

Admission policy for 2024/25 for The Wickford Church of England School



The Wickford Church of England School

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Age range 2 - 7

DfES Number: 881-3101

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Admission policy

Applications are made on a common application form provided by Essex County Council, and must be submitted by their closing date. Supplementary Information Forms are available from the school, on the school website and on the Essex website; these must be submitted directly to the school.

An application must be made for all prospective pupils via Essex County Council irrespective of where a child attends nursery, including pupils currently attending the school nursery.

The school is charged under the School Standards and Frameworks Act 1988 to restrict infant class sizes to a maximum of 30 per qualified teacher, with the exception of twins/triplets.

There is no guarantee of a place for children living in the school's priority admission area.

In the event of oversubscription, places will be allocated using the following criteria in the order given:

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| 1 | Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) | A 'looked after child' or a child who was Previously Looked After (PLAC) but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order will be given first priority in oversubscription criteria ahead of all other applicants in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021. This also includes 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 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 (as defined in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). Evidence will be required at the time of application. |
| 2 | Children currently attending the school's preschool, Little Teds, who are eligible for the early years' pupil premium. | Parents/Carers are required to complete a Supplementary Information Form and submit it to the school, with evidence. |
| 3 | Children who are eligible for the early years' pupil premium/pupil premium. | Parents/Carers are required to complete a Supplementary Information Form and submit it to the school, with evidence. |
| 4 | Children with a sibling currently attending the school or its partner junior school, Hilltop Junior School. | Sibling means a birth, step or adopted sibling living at the same address and attending the school at the time of the application. |
| 5 | Children of staff at the school | Where 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, or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage |
| 5 | Children living in the priority admission area | SS11 and SS12 postcodes |
| 6 | Remaining applications | |

Oversubscribed tie breaker

In the event of over-subscription within any of the above criteria, priority will be determined by a straight-line distance from home to school, with those living closest being given the highest priority. At the normal point of entry, the trust uses data provided by the Local Authority (LA), via the Ordnance Survey (OS) to measure straight-line distances. The OS data plots the coordinates of each individual property (the home address) which are referred to as address points.

Straight line distance is measured from the address point of the home address to the address point of the school. Distances are reported in miles to three decimal places. If a child's time is split equally between two residences, the address of the residence at which the child resides for the majority of the school week would be used to measure the distance between the child's school and home. In the unlikely event of two applicants with an identical distance competing for a single place at the school, the place will be offered to one applicant on the basis of lots drawn by a senior member of trust staff not involved in admissions, with the exception of twins, triplets etc where the law allows the school to offer both twins, each triplet etc

Mid-year applications (Applications for school places outside the normal admissions round)

All mid-year applications should be made directly to The Wickford Church of England School, using the mid-year application form available on our website or from the school office. Mid-year applications (sometimes called in-year applications) are any application for a school place made to a year group, **apart** from September admissions to Reception (*primary and infant schools*)/Year 3 (*junior schools*).

For applications into existing year groups, a place will be offered when the number of pupils in the relevant year group is below the admission number for that year group.

Measurements for mid-year admissions

The criteria for the "distance tie-breaker" detailed above will apply. Outcomes of mid-term applications will be notified by The Wickford Church of England School in writing within 15 school days.

Proof of address

We may ask for verification of the child's home address, in particular in the case of children to whom shared parental responsibility arrangements apply. Where this is the case, the application may be processed on the basis of that address (where the child resides for the majority of the school week) and proof of address and residence arrangements will be required with the application. The child must be living with the parent, relative or carer 24 hours per day, for the majority of the school week.

Applications received after the national closing date

Applications received after the national closing date will be handled in accordance with the above and treated as a mid-year application.

Appeals

The Academy Trust recognises that it must comply with the Department for Education's Admissions and Appeals Codes. Where a child is not offered a place, the parent(s) will be entitled to an appeal against the decision to refuse admission. The letter of refusal will contain details of how to go about appealing the decision, including the deadline for lodging the appeal and whom to contact. Parents must set out their grounds for appeal as part of their application. Where an appeal is successful, the Academy must admit the child.

Waiting list

The waiting list will be ordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out above and will be held by School Admissions at the Local Authority (LA) until the end of August each year, the LA will continue to allocate places from these lists if spaces become available until the end of August each year. The school will take ownership of the waiting list from 1 September each year and will continue to hold the list in ranked order for at least the first term of the academic year.

Applicants will be ranked on these waiting lists in priority order, according to the school's admission criteria listed above. For each child added, the list will be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria.

Age of Admission into HEARTS Academy Trust

The policy is that children born on and between 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2020 would normally commence primary school in Reception in the academic year beginning in September 2024. As required by law, all Essex infant and primary schools provide for the full-time admission of all children offered a place in the Reception year group from the September following their fourth birthday. Therefore, if a parent wants a full-time place for their child from September (at the school at which a place has been offered) then they are entitled to that full-time place.

Parents can defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in the school year. The law does not require a child to start school until the start of the term following their fifth birthday. Compulsory school age is reached at that point. Where entry is deferred, the school will hold the place for that child and not offer it to another child. The parent would not however be able to defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the original application was accepted. Parents can also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. Any parents interested in taking up a part-time place initially should contact The Wickford Church of England School for further details as to what this would entail.

Where parents choose to defer entry, a school may reasonably expect that the child would start at the beginning of a new school term/half term. Where a parent of a 'summer-born' child (1 April – 31 August) wishes their child to start school in the autumn term following their fifth birthday, they will need to apply for a place at the correct time for the normal admission round for the following academic year. The process to be followed is defined in detail in the 'Primary Education in Essex' booklet. Supporting evidence from relevant professionals working with the child and family stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age-appropriate cohort should be submitted.

The Wickford Church of England School will decide whether the application for a Reception place will be accepted or whether it will be treated as an application for a Year 1 place, the child's normal age-appropriate cohort. Further details are provided in the 'Primary Education in Essex' booklet. If the application for a Reception place is not accepted this does not constitute a refusal of the place and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal.

Admission Outside of the 'Normal Age Group'

Parents may seek a place at a school outside of a child's normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. Any such request must be made in writing with an application setting out clearly the reasons and include, where relevant, any supporting evidence from relevant professionals such as teachers or doctors. Each such case will be considered by the trust as admission authority on an individual basis.

The views of the Headteacher of the school at which the place is requested will be sought. There is no guarantee that a request for a place outside of a child's normal age group will be agreed upon.

