

Offham Primary School



Admissions Policy

September 2026

We are delighted that you are considering our school for your child. Our admissions process is designed to be welcoming, transparent and supportive, ensuring that every family has the information they need to make an informed choice about their child's education.

At the heart of our school community is a commitment to providing a nurturing, inclusive and ambitious learning environment where every child is encouraged to thrive academically, socially and emotionally. We value strong partnerships with parents and carers and believe that a successful educational journey begins with a positive start.

This Admissions Policy outlines the arrangements for applying for a place at our school, including the admissions criteria, application procedures and arrangements for both Reception and in-year admissions. We encourage families to visit the school and experience first-hand the warm, caring and aspirational ethos that makes our school such a special place to learn and grow.

Annual Reception Admissions

The Local Authority (LA) is responsible for the control of annual admissions to Offham Primary School and this will be co-ordinated by them using a common application form and timetable.

The Governing Body and the Local Authority (Kent County Council, KCC) have agreed that the admission limit for Key Stage 1 (Reception Classes and Year 1 and 2) shall be 30 pupils per year.

The School has a total roll limit of 210 children. Wherever possible we aim not to exceed 30 children per class because we believe this is in the best educational and social interest of all our children. However, we are allowed to have up to 35 children per class.

For children entering the school at the start of Reception class there is a Common Application Form (RCAF) produced by KCC (accessed via their website www.kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions) which has to be returned to the School or directly to KCC by the closing date stipulated for that year, usually six to eight months prior to the September of the school year in which the child turns five.

The procedure for admissions to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is arranged by KCC and will follow the timetable set by them. Detailed information can be found in the booklet 'Admission to Primary School' on the website www.kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions.

The offer of a place at Offham Primary School will be made by KCC as we are a Maintained School and we are required to adhere to KCC admissions procedure. This will be in the form of a letter which is sent on the date set in the timetable for that year.

Decisions on admissions to the School are guided by our admissions criteria:

1. Looked after child or previously looked after child
2. Sibling link (sibling in school at time of entry, where family continue to live at same address as when sibling admitted or if they have moved, live within 2 miles of the school or have moved to a property nearer school than previous property)
3. Health and special access (to be determined by the school)
4. Distance

Admission decisions reached by KCC are binding. A parent refused a place for their child can appeal which, if upheld, requires the school to take in the extra child. Further detailed information is available from the School Office.

There are times when one child from a family can be offered a place in Reception but a sibling in another year group is not. Year groups run at a capacity of 30 children. Vacancies do occur, usually when a family leave the area, but these vacancies may not accommodate sibling links in a year group that is already full.

At Offham Primary School all children start school in the September of the school year (September to August) in which a child turns five. However, in certain cases the Headteacher may agree a later start date.

We admit children to our school in a way which we hope is supportive to building positive attitudes to school and which helps children achieve. We believe it is conducive to a happy “starting school” experience to bring the children into class gradually when they first start school.

All prospective parents/pupils are welcome to visit the school. The School Office should be contacted to make arrangements. The school holds Open Mornings each year during the Autumn Term and visits outside these times may be arranged with the office.

Our arrangements for admitting children to the EYFS Year (Reception) will be explained at our Admissions Meeting with new parents and carers.

Please refer to Kent County Council Admission and Transport Office, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ 01622 696565 or www.kent.admissions@kent.gov.uk for further information.

In Year Admissions

Applications for all places at Offham Primary School, other than the start of Reception, are made directly to the school using the In Year Common Application Form (IYCAF) accessed via www.kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions or directly from the school.

If a place is available at the school:

- Parents should complete the IYCAF and send to school. The school will produce an offer letter (if places available) and send to parents within 5 school days. Parents must accept or refuse the place within 10 school days
- If the place is accepted the child should start school as soon as possible and the completed IYCAF be sent to the LA
- If the child subsequently doesn't start, CME processes are initiated by the school
- If the place is refused by the parents the completed IYCAF should be sent to the LA
- If the parent doesn't reply a chaser letter will be sent by the school after 10 school days
- If the place is accepted the child should start school as soon as possible and the completed IYCAF sent to the LA

- If no reply after a further 5 school days, school can withdraw the offer. Completed IYCAF sent to LA

If a place is not available at the school:

- Parents send IYCAF to school
- School produces a refusal letter and sends to parents within 5 school days
- School waits for 5 days to see if parent requests to join waiting list and then sends a completed IYCAF to the LA

Applications will be processed in the order that they are received. If more applications are made than places available offers will be made to those applications received first. If more applications are received in one day than places available these applications will be put into the schools oversubscription criteria order (looked after children, siblings at school, distance from school) to decide who gets an offer. Cases will be reviewed on an individual basis.

If the school makes an offer from the waiting list this will also be maintained in the oversubscription criteria order. The school will inform the LA that an offer from the waiting list has been made.

The school will retain copies of all correspondence.

New Entrants Induction

Reception (Rainbow Class)

We are committed to ensuring that every child has a positive and successful transition into Reception. To help children become familiar with their new environment, staff and classmates, we offer a comprehensive transition programme.

Children will be invited to attend a half-day Stay and Play session, giving them the opportunity to explore the Reception setting and take part in a range of activities. They will also attend an afternoon play session independently, helping them to build confidence and experience a typical Reception environment before starting school.

Parents and carers will be invited to a Welcome Meeting with the Headteacher and Early Years Lead, where they will receive important information about starting school, routines, expectations and ways to support their child at home.

The Early Years Lead will conduct visits to children's nursery settings to gather information about their learning and development and ensure continuity of provision.

In addition, home visits will be carried out by the class teacher and teaching assistant, providing an opportunity to meet families, get to know each child in a familiar environment and answer any questions.

Where additional support is needed, extra visits can be arranged to help children feel confident and settled before starting school. Parents and carers are also welcome to meet with the SENDCo to discuss any individual needs, ensuring that appropriate support and provision are in place from the outset.

Our aim is to work closely with families to make the transition to Reception a positive, enjoyable and successful experience for every child.

In Year Admission

We warmly welcome families considering an in-year admission to our school and are committed to ensuring that every child experiences a smooth and positive transition.

Prospective families will be offered a personalised tour of the school, providing an opportunity to experience our learning environment, meet members of staff and gain an insight into school life.

Families will also have the opportunity to meet with the Headteacher to discuss their child's needs and answer any questions they may have. Where appropriate, meetings can also be arranged with our SENDCo to discuss any additional needs and ensure that appropriate support is in place from the outset.

To help children feel confident and settled, we may offer taster sessions or transition days, allowing them to experience life in their new class, meet their peers and become familiar with routines before joining the school.

Our aim is to work closely with families to ensure that every child feels welcomed, supported and ready to thrive as a valued member of our school community.