CULVERSTONE GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Admissions Policy 2025-2026

Review and Approved:	Board of Trustees – Autumn 2023
Next review due by:	Spring 2025

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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at the school
- Set out the school's arrangements for allocating school places
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer a child a place

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

Culverstone Green Primary School is an academy of The Golden Thread Alliance and as such the Board of Trustees is the Admissions Authority.

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- School Admissions Code 2021
- School Admission Appeals Code

As an academy, the school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and Articles of Association.

3. Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the Common Application Form (CAF) provided by their home Local Authority.

Looked After Children are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:

- In the care of a Local Authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in exercise of its social services functions

Previously Looked After Children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order, or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order

This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

A child reaches **compulsory school age** on the prescribed day following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

4. How to apply

4.1 Admissions to the School

For applications in the normal admissions round parents should use the Common Application Form (CAF) provided by their home Local Authority (regardless of which Local Authority the school is in). Parents can use this form to express their preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order.

Parents will receive the offer for a school place directly from their Local Authority.

Please use the following link for more information:
www.kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions

5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to Reception rather than Year 1. The term summer born children relates to all children born from 1 April to 31 August. These children reach compulsory school age on 31 August following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on 31 August).

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parents' views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- The Headteacher's views

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6.2. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Although parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied, this right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group.

6. Allocation of places

6.1 Admission number

The school has a Published Admission Number of 30 pupils for entry in Reception.

6.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plans names the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated. If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

In the event that the school receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in order until all places are filled.

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. **Health, Social and Special Access Reasons**
   Medical, health, social and special access reasons will be applied in accordance with the school's legal obligations, in particular those under the Equality Act 2010. Priority will be given to those children whose mental or physical impairment means they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Equally this priority will apply to children whose parents'/carers' physical or mental health or social needs mean that they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend the school. 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 school.

3. **Current Family Association**
   Children with a sibling attending the school at the date of entry to the school. Sibling is defined in these arrangements as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers and sisters and foster brothers and sisters. Priority will not be given to children with siblings who are former pupils.

4. **Children of Staff**
   Children of staff in either or both of the following circumstances:
   a) 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; and/or
   b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

5. **Nearness of children's homes to school**
   A child's permanent home address will be considered to be where he/she is resident for the majority of nights in a normal school week. We use the distance between the child's permanent home address (defined in Kent County Council's annual admissions prospectus) and the school, measured in a straight line using the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) address point. Distances are measured from a point defined as within the child's home to a point defined as within the school as specified by NLPG. The same address point on the school site is used for everybody. When we apply the distance criterion for the school, these straight-line measurements are used to determine how close each applicant's address is to the school. Where applications are made from properties or abodes that are not registered to the NLPG, including new build properties, Kent County Council may be required to use planning sites or other relevant co-ordinates. In exceptional circumstances where alternative co-ordinates are not available, measurements will be determined by a Senior Admissions Officer and confirmed by Head of Service.

6.3 Waiting List for Reception Places

After the allocation of school places by the Local Authority, parents whose children were not allocated a place may be put on a waiting list. The waiting list is kept and follows the oversubscription criteria order detailed in paragraph 6.2. The child will remain on the waiting list until parents request the child be removed from the list or until the end of August of the following year whichever is the sooner. Applications received by the school after the reallocation date of school places by the Local Authority are classed as "in-year applications" and are dealt with as detailed in paragraph 7.

6.4 Tie break

In the case of two or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, the school will use the distance as detailed within paragraph 6.2 (5) above "Nearness of children's homes to school". Where the distance between two children's homes and the school is the same, random allocation will be used to decide between them. This process will be independently verified.

6.5 Multiple Births

If siblings from multiple births (twins, triplets etc) apply for a school place and the school has reached its Published Admission Number after admitting one or more but before admitting all siblings, the school will offer a place to each of the siblings even if it takes the school above the Published Admission Number. If these admissions are to Reception Class and would result in a breach of the infant class size legislation, the additional children would be treated as "excepted" for the time they are in the infant class or until pupil numbers decrease to the current infant class size limit as defined within the School Admissions Code.

6.6 Children below compulsory school age

The school is required to provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday, but children do not reach compulsory school age until on or after their fifth birthday. For children who are under compulsory school age, once a school place has been accepted, parents may, if they wish, agree

with the school a pattern of part time attendance or a deferred start until later in that school year (but not later than the beginning of the summer term). These arrangements should be discussed with the school.

6.7 Withdrawing an offer or a place

The Local Authority or school cannot withdraw an offer unless it has been offered in error, a parent has not responded within the initial timeframe of 10 school days, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application. Where the parent has not responded to the offer, the school gives the parent a further opportunity of 5 school days to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not. The school will confirm in writing if the offer is withdrawn. Where an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, the application must be considered afresh, and a right of appeal offered if an offer is refused.

6.8 Challenging behaviour

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. We may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, i.e. where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that is not the normal point of entry, only in such a case that we have good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour that may adversely affect the provision we can offer. In this case, we will refer these pupils to the Fair Access Protocol. We will not refuse admission on these grounds to Looked after Children, previously Looked After Children and children with EHC plans naming the school.

6.9 Fair Access Protocol

We participate in the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible.

7. In-year admissions

Parents can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose EHC plans name the school will be admitted. Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group parents are applying for, their child will be offered a place.

If there are no spaces available at the time of an application, the child's name will be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by one of the children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in paragraph 6.2 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

The child will remain on the waiting list until parents request the child be removed from the list or for one calendar year whichever is the sooner. Parents will be notified in writing when any child is removed from the waiting list and informed they can reapply for a school place should they wish to do so.

Applications for in-year admissions should be submitted to the School Office using the In-Year application form which is available on the school's website or a paper copy is available from the School Office.
https://www.cgps.kent.sch.uk/admissions/

Parents will be notified of the outcome of in-year applications in writing within 15 school days detailing any reason for refusal and information about the right to appeal.

8. Appeals

If a child's application for a place at the school is unsuccessful, parents will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals.

If parents are unhappy with the school place they have been offered, they can appeal for any of the schools named in their application. The Local Authority recommends parents accept the school place their child has been offered. This does not affect any appeal and will guarantee the child has a school place if the appeal is unsuccessful. If the appeal is successful parents must notify the school they were originally offered that they no longer want the place.

If parents wish to appeal, they:

a) must set out the grounds for their appeal in writing and email to: appeals@kent.gov.uk; or
b) can use the Primary Education Appeals Form online using the following link: https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/appeal-a-school-offer#tab-1

Parents can only make one appeal per school in a single academic year unless there is a significant change in circumstances.

You can find details of the school's appeals timetable on the school's website: https://www.cgps.kent.sch.uk/admissions/

Parents can also telephone the Local Authority for advice on 03000 414222 and further information is available from Kent County Council on the following website: www.kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees annually.

Whenever changes to the admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the PAN), the Board of Trustees will publicly consult on these changes.

The Board of Trustees will consult on the admission arrangements at least once every 7 years, even if there have been no changes during that period.

Document Control - Changes History

Version	Date	Owned and amended by	Recipients	Purpose
1.0	Spring 2023	Trust Governance Professional	Agreed with CEOs, Headteachers/Heads of School and Admissions Officers of all nine schools	This is a new policy being put in place for the merger of The Galaxy Trust and The Pathway Academy Trust to form "The Golden Thread Alliance" with effect from 1 January 2023. To purpose of the policy is to provide parents with details of the process for pupil admissions to all schools in The Golden Thread Alliance.
2.0	Autumn 2023	Trust Governance Professional	Agreed with CEOs, Headteachers/Heads of School and Admissions Officers of all nine schools	To determine the Admissions Arrangements for 2025-2026 which included the amended definition of Kent County Council provided distances for admissions purposes to meet regulatory requirements from the Equality Act (2010).

Policy Tier

☒ Tier 1	☐ Tier 2	☐ Tier 3	☐ Tier 4

Owner: Trust Governance Professional

Contact in case of query: Admissions Officers of the schools in The Golden Thread Alliance

Approvals
This document requires the following approvals.

Name	Position /Meeting	Date Approved	Version
Board of Trustees as the Admissions Authority	Meeting of the Board of Trustees	21 February 2023	1.0
Boards of Trustees as the Admissions Authority	Meeting of the Board of Trustees	6 December 2023	2.0

Position with the Unions
Does the policy or changes to the policy require consultation with the Unions under our recognition agreement?
☐ Yes
☒ No

Location
Tick all that apply:
☐ The Golden Thread Alliance website
☒ School website
☒ Policy portal
☐ Other: state

Customisation
☐ The Golden Thread Alliance Policy
☐ The Golden Thread Alliance with an attachment for each school to complete regarding local arrangements
☒ School policy

Distribution
This document has been distributed to:

Name/School	Position	Date	Version
All schools in The Golden Thread Alliance	Headteachers/Heads of School/Admissions Officers	23 February 2023	1.0
Kent County Council	Primary Admissions Team	23 February 2023	1.0
All schools in The Golden Thread Alliance	Headteachers/Heads of School/Admissions Officers	28 February 2024	2.0
Kent County Council	Primary Admissions Team	28 February 2024	2.0