
- to make it easy for parents to apply for their child(ren) to have a place at our school
- to signpost the relevant codes and laws which apply to our school admission arrangements.

This policy suite contains the following chapters:

[Frequently Asked Questions & Answers](#)

[Chapter 1](#): Admissions & Legislative Frameworks

[Chapter 2](#): Admissions criteria (in the event of over-subscription)

[Appendix 1](#): Relevant legislation

Complaints and whistleblowing

Complaints should follow the procedures as set out in the Complaints Policy on our website. Staff also have a responsibility to raise any concerns following the school's whistleblowing policy.

Compliance

This policy is set out in line with the new [School Admissions Code](#) (from 1 September 2021) and other relevant legislation, details of which can be found at Chapter 1.2 and Appendix 1 below.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When should I apply for my child's school place?

Parents/carers must submit an application for a school place [here](#) (or by requesting a paper application form at 01432 260926) by 15 January in the year before the year in which the child turns 5 years old. This means for example that if your child's fifth birthday is 31 March 2023 then you have to apply by 15 January 2022.

The legal requirement is for every child to be at school no later than the term which immediately follows their fifth birthday. However, the normal practice is for children to start school in the September before their fifth birthday. This class is called 'Reception'. Our schools take a flexible approach to the school day in the first 3 weeks of a child's enrolment, and the Reception class teacher is happy to discuss each child's particular needs.

Even if you do not wish your child to start at the beginning of the school year during which they will turn 5 years old, you still need to apply for a place at the same time as everyone else (i.e. by 15 January before the school year in which your child turns 5). You can request your child's later start date when you apply.

School places are offered on 'National Offer Day' which is 16 April for primary schools (or the first working day after 16 April).

Does my child automatically have a place at my catchment school?

No. Children are not automatically enrolled at any school, and it is the parents'/carers' responsibility to complete an application with the Local Authority [here](#). Many of our children come from outside catchment and in the past ten years, we have always been able to accommodate this. In the first instance, please give us a call and come and have a look at the school.

You can see the schools' catchment areas [here](#), but parents are free to choose any three schools (by order of preference).

The catchment area for Kimbolton CE Primary School lies in the corner formed by the A49 and the A44 and includes the villages of Kimbolton, Middleton on the Hill, The Hundred, Leysters, Stockton, Grantsfield, Hamnish Clifford and Pudleston.

Kimbolton is C of E. Do I have to go to church for my child(ren) to get a place?

No. We welcome children from any (or no) faith background, within the constraints of our published admission number (PAN) and class sizes, and are committed to provide a safe and stable learning environment in which every child can grow and flourish. We have good links with our local parish churches and a Christian ethos which is rooted in 1 Corinthians 16:13-14: 'Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love'.

In the event of over-subscription, however, applications are ranked according to a range of criteria (see paragraph 2.1 of our Admissions policy), and these include the family's active involvement in a Christian church for at least a year prior to the child(ren)'s starting school (discounting any period during which church buildings have been closed for public worship).

What do I do if my child is not awarded my first choice of school?

You may add your child's name to the waiting list, which stays open for the first term of every school year. Any vacancies will be allocated according to the over-subscription criteria (see paragraph 2.1 of the Admissions policy), and your child may take up a place which is offered whether or not they have already started at another school. You may also appeal the decision.

How can I appeal a decision not to offer my child a place at my first choice of school?

When you receive a letter from your Local Authority telling you which school your child has been admitted to, you will be told how to appeal the decision and you will be given 20 school days during which to appeal. We will then give you a deadline for submitting information and evidence to support your appeal, and will invite you to a hearing at which an independent panel of 3 people will listen to the reasons why you feel that your child should be admitted to the school. You may not complain about the decision of the appeals panel, but if you have a complaint about the appeals process you may write to the [Local Government Ombudsman](#).

CHAPTER 1: ADMISSIONS & LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORKS

1.1 Admissions framework

We are an inclusive and welcoming school and, within the constraints of our published admission number (PAN) and class sizes, are committed to provide a safe and stable learning environment in which every child can grow and flourish. Our admissions criteria are fair, clear and objective, and are designed to be easily understood by parents/carers.

Our admission policy is reviewed annually and our admission arrangements are subject to public/parental consultation every seven years, for a minimum 6-week period between October and January (inclusive) in the year before any changes are proposed to take effect.

Admission arrangements will be published on our websites every year by 15 March whether or not they differ from arrangements in the previous year.

The school's catchment areas can be viewed [here](#).

Parents/carers may express a preference for at least three schools, and are free to choose our (or any other) school whether or not they live in the catchment area. Parents must express this preference before 15 January in the year before the academic year (1 September-31 August) in which their child(ren) will turn 5, whether or not they have any existing connection with the school (such as an older sibling who already attends the school). Kimbolton does not have a formal feeder arrangement with the pre-school on-site.

The ranking of admissions based on our published criteria (see paragraph 2.1 below) only takes effect if the school is over-subscribed. We will never ask about personal family details such as criminal convictions, marital or financial status, disabilities or medical conditions, or a child's first language, and we will not require both parents to sign the application form.

1.2 Legislative framework

We will report to the Local Authority and publish on our website by 31 October each year (from 2022) an annual report on admissions which includes:

- information about how our admission arrangements serve the interests of looked-after children, previously looked-after children, and children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), including any details of where problems have arisen, and;
- an assessment of the effectiveness of Fair Access Protocols¹ including how many children were admitted to the school under these protocols.

Other relevant legislation, including how the Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998 and School Standards & Frameworks Act (SSFA) 1998 apply to our admissions policy, can be found at [Appendix 1](#).

Any objection to our admission arrangements (as opposed to any individual decisions about particular children) can be made to the [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](#), whose decision is final and binding, and must be made before 15 May in the academic year before which the arrangements take effect. We will revise our admission arrangements within two months of that decision, or by 28 February every year, whichever is sooner.

¹ See paragraphs 3.9-3.12 of the [School Admissions Code](#) and paragraphs 3.23-3.24 of the [School Admissions Appeals Code](#).

CHAPTER 2: ADMISSIONS CRITERIA & OVER-SUBSCRIPTION

2.1 Admissions criteria

The schools will always admit children for whom one of our schools is named on their Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) or statement of special educational needs (SEN). We will never deny a child a place in our school because we have not made appropriate arrangements for their medical conditions.

In the event of over-subscription, other admissions criteria are as follows, in order of priority.

1. Looked-after children and children who were previously looked-after but immediately after being looked-after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order. A looked-after child is a child who is in the care of a local authority in England or is being provided with accommodation by a local authority in England in the exercise of their social services functions.
2. Children who appear to have been in state care outside England and ceased to be in state care as a result of having been adopted. A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.
3. Children who live nearest to the school by the shortest available walking route using a road and/or made up footpath from the front door of the child's address (including flats) to the main entrance of the school. Distance will be measured using the Local Authority's computerised digital map measuring system. In cases where there is doubt of the home address, or where the child lives between two homes or other relevant circumstances, proof of the home address must be provided to the school to confirm the address on the application form. The home address will be the address that complies with the above at the Local Authority's closing date of applications.
4. Children who have a sibling at the school both at the time of application for a place and when the younger child is due to commence school. A sibling connection refers to a brother or sister, half-brother or half-sister, adopted brother or sister, fostered brother or sister, step-brother or step-sister, or a child of the parents/carers/carer's partner, provided that in every case the child is living in the same family unit at the same address.
5. Children with particular medical, social or educational needs. Independent written confirmation from a medical or other relevant professional should be submitted at the time of application, detailing why the school is the most suitable school for the child.
6. Children eligible for Pupil Premium, including the Early Years Pupil Premium.
7. Children of staff who are based at Kimbolton school, have a permanent contract and have been employed for at least two years at the time of the closing date for admissions applications.

2.2 Tie-breaker

In the event that two or more children live at the same distance from the school (as can happen with families who live in a flat), random allocation through the supervised drawing of lots by an independent responsible person of good standing will be used to decide which child(ren) will be allocated the remaining place(s).

2.3 Late applications

Late applications will be placed last in the criterion in which they fall unless the governors are convinced that there were exceptional circumstances that meant the application was late.

2.4 Waiting lists and in-year transfers

The schools operate a waiting list for each year group. This is held by the governing body as the admission authority and is open until 31 December every year to any child whose application was unsuccessful. A child's position on the waiting list and the allocation of any place which becomes vacant are determined solely in accordance with the over-subscription criteria. Parents/carers may add their child's name to the waiting list whether or not they have already been offered a place at another school and may still accept an offer of a place even if their child has already started at another school. Parents wishing to transfer their child(ren) from another school to the same year group(s) at either of our schools should discuss the transfer with the headteacher of the pupil's present school in the first instance. If more applications are received than places available, places will be allocated using the over-subscription criteria above. In practice, this is likely to result in a first-come-first-served basis as it is rare that there are multiple children waiting at once.

2.5 Appeals procedure

Parents have the right to appeal against an admissions decision. Appeals by parents/carers, setting out the grounds upon which the appeal is made, should be submitted to the school by using the appeals form available from the school office within four weeks of the date of notification of the refusal of a place. All appeals are heard by an independent appeals panel which holds most of its meetings between June and July, though meetings can be arranged at any time of year as necessary. Separate hearings are held for each school.

2.6 Withdrawing an offer

We will not withdraw an offer unless it has been offered in error, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application. If an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, the application will be reconsidered based on the information which is not misleading. If a parent/carer does not respond to the offer, we will make every attempt to contact the parent/carer and explain that a place may be withdrawn if it is not accepted. Except in the case of fraudulent applications we will not withdraw an offer once a child has started at school, and in the case of a potential withdrawal due to a fraudulent application we will consider how long the child has been at the school.

2.7 Admission of children outside their normal age group

In some circumstances (e.g. where a child is unusually gifted or talented, or where a child has missed education due to health issues) we will consider placing the child in a different year group. If parents would like us to consider this, they should submit this request with their admissions application, including evidence for why they are making the request.

Appendix 1: Legislation and Statutory Guidance

The [Equality Act 2010](#) consolidates the law prohibiting discrimination, harassment and victimisation and expands the list of protected characteristics. All schools must have due regard to their obligations under the Act and review their policies and practices to make sure these meet the requirements of the Act, even if they believe that they are already operating in a non-discriminatory way.

An admission authority must not:

- discriminate on the grounds of disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; or sexual orientation, against a person in the arrangements and decisions it makes as to who is offered admission as a pupil;
- harass a person who has applied for admission as a pupil, in relation to their disability, race, or sex;
- victimise a person in relation to a protected act either done, or believed to have been done, by that person (e.g. bringing proceedings under the Equality Act 2010) in the arrangements and decisions it makes as to who is offered admission as a pupil.

This Act contains limited exceptions to the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion or belief and sex. Schools designated by the Secretary of State as having a religious character are exempt from some aspects of the prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief and this means they can make a decision about whether or not to admit a child as a pupil on the basis of religion or belief.

Admission authorities are also subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty and therefore must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations in relation to persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics for these purposes are: disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. Further guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty is available in the Department for Education's [Advice to Schools on the Equality Act 2010](#).

The [Human Rights Act 1998](#) confers a right of access to education. This right does not extend to securing a place at a particular school. Admission authorities, however, do need to consider parents' reasons for expressing a preference when they make admission decisions, though this may not necessarily result in the allocation of a place. These might include, for example, the parents' rights to ensure that their child's education conforms to their own religious or philosophical convictions (as far as is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure).

Chapter 1 of Part 3 of the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#) contains the key provisions regarding school admissions, including the statutory basis for the Schools Admission Code. Section 86 of the Act provides that the admission authority for a maintained school must comply with any preference expressed by a parent except where to do so would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources. Section 94 of the Act provides that parents (and in some circumstances children) may appeal against a decision to refuse admission to the school. Two or more admission authorities in the same local authority area may make joint arrangements.

The most relevant regulations are:

- a) the [School Admissions \(Admission Arrangements and Coordination of Admission Arrangements\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#);
- b) the [School Admissions \(Infant Class Sizes\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#);
- c) the [School Admissions \(Appeals\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#), and;
- d) the [School Information \(England\) Regulations 2008](#).