

Hazlemere Church of England Combined School



***“Encourage one another and build one another up”
1 Thessalonians 5:11***

**Admissions Policy
2026-27**

General Information

Hazlemere Church of England Combined School has a distinctive Christian ethos which is at the center 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, another faith or no faith, but we expect parents to respect the Christian ethos of our school, our close links with local churches and the Diocese of Oxford. We provide a distinctively Christian, yet inclusive, environment in which each child is motivated to acquire skills for life and a love of learning. As a church school, we welcome applications from Christian families, and those of other faiths or none. We ask all parents applying for a place at our school to respect this ethos and its importance to the whole school community.

The governors have made every effort to ensure that these arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code 2021 and all relevant legislation, including that on infant class sizes and equal opportunities.

Admission arrangements to the Reception Year in September 2026

At our school, pupils are normally admitted at the beginning of the school year (1 September – 31 August) in which they reach their fifth birthday. Parents whose children were born between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022 may apply for them to be admitted to the Reception Year in September 2026. There are 30 places available.

Parents of a child whose fifth birthday falls between 1 September 2026 and 31 March 2027 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 2026/27), 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 1 April 2027 and 31 August 2027 (summer born children) who do not reach compulsory school age until September 2027 and whose parents who do not wish them to start school in school year 2026/27 but to be admitted to the Reception Year in September 2027 should proceed as follows: They should apply at the usual time for a place in September 2026 together with a written request that the child is admitted outside his or her normal age group to the Reception year in September 2027. **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 in April 2026, and their application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before any place is offered. They should then reapply in the normal way for a Reception place in September 2027. If their request is refused, the parents must decide whether to wait for any other offer of a place in September 2026 (**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 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 and it could be full with children transferring from the 2026/27 Reception Year group.

NB agreement by the school in 2026 to defer does not guarantee a place in September 2027 – the normal over-subscription criteria apply.

Until the child reaches compulsory school age, s/he may attend part-time. If parents wish to exercise this right they should discuss detailed arrangements with the head teacher.

Parents (see Note 1) wishing to apply for the Reception (Foundation) Year in September 2026 must complete the common application form provided by their home local authority (the home LA). The home LA is the LA in whose area the parents live at the time of the application. Applications received after the cut-off date will normally only be considered after all those received on or before the cut-off date. Offers and refusals of places will be sent by the home LA in April 2026.

Over-subscription criteria

Children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan naming Hazlemere Church of England Combined School will always be offered places. If there are fewer applications than places available, all children will be offered places. If there is greater demand for admission than there are places available, the following criteria 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 as a result of being adopted. (See Note 2)
- 2 Families who have exceptional medical or social needs that make it essential that their child attends Hazlemere 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 3)
- 3 Children with a with a sibling (see Note 5) on the roll of the school at the time of application 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 on roll at the linked Nursery at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made.
- 5 Children of a member of staff who 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 the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
- 6 Children with at least one parent being a regular worshipper at a local Church of England or Methodist Church (supplementary information form).
- 7 All other applicants measured by proximity to the school.

Definition of Over-subscription Criteria

1. Looked-after and previously looked-after children:

Looked-after children and children who were previously looked after, including those children who appear to have been in state care outside of 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 they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship order. 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 (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). 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).

2. Children with exceptional social or medical needs: Families of children who have exceptional medical or social needs that make it essential that the children attend Hazlemere C of E Combined School & Nursery rather than any other. These needs must be fully supported by written evidence from the appropriate professional person involved with the family. When applying under this criterion, you must include supporting evidence from an independent professional person who is aware of the situation and supports your reasons for preferring Hazlemere C of E Combined School & Nursery. The 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 must be a doctor, health visitor, social worker, etc who is aware of your child’s or your own circumstances. The school reserves the right to ask for further evidence or clarification where necessary and may seek the advice o

3. Children with a sibling: Children with a sibling on the roll of the school at the time of the application or whose parent has accepted an offer of a place at the school and where, in either case, the sibling is expected to still be in attendance at the time of entry to the school. 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. The catchment area is clearly shown on the map under the admissions tab on our website.

4. Children on roll at the linked Nursery: Children who are on register and attending the school’s Nursery provision at the time of the application.

5. Children of school staff: Children of staff where either a) the member of 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 for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

School staff includes:

- i) Teaching staff on a permanent or fixed term contract exceeding 11 months in duration, and
- ii) All other staff on permanent or fixed term contracts exceeding 11 months in duration for posts of in excess of 15 hours per week

Demonstrable skill shortage is a post which the school has had difficulty in filling. An example might be where the school has taken part in a recruitment drive to fill the post either across the country or worldwide and / or where the post was not filled at the first attempt.

6. Children with at least one parent being a regular worshipper at a local Christian Church:

Children whose parents express a preference for the school, supported by evidence that at least one parent has been, for the year immediately preceding the application, a regular worshipper (at least twice per month on average) at a Church of England or Methodist Church in the Wycombe Deanery or another church within the area of High Wycombe that is included on the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland list. The Governing Body asks the parent to complete a supplementary information form, at the end of this document and available from the school, confirming that s/he is a regular worshipper, and to pass the form to the priest, minister, etc. to confirm the statement made. Where a parent has not worshipped at a church for the minimum one year period, but has worshipped regularly at another church prior to that, the governors will take this into account provided supplementary information forms are completed for both churches. 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.

7. All other applicants measured by proximity to the school.

Proximity of the child's home, as measured by the straight-line distance (see Note 6) between the home and the school with those living nearer being accorded the higher priority, will serve to differentiate between children in criteria 1 to 6 should the need arise. In the event that two distance measurements are identical, the school will use random allocation to decide which child should be offered the place. The process will be conducted in the presence of a person independent of the school.

All Other Admissions

Admission to the school during the school year depends on whether or not there are places available. Year groups at the school have 30 places in Year 1 & 2 and 33 places in years 3 to 6. Applications must be made directly to the school on a form available from the school.

If there is a vacancy, and there is no child on the relevant waiting list with a higher priority (according to the over-subscription criteria 1-4 above), a place will be offered.

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 [using the three term year] 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.

Admission Arrangements to Year 3 in September 2026

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 2027.

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

3.4. Two admission information meetings will be held at the school during the Autumn Term, 2025. 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.

3.5. 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 coordinated scheme.

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

3.7. 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).

3.8. The County Council will email 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).

If parents are moving house, the school will ask for evidence of the move, when considering any application for a place. Documentary evidence in the form of a solicitor's letter to confirm exchange of contracts, or a rental agreement for at least a period of six months will

be required (Armed Forces personnel and crown servants are exempt). If you are returning from elsewhere, to live in a home that you own, we will require evidence to show that you have returned. We will also ask for evidence that any previous house owned has been sold or is being sold. 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.

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. It is recommended that parents discuss their wishes with the head teacher in advance of applying for a place. The governors may 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.

Waiting Lists

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.

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 (and all the children in the case of other multiple births) even if this meant exceeding the agreed admission number of for Reception 2026/27 or the number of places in other year groups.

Fair Access

The school participates in Buckinghamshire LA's Fair Access Protocol. Children qualifying under the Fair Access Protocol may be offered a place even if there are no places available in the relevant year group and also take priority for admission over any child on the waiting list.

Appeals

There are established arrangements for appeals 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 has been a material change in circumstances, for example a change of address which results in a move from outside the catchment area to inside it.

Parents who wish their children to attend the school are most welcome to visit. Arrangements can be made through the school office.

Further information

Further information can be obtained from the School Secretary at the school Please contact the school on 01494 521420 or email enquiries@hazlemere-ce.bucks.sch.uk

Notes

Note 1 A Parent is defined in law (The Education Act 1996) as either:

- a) any person who has 'parental responsibility' (defined in the Children Act 1989) for the child or young person; or
- b) any person who has care of the child or young person.

If you are in any doubt, please contact the school for advice.

Note 2 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. Previously looked after children are children who have been adopted, subject to child arrangement orders or special guardianship orders. 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 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). 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 3 When applying under criterion 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 our 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 4 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, when considering any application for a place under the coordinated 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.

There are special arrangements for families of service personnel with a confirmed posting or crown servants returning from overseas. If the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares the relocation date, and if there is a place available, it will be offered even though there is not an intended address or the family is not yet living in the area.

Note 5 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.

Note 6 The straight line distance used to determine proximity of the home to the school will be measured by Buckinghamshire LA's Geographical Information System: Home to School 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 Base 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](#).

Where Service families or families of other Crown Servants are posted to the area, we will allocate school places in advance of the move if an official government letter declaring the relocation date and intended address is provided.