

# FRIARS PRIMARY (FOUNDATION) SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 2024 TO JULY 2025

## ADMISSIONS: POLICY AND CRITERIA

### PRINCIPLES

- 1 Governors recognise and support the principle of parental choice of school. Parents and carers considering applying for places for their children are welcome to view the school and staff are always willing to advise parents and carers on application procedures.
- 2 Governors have set the school's admissions criteria in the belief that they are transparent, unambiguous, fair and appropriate and that they do not discriminate either directly or indirectly on the basis of any factors other than those made explicit in the criteria.
- 3 The admissions criteria will be applied objectively and without regard for any additional factors.
- 4 The admissions criteria apply equally to the 'normal admissions round', that is the annual admission of new pupils to reception class, and to casual in-year vacancies.
- 5 The school recognises its duty to provide fair access to pupils applying outside the normal round and will be adopting an in-year fair access protocol, which line with Southwark Local Authority.
- 6 The admissions criteria herein apply both to the nursery and to the primary school (Reception to Year 6) but see 7 below.
- 7 Children will be admitted only into the appropriate class for their chronological age. This does not affect the possibility of there being informal arrangements for pupils to spend time in other classes at the discretion of the head teacher if (s)he judges it to be appropriate for their needs and providing it does not violate the legal restriction on infant class sizes.

- 8 Whilst a child is entitled to a full time place in the September following their fourth birthday, parents can defer the date their child is admitted until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age (5) and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made. Where the parents wish, children may attend part time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. Additionally, families of summer born children may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group - to reception rather than Year 1. For further information please see website [www.southwark.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/schooladmissions).
- 9 Throughout the admissions criteria and procedures, as throughout all the school's operations, legally adoptive families have the same status as biologically related ones.
- 10 The guiding principle applied to less formal care arrangements is that children will be considered as resident with whom and where they spend the majority of the school week, that is the nights from Sunday to Thursday inclusive during school terms. Documentary evidence of such arrangements will be required.
- 11 All offers of school places are conditional upon receipt of the documentary evidence before the place is taken up. Documents requested are: short birth certificate or passport for child identification and current council tax bill, tenancy agreement, house deeds or letter from housing association on headed paper for proof of address. These documents are only requested at the time of registration. Governors adopt this as a principle in the belief that it is necessary in order to safeguard the places of those children who are entitled to be admitted under the school's admissions criteria and by doing so, to eradicate discrimination. All applicants are required to produce documentary evidence and hence no applicant should interpret the request to do so as evidence of mistrust.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1 The school's governing body sets its admissions criteria.
- 2 The admissions committee of the governing body is responsible for ensuring that the admissions policy and criteria are applied accurately and consistently to all admissions.

- 3 The admissions committee decides the annual intake into reception class by the application of the admissions criteria set by the governing body for the relevant year.
- 4 Applications for places outside the normal round of admissions (in year admissions) will be allocated in accordance with the school's published admission criteria and processed as per Southwark's agreed protocol.
- 5 The head teacher may allocate in-year vacancies and places which are exceptions to class size constraints except as specified in 5 and 6 below, subject to the following.
  - (S)he must do so strictly in accordance with the admissions criteria contained herein, which have been set by the governing body.
  - (S)he must report every case to the next meeting of the admissions committee for ratification.

It remains the responsibility of the admissions committee to satisfy itself that all places are allocated correctly in accordance with this policy and the criteria set out below.

- 6 All applications considered under criterion 3, social and medical needs, must be referred to the admissions committee. Please note social and medical needs is completely different to applicants who have a special educational need with a statement/Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school.
- 7 All cases involving a tiebreaker must be dealt with by the admissions committee.

### ADMISSIONS AND CLASS SIZES

The admissions number for each class and year group is given below. Classes will normally be maintained at the admissions number given sufficient applicants to do so, that is classes of the following sizes are defined as 'full'. The school will not admit more pupils than the admission number in any class or year group except as specified in 'Exceptions to Class Size Constraints' below.

Infants	Reception	30
	Year 1	30

	Year 2	30
Juniors	Year 3	30
	Year 4	30
	Year 5	30
	Year 6	30

### EXCEPTIONS TO CLASS SIZE CONSTRAINTS

- 1 Infant classes, that is Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, are constrained by law not to exceed 30 unless one or more of the following apply.
  - Looked after children admitted outside the normal admissions round;
  - Previously looked after children but ceased to be so because they were adopted, subject to a special guardianship order or a residence order and admitted outside the normal admission round;
  - Children educated in a unit in the school but who spend the minority of time in the infant class;
  - Children who are initially refused because of a failure to implement school admission arrangements properly;
  - A child has moved into the area outside the normal admissions round and there is no other suitable school within a reasonable distance of home. The school will consult the local authority as to the availability of alternative school places;
  - A child gains, outside the normal admissions round, an EHCP naming the school;
  - Children who are twins/multiple birth siblings admitted in a normal admission round;
  - Children whose parent/s is in the armed forces and admitted outside the normal admission round.
  
- 2 All other classes will be kept at the numbers given above except in the following circumstances and cases.
  - There are insufficient applicants to reach that number.

- The school is legally obliged to take an additional pupil despite the class being full, for example if the school is named on an applicant's statement of special educational need or if the local authority properly exercises its powers to direct the school to admit a pupil.
- The school should admit an additional pupil under the terms of its in-year fair access protocol.

### ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

The school will admit any child of nursery or primary school age unless

- the appropriate year group for the child is already full (but see 'Exceptions to Class Size Constraints' above), or
- the admission would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources, always excepting cases in which it would be unlawful to make such a decision.

### OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

In the event of the school having more applicants than places, either in the normal admissions round or for in-year vacancies, places will be allocated in the following priority order, with 1 as highest priority. In addition, children with statements of special educational need naming this school will be admitted and will be counted in class numbers.

- 1 Children in public care (looked after children) and children who were looked after but ceased to be because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or a special guardianship order).**

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 definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school. This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders). Child arrangement orders are defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence orders in

force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians). This includes internationally adopted and previously looked after children at the time of making the application to the school.

## **2 Siblings of children attending the school at the time of admission**

- These must be brothers and sisters who will still be attending the school at the time of admission of the child for whom application is being made. If the child attending the school at the time of the allocation of the place to his or her sibling leaves the school before that place is taken up, the allocation is invalidated and the place will be reallocated to another child.
- For the purpose of this criterion, 'siblings' includes all children, for example half-siblings and step-siblings, who live together in the same home as a family for all or the majority of the school week, that is who sleep in that home most nights from Sunday to Thursday inclusive.

## **3 Children with social/medical needs for whom this is the nearest school to their home address or whose needs this school is particularly able to meet.** Please note that having social/medical needs is completely different to applicants who have a special educational need with a statement/Education, Health and Care Plan.

- These needs may be
  - ❖ medical needs, applying to the child or the child's primary carer,
  - ❖ Exceptionally pressing family or social needs.
- In all cases, the need is not of itself sufficient: it must also be the case
  - ❖ either that this school is the nearest school to the applicant's home address, measured as the crow flies, or
  - ❖ that this school is better able to meet the need than any schools nearer to the applicant's home address.

- Parents or carers who want their children to be considered under this criterion must write to the school setting out clearly
  - ❖ that they are asking to be considered under this criterion,
  - ❖ what the social/medical need is,
  - ❖ whether or not the school is the nearest primary school to their home address and
  - ❖ if not, how this school is better able to meet their needs than a school closer to their home address and must include supporting evidence as described in the following bullet point
- All applications under this criterion must be supported in writing by appropriate involved specialists. Letters from general practitioners or health visitors, for example, will not be accepted as evidence of social/medical needs.
- The admissions committee will consider all applications made under this criterion to establish whether or not it accepts the validity of the special need for a place at this school. Parents/carers in each case will be informed whether or not admission has been considered under this criterion.

#### **4 Other applicants: children who live nearest to the school as the crow flies**

- The relevant distance is the distance in a straight line between
  - ❖ The school gate to the entrance of the building in which the child lives.
  - ❖ Measurements will be deemed to be as provided by an independent company's computerised mapping system.
  - ❖ The relevant address is the child's home address, which is the place the child is normally resident.
  - ❖ In the case of children whose care is divided between two or more parents or carers living in different homes, the relevant address will be the one at which the child spends the majority of school nights (that is Sundays to Thursdays inclusive during school terms).

- ❖ In the case of children whose care arrangements are complex or frequently change, the school will accept any address upheld as appropriate by any relevant involved statutory agency, for example social services.
- ❖ If a child's home address not the same as the address of at least one parent named on the child's birth certificate or adoption papers, further corroboration of the home address by an involved statutory authority will be required (but see below).
- ❖ After the offer of a school place has been made, the school will request further documentary evidence of proof of address.
- ❖ For proof of address, the school will normally require a Council Tax bill or current tenancy agreement or rent book for the address in the name of one of the parents or carers. If parents or carers are unable to provide one of these, the parents/carers case will be referred to the admissions committee of the governing body for consideration. The admissions committee will only accept alternative proofs of address if they are reasonably compelling, for example if they appear on a range of official documents and, for example, the landlord and Council Tax departments are aware of the residency of the parent or carer.
- ❖ Children whose statement of special education needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan names the school must be admitted.

### TIEBREAKER

- 1 If there is a tie of one or more children for a place allocated under one of 1 to 3 above (normally occurring only for in-year vacancies), it will be resolved by the application of criterion 4 to the competing applicants. If there remains a tie, the tiebreak given at 2 should be used.
- 2 If in any circumstances, after the application of all criteria, and, if applicable, the tie-breaker given at 1 above, a tie between two or more children has to be resolved; the place will be allocated randomly between those children by the drawing of names unseen from a hat.

The draw will be made by the chair of the admissions committee at a meeting of that committee. The admissions committee is responsible for ensuring that the draw is entirely fair and made in such a way as to ensure all applicants have an equal chance of being chosen. Governors understand that it is sometimes hard for parents/carers to accept an arbitrary choice but point out that it is fairer and no more arbitrary than to decide the allocation by reference to an irrelevant criterion. Governors believe that all relevant criteria are already included at 1 to 4 above.

## INFORMATION AND RIGHT OF APPEAL

- 1 All parents/carers who have applied for places in the normal admissions round in either nursery or reception will be informed of the outcome of their application.
- 2 All parents/carers whose children are not allocated places in any year of the primary school, that is Reception to Year 6 inclusive, whether during the normal admissions round or at another time, have the right to appeal and will be informed of this right by the school. Any parent or carer wishing to appeal should complete the school's appeal form and procedure which can be found on our website [www.friarsprimaryschool.com](http://www.friarsprimaryschool.com) or alternatively contact the school.
- 3 You may find the new Appeals Code here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code> The new Appeals Code makes changes to allow appeal hearings to be held in-person or remotely by video conference, and in certain limited circumstances, by telephone. The Appeals Code also allows for hybrid appeals.  
Updated guidance for admission authorities, clerks and appeal panels, and parents and guardians can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/admission-appeals-for-school-places> The updated guidance reflects the changes made to the Appeals Code regarding remote or hybrid appeals, providing guidance on how such appeals may be set up.
- 4 There is no right of appeal against the school's decision on nursery places.
- 5 Parents/carers with children on the waiting list for casual places will only be contacted if the school has a place available (or for periodic updating of the waiting list).

## WAITING LIST

- 1 A waiting list for starter reception places will be maintained by the Local Authority until August 31<sup>st</sup> and will then be handed back to the school.
- 2 Please note that looked after children, previously looked after children and those allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those on a waiting list.
- 3 All children who named the school as a higher preference on their primary application for a Reception place will automatically be placed on the school's waiting list by the local authority.
- 4 The school maintains a waiting list for a year.
- 5 Applicants on waiting lists will be admitted strictly in accordance with the school's admissions criteria. Length of time on the list will not confer any advantage.