

LANGDON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Admissions Policy

Reviewed Autumn 2023

Agreed by the Governing Body 10.10.23

Due for review Autumn 2024

Introduction:

Langdon Primary School is a Kent County Council community school situated in Dover, Kent. It has had a Published Admissions Number of 15 since September 2017 (previously 10). The school will accordingly admit up to 15 pupils in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are received. All applicants will be admitted if 15 or fewer apply.

We recognise our duty and responsibility to establish equality for all pupils, staff, other members of the school community and service users regardless of their ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation; age or beliefs as defined within existing equalities legislation. Our governing body applies the regulations on admissions sensitively, fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend the school.

The School Admission Code that was issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 applies to admissions arrangements for the current time. Kent Local Authority coordinates the admission arrangements of all community and voluntary controlled primary, infant and junior schools, according to this code and act.

Allocation of places:

We are an inclusive school, welcoming children of all abilities and needs, from all backgrounds. As far as possible we want parents to be able to secure a place at a school of their choice for their child. We only restrict entries on the basis of number. If the number of children applying for places exceeds the places available then we will adopt the procedure set out below in order to determine whether a child will be accepted or not.

At the normal point of entry to our school (Year R) parents have the opportunity to apply for their child's school place either on-line at www.kent.gov.uk/ola or by using a standard paper form known as the Reception Common Application Form (RCAF). Kent LA issue an 'Admission to Primary School' prospectus which is available from any Kent school, from the LA or on-line on the Kent County Council web-site usually towards the end of Term 2. This prospectus sets out the admission scheme and explains the application process and key dates in detail for parents.

Parents should complete the on-line application or an RCAF expressing a preference for up to three schools. Where parents have completed a paper RCAF they should return this to the school or directly to the LA.

The LA acts as a clearing house for allocation of places.

Places will be offered according to the following criteria as determined by the LA:

1. Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children:

- a looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

- a previously looked after child means such children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after and those children who appear to the admission authority to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
- a child is regarded as having been in state care outside of 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.

2. Current Family Association - a sibling (brother or sister) at Langdon School at the time of entry and the family continue to live at the same address as when the sibling was admitted, or if they have moved, live within 2 miles of the school (as measured by LA measuring software) or have moved to a new property that is nearer to the school than the previous property. In this context brother or sister means children who live as brother and sister in the same house including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters.

If siblings from multiple births (twins, triplets etc.) apply for a school and the school would reach its Published Admission Number (PAN) after admitting one or more, but before admitting all of those siblings, the LA will offer a place to each of the siblings, even if doing so takes the school over the PAN. If admissions are to Year R, and so result in a breach of class size legislation, the additional pupil(s) will be treated as 'excepted' for a period of one year, as defined in the school admission code.

3. Health and Special Access Reasons – children, or children of parents, whose health or physical impairment means they have to attend Langdon School. Medical, health, social and special access reasons will be applied in accordance with the school's legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010. Such claims will need to be supported by written evidence from a suitably qualified medical or other practitioner who can demonstrate a special connection between these needs and the particular school.

4. Nearness of children's homes to school - the Local Authority calculate the distance between the child's permanent home address and the school, in a straight line, using Ordnance Survey address point data.

Parents are notified if their application has been successful, by the LA, on a specified date each year. If children are not allocated a place at Langdon School, parents may ask us to place their child's name on a waiting list. Once parents have accepted or declined the places they were offered however, the school will offer any vacant places to children on our waiting list according to the above criteria. Parents also have the right to appeal and are notified of how to do this with their offer letter.

It is our policy to admit 'rising fives' at the beginning of the academic year in which their birthday falls. Children begin school on a part-time basis with most children attending full time by the end of Term 1. If teachers and/or parents do not feel children are ready to begin full time, this may be delayed, by mutual consent, but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

Children and parents are invited to visit the school for induction sessions during June and July. At these sessions the Head Teacher, Class Teacher and where possible, members of the Governing Board and Parent, Teacher and Friends Association are available to talk to parents about the school. Children spend time in the classroom familiarising themselves with the environment and key members of staff.

In Year Casual Admissions (admission at any other time):

Parents wishing to apply for a place for their child at Langdon School outside of the normal round of admissions must complete an In-Year Casual Admissions Form (IYCAF). Parents can obtain information about the IYCAF from the LA Admissions and Transport Office, from any Kent school or on-line on the KCC web-site and must return the form to the school they wish to apply to. If the school has a place that the child is eligible for and no other child has a higher priority, the school must offer it (unless the child has been excluded from more than two schools in which case parents should contact the local authority for advice). The school will make starting arrangements once the offer has been made and accepted by the parents in writing.

If a child is turned down for a place at the school then parents have a legal right to appeal against the refusal of a place. Appeals should be made in writing to the school's admissions authority. Parents can also request to join the school's waiting list where schools are full in a particular year group.

Children with Education Health and Care Plans or Statements of Special Educational Need:

Pupils with and Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or a Statement of Special Educational Need (SEN) do not apply to the LA for a school place through the In Year Admissions processes.

Any application received by the LA for a child with EHCP/SEN will be referred directly to the SEN team who must have regard for Schedule 27 of the Education Act 1996 and name the school preferred by the parents providing it is suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and SEN set out in the EHCP or statement; that the child's attendance at the school is not incompatible with the efficient education of other children in the school and that the placement is an efficient use of the LA's resources.

Before the application of oversubscription criteria, children with a Statement of Special Educational Need or Education, Health and Care Plan which names the school will be admitted. As a result of this, the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly.

Children in Local Authority Care:

Where children are in local authority care (LAC) the LA will consider the most suitable placement for them, usually following contact with the school. At times our school might be directed to take a child by the LA, acting as corporate parent.

Waiting List:

The school will maintain a waiting list when the school is oversubscribed. The waiting list will be maintained in order of priority according to the school's admissions criteria listed above. This is known as the school's oversubscription criteria in this instance. The school's waiting list will be re-ranked in line with the oversubscription criteria, every time a child is added.

When places become available the school will contact parents in order to make an offer of that place to the appropriate child at the top of the waiting list. If two children on the waiting list meet the oversubscription equally then, in order to decide between the two applications that cannot otherwise be separated, an offer will be made on a 'first come, first served' basis.

Deferment of Entry

The Admissions Code states that parents have the right to request that their child defers entry into Reception year (until the term following their fifth birthday, but not beyond the beginning of the final term). Parents also have the right to request that the child starts part time (until the term following their fifth birthday).

Equally, every child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday. This school prefers to operate a staggered intake into reception, which involves short-term part-time sessions building to full-time entry over a period of three weeks. Parents will be advised for the reasons for operating this system and the success that it has on ensuring a smooth transition to school for the majority of our pupils. However, parents are able to insist that the school will take their child full-time from the start of term if that is their preference.

The only restriction is that children must secure the offered place by starting school on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day), but not beyond the beginning of the final term. The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August. This means that children born between the 1 April and 31 August (also known as "summer born") must start school at the beginning of the April term if they wish to keep their offer. Where parents wish for their summer born child to defer entry until the start of Year 1, they must refuse their offered place, which may be offered to a different child, and then reapply through the In Year process. These applications should be made during the last month of Reception Year.

Parents must be made aware of the funding implications this change will cause the school. Funding is driven by children who are on role and attending the school and is measured using the October School Census. There is currently no mechanism for schools to receive funding for a child that does not appear on the October School Census. We are mindful of this limitation when discussing deferral of entry, but accept that ultimately the parent has the final decision. If a parent chooses to defer their child's entry to school, the child remains entitled to a funded early education place of 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year until they are admitted to school.

Summer Born Children and Admission Outside of Expected Year Group

As detailed above, children born between 1 April and 31 August (summer born children) are not legally required to start school until the beginning of Year 1. While the vast majority of summer born children will start at some point in their expected year group, flexibilities exist for children whose parents do not feel they are ready to begin school before they reach compulsory school age and also do not wish for their child to miss Reception year.

The Department for Education have confirmed that there is no legal barrier to children being admitted out of their normal age group, but also state that parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular year. As such parents must gain agreement from the admission authorities of the school before an application can be made. Admissions authorities and parents will be clear that this agreement is only in relation to a child to applying for a place in a different year group. There is no guarantee that once a parent has secured agreement from the school to be considered for admission in that year group, that they will actually be offered a place for their child. All offers are made in accordance with a school's oversubscription criteria, which will not prioritise or penalise a child because of their age.

We will always meet with parents as early possible to explain how their child will be supported should they start school at the normal time. Our teachers are skilled at differentiating the curriculum to meet a diverse range of needs and may also be able to allay any concerns the parent may have about their child's readiness for school.

The admissions authority will take into account the child's individual needs and abilities upon receipt of an application. While the admissions authority of the school is responsible for the decision, they will consider the views of our head teacher before a final decision is made.

Parents are not expected to provide evidence to support their request to defer their application, however where provided it must be specific to the child in question. This might include medical or Educational Psychologist reports. There is no legal requirement for this medical or educational evidence to be secured from an appropriate professional, however, failure to provide this may impede a school's ability to agree to deferral.

We will remind parents that this process will need to be repeated each time the child changes school. While the guidance prompts schools to be mindful of the age group a child has previously been taught in, schools are under no obligation to agree and continue to teach a child out of year. Once the child has started school, it is for the head teacher to decide how best to educate them. Any future decision to move a child to a different age group will be based on sound educational reasons.

Requests for admission outside of the normal age group should be made to the Headteacher as early as possible in the admissions round associated with that child's date of birth. This will allow the school and admissions authority sufficient time to make a decision before the closing date.

Parents are required to complete an application for the normal point of entry at the same time, in case their request is declined. This application can be cancelled if the school agrees to accept a deferred application for entry into Year R the following year. Deferred applications must be made via paper CAF to the LA, with written

confirmation from the school attached. Deferred applications will be processed in the same way as all applications for the cohort in the following admissions round, and offers will be made in accordance with each school's oversubscription criteria.

Parents do not have a right of appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like. However, they may make a complaint about an admission authority's decision not to admit their child outside the normal age group through the school or authority's complaints procedure.

Class Sizes:

We are required by law to admit no more than 30 children to the Foundation Stage/Key Stage One. In Key Stage Two the Governing Body have decided that no class should have no more than thirty children.

Additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an 'excepted pupil' for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit. The excepted children are:

- a) children admitted outside the normal admissions round with statements of special educational needs or Education, Health and Care Plans specifying a school;
- b) looked after children and previously looked after children admitted outside the normal admissions round;
- c) children admitted, after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the admission authority or local authority in the original application process;
- d) children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal;
- e) children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance;
- f) children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round;
- g) children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil.

Appeals:

All parents have a statutory right to appeal against any decision refusing them a school place. If we do not offer a child a place at this school, this will be because to do so would prejudice the education of other children by allowing the number of children in the school to increase too much.

If parents wish to appeal against a decision to refuse entry, they can do so by applying to the LA. An independent panel considers all such appeals, and its decision is binding for all parties concerned. If the appeals panel decides that we should admit a child to whom we had refused a place, then we will accept this decision and continue to do all we can to provide the best education for all the children at our school. (Further details of appeal arrangements are set out in the revised Code of Practice on School Admissions Appeals, which came into force in 2012.)