





# TOWNSEND

CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

## Admission Arrangements for 2026/27

<b>Last reviewed</b>	<b>February 2025</b>	<b>Next review</b>	<b>January 2026</b>
<b>Review period</b>	<b>Annually</b>	<b>Reviewed by</b>	<b>FGB</b>
<b>Headteacher Signature:</b> <b>Anthony Flack</b>		<b>Chair of Governors Signature:</b> <b>Helen Quenet</b>	

*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 Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) 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), HCC 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](http://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.

## **Multiple births**

The Governing Body, as the admission authority, will admit over the school's published admission number (PAN) when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated a place and the other twin/multiple birth child has applied but not been allocated. To maximise the chances of your children being allocated places, it is recommended that you list the same schools in the same order across all applications (the order of preference will not be shared with the school).

## **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](http://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. Parents of children entitled to be considered for a place under the Fair Access Protocol may also make an in-year application to the school.

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](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/inyear)

## **Children Out of Year Group**

Children are normally educated within their correct chronological year group with the curriculum differentiated as necessary to meet the needs of individual children. This is in line with DfE guidance which states that "in general, children should be educated in their normal age group".

If parents/ carers believe their child(ren) should be educated in a different year group they should, at the time of application make a request to the Governors (by letter c/o the school office) for their child to be admitted out of year group. The request should enclose supporting evidence including (where relevant and available) evidence from professionals working with the child and family stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age cohort.

Requests from summer born children who initially started Reception a year later than normal and who remain educated out of year group, will automatically be accepted and processed as "out of year group" when the child moves to the school for year 7.

For all other out of year group applications, the Governing Body, as the relevant admission authority, through a panel process, will decide whether the application will be accepted on the basis of the information submitted. The panel will make a decision based upon the best interests of the child and the circumstances of each case including the view of parents, the view of the headteacher; information about the child's social, academic and emotional development; where relevant, the child's medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether the child has been previously educated out of year group; and whether the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if not for being born prematurely. There is no guarantee that an application will be accepted on this basis. If the application is not accepted, this does not constitute a refusal of a place and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal.

Similarly, there is no right of appeal for a place in a specific year group at a school. The internal management and organisation of a school, including the placement of pupils in classes, is a matter for the Headteacher and senior leadership.

## **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 became subject to a child arrangements order<sup>1</sup> or a special guardianship order<sup>2</sup>.

Please see Appendix 1 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 2 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 sister, brother or 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<sup>3</sup> in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of admission.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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 placement or very short term or bridging foster placement. 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.

**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.

#### **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 transfer application 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 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2025** ("the late deadline"). If the amended joint application is received **after 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2025**, 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, including referring cases to the Shared Anti-Fraud service for further investigation as necessary.

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:
  - o The family has moved to a property from which their application was less likely to be successful
  - o The family has returned to an existing property
  - o The family lived in rented accommodation for a short period of time (anything less than a year) over the application period
  - o Official/public records show an alternative address at the time of the application
- When a child starts at the allocated school and their address is different from the address used at the time of application

Parents/carers will need to show that they have relinquished residency ties with their previous property and they, and their child(ren), are permanently residing at the address given on the application form.

### **Address Visits**

Where suspicions lie as to the validity of an address, the Admissions & Transport Team may make unannounced visits to the applicant's claimed address or any other address suspected to be the normal permanent residence of the child's primary carer or the address where the child resides for the majority of the week. The aim of these visits is to verify that the address information provided on the application form is accurate. All visits will be made by two members of the Admissions & Transport Team.

If an address appears to be unoccupied at the time of a visit, a letter will be left confirming that an attempted visit took place. This letter will ask the occupant to contact the Admissions & Transport Team within 24 hours to confirm receipt of the letter and details of the occupant. It is reasonable to expect that an applicant living at the address stated on the application form can respond within 24 hours. If contact takes longer than 24 hours, the applicant will be asked to explain why and provide evidence why they did not respond within the specified time.

### **Applications from children\* from overseas**

All children of compulsory school age (5 to 16 years) in England have a right of access to education. However, where a child is in England for a short period only, for example less than half a term, it may be reasonable to refuse admission to a school.

An application for a school place will only be accepted for children currently overseas if, for In Year applications, proof is provided that the child will be resident in Hertfordshire within two weeks. In Year allocations are made on the assumption that the child will accept the school place and be on roll within that timescale.

For the Secondary transfer processes, applications will not normally be accepted from, nor places allocated to, an overseas address. The exception to this (for both In Year and transfer processes) is for children of UK service personnel and crown servants (and from military families who are residents of countries with a Memorandum of Understanding with the UK). In these cases, the Governing Body will allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a HCC Unit postal address or quartering area address, for consideration of the application against oversubscription criteria.

Applications will also be considered, and places offered in advance for these families, if the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date but does not provide a quartering or unit address because the family will be residing in private accommodation. In these cases, if the family does not already have a permanent private address in Hertfordshire, the military base or alternative "work" address in Hertfordshire will be used for allocation purposes. If

the family already has an established alternative private address, that address will be used for admission purposes as long as the parents provide evidence of the address and that the child will be living there.

The Governing Body will also consider accepting applications from children\* whose family can evidence intent to return to and/or permanently reside in Hertfordshire prior to the start of the new academic year. These applications, if accepted, will be processed from the overseas address until sufficient evidence is received to show the child is permanently resident in Hertfordshire. Evidence must be submitted at the time of application.

Evidence submitted after the date for late applications (2 December 2025) cannot be considered before National Allocation Day. Decisions on these applications will be made by an officer panel and communicated to parents within 6 weeks of receipt.

If an applicant owns a property in Hertfordshire but is not living in it, perhaps because they are working abroad at the time of application, the Hertfordshire address will **not** be accepted for the purposes of admission until the child is resident at that address.

Children from overseas, other than those mentioned above, do not generally have automatic right of entry to the UK. An application for a school place will not therefore be accepted until they are permanently resident in Hertfordshire. Proof of Hertfordshire address will be required, for example a council tax bill or 12-month rental agreement.

*\*Children who hold full British Citizen passports (not British Dependent Territories or British Overseas passports) or have a UK passport describing them as a British citizen or British subject with the right of abode and normally have unrestricted entry to the UK. Freedom of movement into the UK for European Economic Area and Swiss citizens ended at the end of 2020. EEA (Irish citizens aside) and Swiss national children entering the UK after the end of 2020 are now treated the same as other foreign nationals. This means they will no longer have the right to enter the country to access a state-funded school unless they fall within certain immigration categories. Find out more about [visas and immigration](#) and the [EU Settlement Scheme](#) for European Economic Area and Swiss citizens.*

## **Timescales**

Closing date for applications to be submitted to the LA	<b>31 October 2025</b>
Statutory deadline for receipt of paper applications	<b>31 October 2025</b>
Allocation Information dispatched to Parents	<b>02 March 2026</b>
Date by which parents/carers may accept or reject place offered	<b>09 March 2026</b>
Date by which parents/carers return appeal forms	<b>March 2026 (date TBC)</b>

**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. Access to specific courses 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](mailto: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 order<sup>4</sup> or a special guardianship order<sup>5</sup>.

**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. Please see the definition of home address on page 6.

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<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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**

**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 they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangement order<sup>6</sup> or a special guardianship order<sup>7</sup>.**

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.

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.

Children previously looked after outside England 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”.

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.

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<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

## **APPENDIX 2 (not relevant to Sixth Form applications)**

### **Rule 2: Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school.**

Rule 2 applications 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 Rule 2 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 requested 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. A Rule 2 application 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 Rule 2 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.