

TEWIN COWPER CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL VOLUNTARY AIDED



Determined Admissions Policy 2025/26

Tewin Cowper Church of England Primary School is a Voluntary Aided Church of England School within the Diocese of St Albans. The Governing Body of the school is the admission authority. The Governing Body will admit up to the admission number of 25 children into the reception year. The Governing Body is required to abide by the maximum limits for infant classes (5, 6- and 7-year olds), i.e. 30 pupils per class.

The Local Authority or LA, (Hertfordshire CC) operates an agreed co-ordinated admissions scheme in line with government legislation. 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 by the home LA.

The closing date for admission application forms to be received by the home Local Authority is 15th January 2025. Information on completing the 'on line' application and notification dates of admission decisions are published in the LA admissions literature which is also available from their website: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions.

All applications **must** be made on the **home** LA common application form. Parents/carers applying under category 4 are requested to complete our supplementary information form (SIF) and return it to the school office by the date given above. If a SIF is not completed the Governing Body will apply their admission arrangements using the information submitted on the LA form only, which may result in your application being given a lower priority.

The school provides for the admission of all successful applicants who have reached their 4th birthday by the beginning of September 2025. However, parents offered a place may defer the date of their child's admission until later in the year, or until the child reaches compulsory school age. Summer born children (1 April – 31 August) may only have admission deferred until the start of the summer term. If parents do not take up the offered place before the start of the summer term of the school year of entry, then they would have to re-apply for a place in Year 1. Parents may request that children attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point they reach statutory school age.

If parents wish such a child to be educated "out-of-year group" i.e. in the Reception Year rather than Y1 they may request this and should discuss it with the school as soon as possible. Such applications will be considered by the Governing Body on a case by case basis. Each case will be judged on its individual merits and must be made in the best interests of the child, but to admit out of year group would require exceptional and extenuating circumstances and professional evidence (where available) explaining why the child's needs cannot be met in the chronological year group. All such parents should apply for their child's normal age group at the usual time and may submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time. The Governing Body will respond to this request prior to the offer of a place being made. If the request is agreed to, the application can be withdrawn for that year before the place is offered.

If the request is refused, parents may decide whether or not to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group or refuse it and make an in-year application for admission into Y1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday.

Where a parent's request has been agreed, they must make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year.

Parents do not have the right of appeal against a decision not to place the child in a year group outside their normal age group.

Please note that the information in this policy is correct for the year shown. Policies for future years may well be different.

Children with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP)

Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the Governing Body 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.

If there are more applicants for admission than there are places available at the school, the Governing Body will allocate the places in the following order of priority (see Definitions and Explanatory Notes on page 3):

1. Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangement order or a special guardianship order), including children who appear to the Governing Body to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
2. Children with a sibling at the school at the time of admission.
3. Children living within the Civil Parish of Tewin (as defined by the home address) <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/election-maps/gb/> put in postcode AL6 0JU for the school
4. Children of parents who regularly attend at St Peter's Church, Tewin.
5. Children who live closest to the school as measured by a straight line.

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 place to the applicant;
- When the applicant does not have parental responsibility;
- When a family moves shortly after the closing date of applications when one or more of the following apply:
 - 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.

In Year Admissions

Parents can make an online in-year application via the Hertfordshire County Council website at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions or contact the Customer Service Centre on 03001234043 for a paper application form. Parents should return the application form direct to the County Council. Admission will depend on vacancies at the time in the relevant age group. Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example; if the child has experienced problems such as ill health. Such applications will be considered by the Governing Body on a case by case basis. Each case will be judged on its individual merits to assess whether it is in the best interests of the child, but to admit out of year group would require exceptional and extenuating circumstances and professional evidence explaining why the child's needs cannot be met in the chronological year group. For details of appeals see page 3.

The Governing Body will admit children under the **Fair Access Protocol** before those on continuing interest, and over the Published Admission Number (PAN) if required. Please see the Hertfordshire protocol on the following link. www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/inyear

Continued Interest

After places have been offered, the school's continuing interest (waiting) list will be maintained by Hertfordshire County Council. A child's position on the CI list will be determined by the admission criteria outlined above and a child's place on the list can change as other children join or leave it. The county council, on behalf of the school's Governing Body, 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 allocation). 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.

Appeals

Reception appeals

Parents wishing to appeal who applied through Hertfordshire's online system should log in to their online application and click on the link "register an appeal". Out of county residents and paper applicants should call the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request their registration details and log into www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals and click on the link "log into the appeals system".

In-Year Admission Appeals

The County Council will write to you with the outcome of your application and if you have been unsuccessful, they will include registration details to enable you to login and appeal online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals

Definitions and Explanatory Notes

The following definitions apply to terms used in the admissions criteria:

Children in public care (children looked after)

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 looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangement order¹ or a special guardianship order², including children who appear to the Governing Body to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care as a result of being adopted.³

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.

Definition of Sibling

A sibling is defined as: Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case, the child should be living in the same family unit at the same address. A sibling must be on the roll of the named school at the time the younger child starts. If a place is obtained for an older child using fraudulent information, there will be no sibling connection available to subsequent children from that family.

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.

³ state care

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 or religious organisation or other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

Regular attendance at St Peter's Church

This is defined as at least once a month for six consecutive months prior to the date of application. Parents applying under this category must produce a letter of verification from the Priest in Charge. If, during the six-month period specified for attendance at worship, the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the attendance requirements of oversubscription category 4 will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

Multiple births

The school will admit over the published admission number, as a permitted exception, when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated the last place in the relevant year group. Where a single twin/multiple birth child has an EHCP naming the school, the other twin/multiple birth children will be considered as siblings for the purposes of category 2.

Home address

The address provided 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 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. and verified as necessary with the HCC Shared Anti-Fraud Service.

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 at 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 a child's 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 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.

Applications made as part of the main Reception 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 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 Reception 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 3rd February 2025 (the late deadline). If the amended joint application is received after 3rd February 2025, it will be treated as 'late'.

Home to School Distance Measurement for Purposes of Admissions

A 'straight line' distance measurement is used in all home to school distance measurements for community and VC schools in Hertfordshire. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

Tie Break

When there is a need for a tie break where two different addresses are the same distance from a school, in the case of a block of flats for example, the lower door number will be deemed nearest as logically this will be on the ground floor and therefore closer. If there are two identical addresses of separate applicants, the tie break will be random. Every child entered onto the HCC admissions database has an individual random number assigned, between 1 and 1 million, against each preference school. When there is a need for a final tie break the random number is used to allocate the place, with the lowest number given priority.