



The **Orchard School**

Admissions Policy

Draft: February 2025

Ratified: February 2025

Review: February 2026

Chair of Governors:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'A' followed by a horizontal line and a loop.

Headteacher:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. H. and'.

The Orchard School Admissions Policy

Mission Statement

At The Orchard School, **Everyone Matters, Everyone Cares**. Our ethos is rooted in the belief that every child has the potential to grow, thrive and succeed when provided with the right environment, relationships and support. **The Orchard Way** guides everything we do, ensuring that our approach is therapeutic, inclusive and centred on understanding behaviour as communication. We are committed to nurturing the social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs of our pupils, recognising their unique challenges while celebrating their individuality. Through strong relationships and a culture of care, we create a school where every pupil feels safe, valued and empowered to reach their full potential.

1. Introduction

The Orchard School is committed to providing a supportive and inclusive learning environment for students with special educational needs. This policy outlines the criteria and procedures for student admissions, ensuring compliance with the latest guidance from Kent County Council (KCC) and the Kent Education Learning and Skills Information (KELSI).

2. Admissions Criteria

- **Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs):** The Orchard School primarily admits students who have an EHCP that names the school. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, children with an EHCP naming the school will be admitted before the application of oversubscription criteria.
- **Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children:** In line with statutory requirements, the school gives highest priority to looked after children

and previously looked after children in its oversubscription criteria. This complies with the School Admissions Code.

3. Application Process

- **Consultation with KCC:** Applications for placement at The Orchard School are typically initiated by the Local Authority (KCC) in consultation with parents or guardians, following the statutory assessment process.
- **Supplementary Information Forms (SIFs):** If applicable, parents may be required to complete a SIF to provide additional information relevant to the school's oversubscription criteria. The SIF will be available on the school's website or upon request.

4. Oversubscription Criteria

In cases where the number of applicants exceeds the available places, the following oversubscription criteria will be applied in order:

1. **Children in Care:** Children who are currently in the care of a local authority.
2. **Previously Looked After Children:** Children who were previously in care but have since been adopted or become subject to a residence or special guardianship order.
3. **Siblings:** Children with a brother or sister currently attending the school and who will continue to do so on the date of admission.
4. **Medical or Social Need:** Children for whom The Orchard School is specifically named due to a demonstrable medical or social need.
5. **Distance:** Children living closest to the school, measured by the shortest safe walking route.

5. Appeals

Parents or guardians who wish to appeal an admission decision can do so by following the appeals process outlined by KCC. Detailed information on the appeals procedure is available on the KCC website.

6. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with the latest statutory requirements and guidance from KCC and KELS. Any amendments will be made in consultation with the school's governing body and will be communicated to all stakeholders.

7. Contact Information

For further details or clarification regarding this policy, please contact:

- **The Orchard School Admissions Office** [Insert School Contact Email and Phone Number]
- **Kent County Council School Admissions:** [KCC School Places](#)
- **Special Educational Needs (SEN) Teams in Kent:**
 - **East Kent SEN Team:** sen.east@kent.gov.uk | 03000 421160
 - **North Kent SEN Team:** sen.north@kent.gov.uk | 03000 410204
 - **South Kent SEN Team:** sen.south@kent.gov.uk | 03000 421160
 - **West Kent SEN Team:** sen.west@kent.gov.uk | 03000 410209

8. References

- School Admissions Code: [KELSI Guidance](#)
- KCC Admissions Criteria: [KCC Website](#)
- KELSI Admissions Guidance: [KELSI Admissions](#)