



Policy and Procedure

Title: Admissions Policy 2024/2025

1. General Information

- 1.1. Hazlemere Church of England Combined School is a Voluntary Aided School serving the whole community. As a school we aim to be a God-centred learning community which includes children, parents and families, staff, governors and the wider community. The Bible tells us that through his youth Jesus, “grew in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and People” (Luke 2 v 52). This is also something that we want for every one of our children and for the school as a whole.
- 1.2. The Governing Body invites applications for admission from parents of all faiths or of no faith who wish their children to receive an education in accordance with the principles of the Christian faith. We want to be a community working together and striving for excellence and high achievement across a broad curriculum. We aim to provide the opportunity for everyone to achieve their potential within a caring, mutually supportive learning environment reflecting our Christian ethos. We are committed to giving our pupils the best possible educational opportunities whilst living out Christian values, within the tradition of the Anglican Church.
- 1.3. The Governing Body is the Admissions Authority for the School. The Governing Body works closely with the Local Authority (LA) (Buckinghamshire County Council) and the Diocese (Oxford Diocesan Board of Education) in determining and managing the admissions process.
- 1.4. This policy applies to admission to Reception and Years 1 to 6. The Nursery has its own admission policy which is available from the School. A place in the Nursery, or an offer of a place in the Nursery, does not guarantee admission to the School.
- 1.5. This policy has been written with due regard to the Department for Education School Admissions Code and the Governing Body has made every effort to ensure that it complies with the relevant legislation governing school admissions including that on infant class sizes and equal opportunities.

2. Admission Arrangements to the Reception Year in September 2024

- 2.1. Admission is by application only. If you are considering this school for your child and would like information about our information sessions, please provide the School Office with your contact details (01494 521420). You will then receive admissions information as soon as it is available. (Please note that this is not part of the admissions procedure).
- 2.2. Submitting your application: Buckinghamshire County Council’s Admissions Team manages the coordinated admission scheme for all Buckinghamshire residents. Parents living in Buckinghamshire are encouraged to apply using the secure web based application procedure. The „Guide for Parents”, which is distributed to parents in summary form and available to download in full from the Buckinghamshire County Council website, explains the process. For parents unable to apply online, the school holds a stock of „Common Application Forms” (CAF) which can be completed by hand. The completed CAF must be returned directly to the Admissions Team at Buckinghamshire County Council no later than 14 January 2024. Parents living outside Buckinghamshire at the time of application must apply on the CAF of the local authority in which they live (the home LA). The completed CAF should be returned to their home LA.
- 2.3. In the event of there being too many applications for the number of places available, the admission rules in section 7 will be applied.

- 2.4. The number of places available for admission into Reception is 30. There are 30 places each in Years 1 and 2. There are an additional 3 places in Year 3 and Years 4 - 6 have 33 places each.
- 2.5. All children who will be five between September 1st 2024 and August 31st 2025 will be eligible for admission to the Reception class in September 2024.
- 2.6. Parents of a child whose fifth birthday falls between 1 September 2024 and 31 March 2025 may defer entry until their child reaches compulsory school age (the term beginning in January or April after his or her fifth birthday). The school will hold the deferred place for the child (provided it is taken up during the school year 2024-2025), 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.
- 2.7. For children whose fifth birthday falls between 1 April 2025 and 31 August 2025 (summer-born children, who do not reach compulsory school age until September 2024)), parents who do not wish them to start school in school year 2024-25, but to be admitted to the Reception Year in September 2023, should proceed as follows. They should apply at the usual time for a place in September 2023 together with a written request that the child is admitted outside his or her normal age group to the Reception year in September 2023. NB parents would need to provide supporting reasons for seeking a place outside the normal age group and should discuss the position with the head teacher as early as possible. The school will consider the request carefully and if it is agreed this should be clear before the national offer day (16 April 2024), their application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before any place is offered. They should then reapply in the normal way (no later than 15 January 2025) for a Reception place in September 2025. If their request is refused, the parents must decide whether to wait for any offer of a place in September 2025 (NB it will still be subject to the over-subscription criteria below) or to withdraw their application and apply in the second half of the summer term 2025 for a Year 1 place in September 2025. Parents should be aware that the Year 1 group may have no vacancies as it could be full with children transferring from the 2024-25 Reception Year group.
- 2.8. Until the child reaches compulsory school age, he/she may attend part-time. If the parents wish to exercise this right they should discuss detailed arrangements with the head teacher.
- 2.9. Two admission information meetings will be held at the school during the Autumn Term, 2023. Prospective parents are invited to attend one of the two. Following a presentation from the Headteacher and key staff, there will be the opportunity to tour the school. Admission forms and information will also be available to parents at this time.
- 2.10. Applications received after the final date will not be processed by the LA (the Local Authority, Buckinghamshire County Council) until after the timely applications have been allocated. These will then be processed in accordance with the co-ordinated scheme.
- 2.11. After all applications have been received from the LA, the Admissions Committee to the Governing Body will meet to review each application against the criteria set out in section 7.
- 2.12. It is the Governors' policy not to reconsider applications within the same academic year unless there has been a significant change in circumstances (for example, a change of address).
- 2.13. Applications for admission of a child whose fifth birthday falls on or after 1st September 2023, will not be considered.
- 2.14. The County Council will send out offer letters to Buckinghamshire residents and the home LA to those living outside Buckinghamshire on behalf of the Governing body of Hazlemere CE Combined School by the date shown in the „Guide for Parents“ (or the home LA's booklet).

3. Admission Arrangements to Year 3 in September 2024

- 3.1. Admission is by application only. If you are considering this school for your child and would like information about our information sessions, please provide the School Office with your contact details (01494 521420). You will then receive admissions information as soon as it is available. (Please note that this is not part of the admissions procedure).
- 3.2. Submitting your application: Buckinghamshire County Council's Admissions Team manages the coordinated admission scheme for all Buckinghamshire residents. Parents living in Buckinghamshire are encouraged

to apply using the secure web based application procedure. The „Guide for Parents“, which is distributed to parents in summary form and available to download in full from the Buckinghamshire County Council website, explains the process. For parents unable to apply online, the school holds a stock of „Common Application Forms“ (CAF) which can be completed by hand. The completed CAF must be returned directly to the Admissions Team at Buckinghamshire County Council no later than 15 January 2022. Parents living outside Buckinghamshire at the time of application must apply on the CAF of the local authority in which they live (the home LA). The completed CAF should be returned to their home LA.

3.3. There are 10 places available for admission into Year 3.

3.4. In the event of there being too many applications for the number of places available, the admission rules in section 7 will be applied.

3.5. Two admission information meetings will be held at the school during the Autumn Term, 2023. Prospective parents are invited to attend one of the two. Following a presentation from the Headteacher and key staff, there will be the opportunity to tour the school. Admission forms and information will also be available to parents at this time.

3.6. Applications received after the final date will not be processed by the LA (the Local Authority, Buckinghamshire County Council) until after the timely applications have been allocated. These will then be processed in accordance with the co-ordinated scheme.

3.7. After all applications have been received from the LA, the Admissions Committee to the Governing Body will meet to review each application against the criteria set out in section 7.

3.8. It is the Governors’ policy not to reconsider applications within the same academic year unless there has been a significant change in circumstances (for example, a change of address).

3.9. The County Council will send out offer letters to Buckinghamshire residents and the home LA to those living outside Buckinghamshire on behalf of the Governing body of Hazlemere CE Combined School by the date shown in the „Guide for Parents“ (or the home LA’s booklet).

4. Admission outside of normal age group

4.1. 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, cases 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. It should be noted that if a place in the requested age group is refused, but one in the normal age group is offered then there is no right of appeal.

5. Applying for a school place in another year group

5.1. If you are seeking a place for your child outside the normal entry points (September entry into Reception or Year 3), you should complete a Common Application Form (CAF) and return it to the School. The School will liaise with the Buckinghamshire County Admissions Team before making an offer of a place, should one be available. Parents are welcome to make an appointment to visit the school, to seek advice from the Headteacher, and to collect a CAF from the school office.

5.2. The school will comply with Buckinghamshire County Council’s In-Year Fair Access Protocol. Therefore, the school may go over its admission number or a child may be admitted ahead of others on the admissions list if this is invoked.

6. Waiting Lists

4.1 The school maintains waiting lists for those children who are not offered a place, and the parents ask for the child’s name to be added to the waiting list. The order of priority on the waiting list is the same as the list of criteria for over-subscription, 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. The school periodically seeks confirmation that parents wish a child to be kept on the waiting list.

7. How we allocate places (the Oversubscription Rules)

- 7.1. The Admissions Committee to the Governing body will apply the criteria listed below to all applications where they have received more applications than there are places available. Words printed in bold are explained in the definitions (Section 5).
- 7.2. Children with a **Statement of Special Educational Need** or an **Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan** naming Hazlemere CE School will always be offered places subject to meeting requirements. If there is then greater demand for admission than there are places available, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out below:

Rule 1
Looked after children and children who were previously looked after in the UK and abroad, but ceased to be so because, immediately after being looked after, they became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order.
Rule 2
Families who have exceptional medical or social needs that make it essential that their child attends Hazlemere CE School rather than any other. These needs must be fully supported by written evidence from the appropriate professional person involved with the family.
Rule 3
Children who have a sibling living at the same address who is on the school roll at the time of application and who is expected still to be registered at the school on the admission date.
Rule 4
All other applications

- 7.3. Once the above rules have been applied then any further places will be offered in distance order; using the distance between the family's **normal home address** and the school's nearest open entrance gate offering the closest first. We use a **straight line distance**. Under any of the above Rules if two or more applications are still equal, a process of random allocation will be followed by the School. The allocation will be by the selection from identical envelopes containing the names of the children. The process will be independently monitored by a member of staff within the Local Authority's Admission Team.
- 7.4. Where the last place is offered to one of a twin/triplets/multiple birth group then the other siblings will also be admitted, even if this takes the number of children above the published admission number or the number of places available in the year group.
- 7.5. Applicants will be required to produce proof of residency in the form of a utility bill or rental agreement for example. Where a child is not residing with a parent, this must be made clear at the time of application, and full details of the circumstances must be supplied to demonstrate that the address of the child is his or her **normal home address** and likely to continue to be so until after entry to the school. Places will not normally be offered on the basis of a temporary address.
- 7.6. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that their application is received safely in the Admissions Team's office at Buckinghamshire County Council or by the home LA for non Buckinghamshire residents by the deadline which is printed on the application form. The school can take no responsibility for forms which go astray.
- 7.7. If a place is not offered for your child, you have a statutory right to an independent appeal arranged by the Diocese. Details of how to make an appeal against this decision will accompany the letter refusing a place.
- 7.8. For entry into Reception in September 2023, we receive 79 preferences (first, second, third and fourth preferences). We admitted 22 pupils in September 2022. There were no admission appeals. Children were allocated up to Rule 4 (up to a distance of 1.786 miles).

7.9. Please note that past admission figures may not be an accurate indication of future admission figures.

8. Definitions:

Parent

Parent is defined in law (The Education Act 1996) as either:

- * any person who has „parental responsibility“ (defined in the Children Act 1989) for the child or young person; or
- * any person who has care of the child or young person.

If two parents live at different addresses, the parent the child lives with for most of the week should make the application. We may ask for evidence if circumstances have changed in the past 18 months. If you are in any doubt, please contact the school for advice.

Looked after child

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. An adoption order is one made under the Adoption Act 1976 (Section 12) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Section 46). A „child arrangements order is one settling 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). Applications 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).

Exceptional medical Or social needs

Note 3 When applying under rule 2 (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 Hazlemere CE 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.

Sibling

By sibling we mean a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent’s/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.

Normal home address

By normal home address, we mean the 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 may ask for evidence of the normal home address in the form of a recent bill. 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. 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.

Straight line distance

We use straight line distance for admission purposes. This is the distance from your child's Normal Home Address, as set out by Ordnance Survey, to the nearest open school gate available for pupils to use. We use a computerised system to measure straight line distance. The point we measure to at your child's address is determined by the Ordnance Survey ADDRESS-POINT which is an Ordnance Survey data product that provides a National Grid coordinate and a unique reference for each postal address in Great Britain that is on the Royal Mail's Post Office Address File. This is different to the shortest walking route which is used for transport purposes – more information is in the School Transport Policy & Guidance which is on the Bucks County Council website.

**Statement of
Special Educational
Need/ Education
Health & Care
(EHC) Plan**

A Statement of Special Educational Need or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan is a legal document published by the Local Authority that sets out the special educational needs of an individual child and the special help s/he should have.

For information please contact:-

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