





TOWNSEND
CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

Admission Arrangements
for 2025/26

Last reviewed	February 2024	Next review	October 2024
Review period	Annually	Reviewed by	LGB
Headteacher Signature: Anthony Flack		Chair of Governors Signature: Helen Quenet	

*The Governing Board is the admitting authority for the school and determined the admission arrangements.
The last consultation on the admission arrangements by the Governing Board was for the 2022/2023
academic year.*

At Townsend, our vision 'Achievement For All, Respect For All' is underpinned by the concept of 'Love your neighbour' from the story of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:25-37. We value everyone, and show love and respect for ourselves and others, setting high standards and supporting each other so that we can all flourish. The concept of 'love your neighbour' is taught in three strands:

1. Love your neighbour – treat others as you would wish to be treated yourself
2. Love yourself – self-care is important, look after yourself physically, mentally and spiritually
3. Love the journey – whether academic or personal, Townsend supports everyone's journeys to enable you to flourish individually and collectively

Townsend Church of England School is a Voluntary Aided School and it is the school Governors who decide who will be admitted to the school in accordance with the admissions arrangements outlined below.

The Governors will admit 150 students to Year 7 each September. The school wishes to protect its Christian character and ethos but also warmly welcomes applications from the wider community.

Townsend Church of England School endeavours to be a distinctively Christian community where the education and the ethos of the school are clearly rooted in, and nourished by, Christian belief and values.

Priority Areas as defined by the County Council for many other schools do not apply to this Voluntary Aided Church School. As Townsend is the only Church of England secondary school in this part of Hertfordshire we welcome applications from a very wide area.

The Local Authority (LA), (Hertfordshire CC) operates an agreed co-ordinated admissions scheme. The LA will coordinate the process on behalf of the school according to the scheme published each year. The governing body, as the admission authority, will allocate the available places in line with this policy. However, offers will be made on behalf of Townsend CE School by the home LA.

The closing date for admission application forms to be received by the home Local Authority is 31st October.

All applications must be made on the home LA common application form. For Hertfordshire residents the form is available at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions

In addition to this parents/carers are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form (SIF) and return it to the school office by the closing date for applications. If a SIF is not completed the Governing Body will apply their admission arrangements using the information submitted on the LA form only.

If the Governing Body receives more applications than there are places available, places will be allocated in the order of priority set out below. Should there be over-subscription within any one priority group within a category, then the deciding factor will be the distance from the school to the home, with those living the closest being given priority. The school uses Hertfordshire County Council's straight line distance measurement system. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of the child's home to the address point of the school. AddressBase premium is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

Tie break

In the event of two children having an equal claim to the last available place then a place will be chosen by random tie break. Every applicant is given a unique random number for each of their school preferences. When a random tie break is needed, this random number is used to allocate the place. The lowest number is given priority. In the case of two applicants in the same block of flats the applicant with the lower door number is allocated the place.

Appeals

At transfer time, parents/carers wishing to appeal, who applied on-line, should log into their online application and click on the link 'register an appeal'. For those who did not apply on-line, please contact the HCC Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request an appeal pack.

For in-year applications the county council will contact you with the outcome of your application and, if unsuccessful, will include registration details for you to login and appeal online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals

Continuing Interest List/Late Applications

In the event of more applications than available places Hertfordshire County Council will maintain a 'continuing interest' list (waiting list) on behalf of the Governors. A child's position on a CI list will be determined by the oversubscription criteria outlined above and a child's place on the list can change as other children join or leave it. The county council will contact parents/carers if a vacancy becomes available and it can be offered to a child. Continuing interest lists will be maintained for every year group until the summer term (date to be specified and confirmed to parents at the time of application). To remain on the CI (waiting) list after this time parents must confirm they are still interested in a place by completing an In Year application form.

In-Year admissions

The school will, if appropriate, admit children who are hard to place in co-operation with the Local Authority Fair Access Protocol. These children will be admitted before any others on the waiting list and may be admitted even if the school is full.

In-Year applications should be made using the Local Authority application form and returned directly to the local authority. The Local Authority, Hertfordshire County Council, co-ordinates the process on behalf of the governing body. The Local Authority will inform parents of the outcome of the application. Information about how to apply and the online application form can be found at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/inyear

Twins and multiple births

Where the first twin or a multiple birth child has been allocated the last available place then the second twin or other multiple birth siblings will also be admitted. This may take us over the Published Admissions Number (PAN).

Education of children outside normal age group

It is the normal practice of the school that children should be educated within their normal age group. However, if a request is made that a child should be educated outside their normal age group the governors will consider the request and make their decision on the basis of the individual circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child. They will consider the parents' views, the child's academic and social development and where relevant their medical history and the views of a medical professional. They will also take into account the views of the head teacher. The governors will communicate their decision. If the governors agree an application must be made for admission into the relevant age group. Parents do not have a right of appeal against a decision not to place their child outside the normal age group.

The exception to this will be summer born (April to August) children who delayed their start entry into Reception and have been educated out of year ever since. The parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday, which means that they would transfer to secondary school a year late.

Oversubscription criteria

If there are more applications than places available, the criteria outlined below will be used to prioritise applications.

Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the governing bodies of all maintained schools to admit a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that names the school. These children will be admitted within the school's PAN but before any child prioritised under the school's oversubscription criteria.

Rule 1: Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, including those who appear (to the Governors) to have been in state care outside of England, and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Previously looked after children are those who were looked after but ceased to be so because of being adopted or becoming subject to a child arrangements order¹ or a special guardianship order². Please see Appendix One of this Policy for additional guidance and information.

Rule 2: Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular **medical or social need** to go to the school. In common with most Admission Authorities, the Governors will give prior attention to children whose parent(s)/carer(s) can prove to the satisfaction of Governors, that they have a particular medical or social reason why they must attend Townsend and this request is supported by a Social Worker, Education Welfare Officer, Doctor or similar professional. Admission under this category will be limited to those who provide proof of their claim and provided that the needs identified can be met by the existing provision/resources of the school, or by additional provision/resources provided by the Local Authority. Only a very small number of children usually qualify under these conditions. Please see Appendix Two of this Policy for additional guidance and information.

Rule 3: Children who have a **sibling** in Years 7 to 12 at the school at the time of application. A sibling is defined as the brother or sister, half-brother or half-sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent/carer or their partner or a child looked after or previously looked after and in every case living permanently in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of admission³. A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite or very short term or bridging foster placement.

Rule 4: The remaining (residual) places will be allocated within two categories: 60% of the places available will be allocated as 'Foundation/Faith Places'; 40% of the places available will be allocated in the 'Community Places' category. In the event of under-subscription in either category, the remaining places will be given to the other category. Should there be over-subscription within any one priority group within a category, those living closest to school – measured by the County Council's computerised mapping system – will be given priority.

¹ Child arrangements order Under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders which settle the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

² Special guardianship order Under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians. Children previously looked after abroad and subsequently adopted will be prioritised under Rule 1 if the child's previously looked after status and adoption is confirmed by Hertfordshire's "Virtual School".

³ If an applicant lives at more than one address, the sibling must also reside at the same address for the majority of the school week. The sibling's address will be verified by the school.

FOUNDATION/FAITH PLACES

(60% of the residual places)

F1. Regular worship in the Church of England

Parents/carers or children who regularly worship at a Church of England Church and whose application is supported by their minister*. Regular worship means attending at least once a month and for at least the past twelve months at the closing date for applications.** Worship as part of school activities would not be considered sufficient.

F2. Regular worship in another recognised Christian Church

Parents/carers or children who regularly worship at another Christian Church and whose application is supported by their minister*. Regular worship means attending at least once a month and for at least the past twelve months at the closing date for applications.**

A recognised Christian Church will be one that applicants can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Governors' Admission Committee is a member of Churches Together in England, the Evangelical Alliance or Affinity.

F3. Church of England Primary School

Children who attend a Church of England Primary School. The child must be on the roll of the Church of England Primary School at the closing date for receipt of applications.

**If there is a vacancy at the Church and no minister is available to support the application, another authorised Church leader will suffice (eg. in the Church of England, a Church Warden).*

***In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church or, in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship, has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these admissions arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or, in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship or alternative premises have been available for public worship.*

COMMUNITY PLACES

(40% of the residual places)

C1. Regular worship in a non-Christian faith community

Children or parents/carers who regularly worship in a non-Christian faith community and whose participation is confirmed by their appropriate faith leader. Regular worship in a non-Christian faith means taking part in faith-sponsored worship at least once a month and for at least the last twelve months at the closing date for applications.** see above

C2. Any other applicants

Distance from school will be measured using the straight-line computerised system described earlier in this document

Home address

The address provided on the application form must be the child's current permanent address at the time of application

- "At the time of application" means the closing date for applications
- "Permanent" means that the child has lived at that address for at least a year

Where a family has not lived at an address for a year at the time of application, they must be able to demonstrate that they own the property or have a tenancy agreement for a minimum of 12 months **and** the child must be resident in the property at the time of application. If, because of the nature of the agreement, it is not possible to provide a 12-month tenancy agreement, alternative proof of address will be requested.

It is for the Governing Body (as the admission authority) to determine the address to be used for admission purposes.

The application can only be processed using one address. If a child lives at more than one address (for example due to a separation) the address used will be the one where the child lives for the majority of the school week. If a child lives at two addresses equally, parents/carers should make a single joint application naming one address.

If the child's living arrangements change after you apply and they now spend the majority of the school week living at a different address, you must provide evidence of the new permanent address.

Addresses will be verified as necessary with Hertfordshire County Council's Shared Anti-Fraud Service.

Applications made as part of the main year 7 admissions round and in-year admission applications are processed by Hertfordshire County Council ("HCC") on behalf of the Governing Body, in accordance with HCC's published coordinated admission schemes.

If a child's permanent residence is disputed, parents/carers should provide court documentation to evidence the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes. If two applications are received, with different addresses, neither will be processed until the address issue is reconciled.

If HCC receives two different applications for the same child from the same address e.g. containing different preferences, parents/carers will be invited to submit a joint application or provide court documentation to evidence the preferences that should be used for the admission process. Until the preference issue is reconciled, neither application will be processed.

For the main year 7 admission round, if the initial differing applications (one or both) were received by HCC "on-time", an amended joint application will also be considered "on-time" if received **before 2nd December 2024** (the late deadline). If the amended joint application is received **after 2nd December 2024**, it will be treated as "late".

Fraudulent Applications

The school, in liaison with Hertfordshire County Council, will do as much as possible to prevent applications being made from fraudulent addresses. Address evidence is frequently requested, monitored and checked and school places will be withdrawn when false information is deliberately provided.

Action will be taken in the following circumstances:

- When a child's application address does not match the address of that child at their current school;
- When a child lives at a different address to the applicant
- When the applicant does not have parental responsibility

When a family move shortly after the closing date of applications when one or more of the following applies:

- The family has moved to a property from which their application was less likely to be successful
- The family has returned to an existing property
- The family lived in rented accommodation for a short period of time (anything less than a year) over the application period
- Council tax information shows a different residence at the time of application
- When a child starts at the allocated school and their address is different from the address used at the time of application

Timescales

Closing date for applications to be submitted to the LA	31 October 2024
Statutory deadline for receipt of paper applications	31 October 2024
Allocation Information dispatched to Parents	3 March 2025
Date by which parents/carers may accept or reject place offered	17 March 2025
Date by which parents/carers return appeal forms	28 March 2025 (4pm)

If you need help to complete the application form, please contact the School Office (01727 853047)

Sixth Form Admission Arrangements

Students of the appropriate age are welcome to apply to join our thriving Post 16 provision. Entry will depend on a match between course requirements and a student's appropriate prior attainment for the course, the wishes of the student and the curriculum available at Townsend.

Once a place has been offered, in order to establish a match between our curriculum offer and the student's desired programme, a discussion will be necessary between the Head of Sixth Form and the student and, if appropriate, with the parent(s)/carer(s).

The school will admit up to 50 external students to its Sixth Form. Information on how to apply is available on our website <https://townsend.herts.sch.uk/how-to-apply/>

Although Townsend offers a broad range of courses, we are also part of the Alban Learning Partner Consortium, and you should note that this involves the shared teaching of some courses and the provision of some subjects at other institutions.

Entry requirements

Minimum entry requirements are as set out in our Townsend Sixth Form Course Booklet available on the website <https://townsend.herts.sch.uk/how-to-apply/>. If you would prefer a hard copy, please contact the school office email Tel: 01727 853047 or Email: admin@townsend.herts.sch.uk.

The entry requirements apply equally to internal students already on roll and external applicants. Unsuccessful applicants will have the right of appeal to an independent panel.

Oversubscription criteria

In the event of oversubscription to the Sixth Form places will be offered by applying the following criteria in the order given:

Rule 1: Children looked after

Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, including those who appear (to the Governors) to have been in state care outside of England, and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Previously looked after children are those who were looked after but ceased to be so because of being adopted or becoming subject to a child arrangements order⁴ or a special guardianship order⁵.

Rule 2: Children whose home address is nearest to the school.

Tie break

Priority will be given to children who live nearest to the school measured via Hertfordshire County Council's 'Find your nearest school' online facility. The measurement is taken from the point of your child's house to a point of distance which has been agreed by the Governors on the school site. Should two applicants have the same home to school distance a random allocation will be made and that process will be independently supervised.

⁴ Child arrangements order Under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders which settle the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

⁵ Special guardianship order Under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians. Children previously looked after abroad and subsequently adopted will be prioritised under Rule 1 if the child's previously looked after status and adoption is confirmed by Hertfordshire's "Virtual School".

APPENDIX 1

Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, including those who appear (to the Governors) to have been in state care outside of England, and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Previously looked after children are those who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangement order⁶ or a special guardianship order⁷.

Places are allocated to children in public care according to Chapter 2, Section 7 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

These children will be prioritised under rule 1.

Highest priority will also be given to children who were previously looked after, including those looked after outside England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangement order or a special guardianship order.

A “child looked after” 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 (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989)

All children adopted from care who are of compulsory school age are eligible for admission under rule 1.

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under rule 1.

Children who were not “looked after” **immediately** before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order, **will not** be prioritised under rule 1. Applications made for these children, with suitable supporting professional evidence, can be considered under rule 2.

The child’s previously looked after status will be decided in accordance with the definition outlined in The Children & Social Work Act 2017:

- i. to have been in state care in a place... because he or she would not otherwise have been cared for adequately, and
- ii. to have ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted.

A child is in “state care” if he or she is in the care of, or accommodated by –

- c) a public authority,
- d) a religious organisation, or
- e) any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

⁶ Child arrangements order Under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders which settle the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

⁷ Special guardianship order Under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian or guardians. Children previously looked after abroad and subsequently adopted will be prioritised under Rule 1 if the child’s previously looked after status and adoption is confirmed by Hertfordshire’s “Virtual School”.

APPENDIX 2

Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school.

Applications under this category will only be considered at the time of the initial application unless there has been a significant and exceptional change of circumstances within the family since the initial application was submitted.

All schools in Hertfordshire have experience in dealing with children with diverse social and medical needs. However, in a few very exceptional cases, there are reasons why a child has to go to one specific school.

Few applications under this category are agreed.

All applications are considered individually but a successful application should include the following:

- a) Specific recent professional evidence that justifies why only this school can meet a child's individual needs, and/or
- b) Professional evidence that outlines exceptional family circumstances making clear why only the school can meet the child's needs.
- c) If the school is not the nearest school to the child's home address clear reasons why the nearest school is not appropriate.
- d) For medical cases – a clear explanation of why the child's severity of illness or disability makes attendance at only a specific school essential.

Evidence should make clear why only one school is appropriate. An application under this category will generally not be upheld in cases where more than one school could meet the child's need.

In exceptional cases relating to a disability, where more than one school in the county can meet the child's specific needs, a clear and compelling case can be made for the "nearest" school with the relevant facilities, environment, or location. You must clearly explain why attendance at the "nearest" school with these facilities is essential.

Applications under this category can only be considered when supported by a recent letter from a professional involved with the child or family, for example a doctor, psychologist, or police officer. The supporting evidence needs to demonstrate why only one named school can meet the social/medical needs of the child.

Applications for children who were not "looked after" immediately before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangements order or special guardianship order may be made under this rule.