

# Admissions Policy 2025/26

## Equalities statement

In our Trust we work to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all members of our community who hold a range of protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, as well as having regard to other factors which have the potential to cause inequality, such as socio-economic factors. For further information, please see our Equalities Policy.

Document Management	
Date of Approval	7 October 2025
Date of Next Review	To be replaced by 2026/27 Admissions Policy
Headteacher	Mr A Holmes
Chair of Governors	Mr I Fidge

This policy will be reviewed annually.

The Whitstable School is a Swale Academies Trust School

## **Admission to the September 2025 Year 7 entry**

### **Numbers Admitted**

The Published Admissions Number for the school is 210.

### **Applications for Admission**

- A. Applications for admission to The Whitstable School should be made on the Local Education Authority's "Common Application Form." The "Common Application Form" should be returned to the Local Authority by the agreed published date.
- B. Pupils wishing to apply for a special aptitude place will be required to complete a "Supplementary Information Form" available from the school. The deadline for returning the completed form will be the same date the "Common Application Form" needs to be returned to the Local Authority.
- C. Parents who wish to request their child to be taught outside of their normal age group, must apply in writing to the Headteacher stating their reasons for the request.
- D. The Governors will follow the Local Authority's timetable for applications.
- E. In the event of the school being over-subscribed, all applications for admission will be considered according to the criteria set out below.
- F. The Local Authority will contact parents on the agreed published date advising them whether or not they have been allocated a place for their child at The Whitstable School. Parents have to accept the offer of a place by the agreed published date.

### **Late Applications**

- A. The deadline for the return of the "Common Application Form" is the agreed published date.
- B. Late "Common Application Forms" received by the Local Authority after the published return date, but before the published end of scheme date will be dealt with.

### **Criteria for Admissions**

On behalf of the Governing Body, this is the responsibility of the Headteacher and Admissions Leader, in consultation with the KCC.

In line with KCC's policy, the Governing Body supports the following criteria when determining admissions:

- Children in Care
- Current Family Association
- Health & Special Access Reasons
- Nearness of children's homes to school
- Special Educational Needs

Nearness of children's homes to school - we use the distance between the child's permanent home address (defined in KCC'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, KCC may be required to use planning sites or other relevant coordinates. In exceptional circumstances where alternative coordinates are not available, measurements will be determined by a Senior Admissions Officer and confirmed by the Head of Service.

### **In Year Admissions**

"Common Application Forms" received by The Whitstable School after the agreed published date, and also applications for places in year groups other than the normal year of entry, will be treated as "in year admissions". The School will send the form to the Local Authority along with their decision on the application. The School will also notify the parent of their decision at the same time. If the parent is refused a place they will be advised of their right of appeal. The school reserves the right to refuse placement on Specific Grounds for Behaviour: The School Admissions Code (specifically paragraph 3.10) allows an admission authority to refuse if there is good reason to believe the child may display challenging behaviour. The Code defines it as behaviour that:

- would be unlikely to be responsive to the usual range of interventions to help prevent and address pupil misbehaviour.
- is of such severity, frequency, or duration that it is beyond the normal range that schools can tolerate.
- would significantly interfere with the pupil's/other pupils' education or jeopardise the right of staff and pupils to a safe and orderly environment.

### **Oversubscription**

Before the application of oversubscription criteria, children with a statement of special educational need which names the school will be admitted. As a result of this, the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly.

### **Oversubscription Criteria**

Where applications for admission exceed 210, the following criteria will be applied, in the order set out below, to decide which children to admit:

- 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. Applicants who have a brother or sister attending the school when the child starts.** In this context brother or sister means children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers and sisters, adopted siblings, step-brothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters.
- 3. Children of staff,** where the member of staff has been employed at The Whitstable School on a permanent contract for 2 years or more or has been recruited to fill a post for which there is a

demonstrable skills shortage.

4. **Applicants who can demonstrate a special aptitude in Music, Dance, Drama or Art** (up to a maximum of 10% of places in all). Applicants under this criterion must complete a Supplementary Information Form (Appendix 1) so that evidence can be reviewed by the school.
5. **Health 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'/guardians' physical or mental health or social needs means that they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Such claims will need to be supported by written evidence from a suitably qualified medical or another practitioner who can demonstrate a special connection between these needs and the particular school.
6. **Any other children** - Within criteria 1, 2, 4 and 5 children will be prioritised based on their distance to the school. The distance is measured between the child's permanent address and the school, measured in a straight line using the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) address point data. The same address point on the school site is used for everybody. A pupil's home address is considered to be a residential property that is the child's **only or main residence** and not an address at which your child might sometimes stay or sleep due to your own domestic or special arrangements. The address must be the pupil's home address on the day you completed your application form and which is either;
  - Owned by the child's parent, parents or guardian OR
  - Leased to or rented by the child's parent, parents or guardian under a lease or written rental agreement.

If you live separately from your partner but share responsibility for your child, and the child lives at two different addresses during the week, we will regard the home address as the one at which the child sleeps for the majority of weekdays.

In the unlikely event that two or more children in all other ways have equal eligibility for the last available place at the school, the names will be issued a number and drawn randomly to decide which child should be given the place. This process will be independently verified.

### **Special Aptitude Places**

The school will reserve up to 10% of the places each year for pupils with a special aptitude for Music, Dance, Drama or Art. If few places are taken in one subject, the school can choose to offer more places in another if suitable applications have been received. Pupils are ranked according to the evidence provided and may be invited to a meeting if further clarification of standards is needed.

### **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)**

A Supplementary Information Form is required **only** from parents who seek one of the special aptitude places. These are submitted to the school at the same time as the Common Application Form is sent to the Local Education Authority.

After a place has been offered the school reserves the right to withdraw the place in the following circumstances:

- A. When a parent has failed to respond to an offer within a reasonable time; or
- B. When a parent has failed to notify the school of important changes to the application information; or
- C. The Admission Authority offered the place on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent.

## **Waiting List**

Parents of children who have not been offered a place at the school may ask for their child's name to be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list, which will be maintained until the end of Term 2 in accordance with the Secondary Transfer Arrangements, will be operated using the same admissions criteria as above. Placing a child's name on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available. This does not affect the statutory right to appeal.

## **Appeals against the Decision not to Offer a Place at the School**

On the agreed published date parents will be notified by the Local Education Authority that they are being offered a place at the allocated school. This letter will give information about their statutory right of appeal.

## **Admission to a Year Group Outside Normal Age Range**

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the 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. Admission authorities must make clear in their admission arrangements the process for requesting admission out of the normal age group.

Admission authorities must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's 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 outside of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. They must also take into account the views of the Headteacher of the school concerned. When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the admission authority must set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

Where an admission authority agrees to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to a relevant age group (i.e. the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school) the local authority and admission authority must process the application as part of the main admissions round, unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible, and on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. They must not give the application lower priority on the basis that the child is being admitted out of their normal age group. 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.

Parents wishing to make a request for an admission to a year group outside normal age range should do so in writing to the Headteacher.

## Sixth Form Admission Arrangements September 2025

The Whitstable School has a mixed Sixth Form. All students in Year 11 are eligible to apply for a place in the Sixth Form, subject to entry requirements of the courses. The maximum role for our sixth form is 100 per year group. This includes a maximum of 20 for the level 2 pathway. Applications are selected by academic performance. Applications from external students are welcomed.

Admission criteria to Sixth Form are as follows:

1. Availability of a suitable course.
2. For admission to Level 3 courses (AS, A2, BTEC) five GCSE grades 9 to 4 are normally required.
3. Some courses of study have particular subject requirements (see prospectus)
4. All external students are interviewed and references are sought.

Offers will be made on the basis of predicted performance at GCSE, with the requirement that the grades are achieved in the final examinations prior to entry to the Sixth Form to study A Levels and the student's chosen subjects being accommodated on the timetable, in feasible group sizes.

All offers made during Year 11 are conditional on students meeting the grade criteria specified and will only become firm offers upon confirmation of actual GCSE results. Offer letters will be made before the end of May 2025. Offers will be confirmed once the school has been notified of GCSE results in August 2025.

Parents have a statutory right of appeal, should an application for a place be refused, by writing to the Chair of Governors, care of the school.

Places will firstly be offered to Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children as defined in the oversubscription criteria.

Pupils are admitted to the Sixth Form subject to the following:

- a formal application by pupil and parent and a pupil interview to determine the courses to be studied; ● availability of a specific course or combination of courses;
- minimum entry requirements for specific courses, as published on the school's website. Please note that the Governors reserve the right to withdraw courses if there is insufficient student demand.

After a place has been offered, the school reserves the right to withdraw the place in the following circumstances:

- A. When a parent has failed to respond to an offer within a reasonable time; or
- B. When a parent has failed to notify the school of important changes to the application information; or
- C. The admission authority offered the place on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent.

Late applications will be considered if places in appropriate subjects are still available after all other applicants have been considered.

A waiting list will be held, ranked according to the oversubscription criteria.

**Appendix 1 – Supplementary Information Form**

**The Whitstable School**

Supplementary Information Form (SIF) for September 2025 Year 7 Admissions - Special Aptitude places

This form does not constitute a valid application. You must complete the relevant KCC Application Form (SCAF or IYCAF) if you wish your child to be considered for a place at The Whitstable School.

The following sections should be completed (in block capitals), and returned to the school by **31st October 2024** to notify us that you are applying for a Special Aptitude place. This form should be sent to: Admissions, The Whitstable School, Bellevue Road, Whitstable CT5 1PX or emailed to [tws\\_admin@swale.at](mailto:tws_admin@swale.at).

Child’s Surname:	
Child’s Forename:	
Child’s Date of Birth:	
Permanent Home Address:	
Parent / Carer Name(s):	
Telephone:	
Email:	
Special Aptitude Place (please select):	Art <input type="checkbox"/> Dance <input type="checkbox"/> Drama <input type="checkbox"/> Music <input type="checkbox"/>
Reason for application (include relevant qualifications; applicants specific interest and skill in art; if any instrument is played and what grade; if the applicant is a member of a dance school, drama club or choir and the name of the organisation). An audition/interview date will be arranged.	
Declaration:	I confirm the information supplied is true and accurate.
Parent / Carer Signature:	
Date:	