



ADMISSIONS POLICY

2025 - 2026

The Downs Primary School & Nursery
Part of the Passmores Co-operative Learning Community

The Downs Primary School & Nursery

Admissions Policy 2025 - 2026

The Trustees of the Passmores Co-operative Learning Community (PCLC) are the admissions authority for all PCLC schools.

The procedure for children starting at The Downs Primary School & Nursery is explained in the booklet **‘Primary Education in Essex’** which is available through Essex County Council to all parents and carers of children resident in Essex who are due to start school in the next academic year.

1 Foundation Stage

At The Downs Primary School & Nursery all children who will have their 5th birthday between September 1st and August 31st (i.e. during the next academic year) are expected to start school in the Autumn Term (in September) on a phased introduction.

All applications must be made in accordance with the co-ordinated scheme operated by the Local Authority (LA). For children resident in Essex this is detailed in the Primary Education in Essex booklet.

Our published admission number is 60.

The admissions arrangements are as follows:-

- A. Parents must complete an Application Form, either on paper or online, and send it to Planning and Admissions at Essex County Council by the published closing date. The Trust will rank all applications in accordance with the admission criteria in section C below, and inform Planning and Admissions of the rankings. Planning and Admissions will allocate places and parents will be offered a place on the published offer date.
- B. All applications must be made by the published closing date detailed in the Primary Education in Essex booklet which is available from Essex County Council. Late applications for children resident in Essex will be dealt with as detailed in this booklet. Children resident outside of Essex should refer to the process for handling late applications published by their home LA.
- C. At The Downs Primary School & Nursery we can admit 60 children in each academic year. If more than 60 applications are received, the Trust will rank places and Planning and Admissions will allocate places using the following criteria in the order given:
 - 1. Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children
 - 2. Children with a sibling attending the school at the time of application;
 - 3. Children who attend the nursery at The Downs Primary School and Nursery;
 - 4. Children of a permanent member of staff who has been employed to work at The Downs Primary School for two years or more at the time of application
 - 5. Children living in the priority admission area;
 - 6. Remaining applications.

Looked After Children

A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order will be given first priority in oversubscription criteria ahead of all other applicants in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021. This also includes those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. 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 (as defined in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

Exceptional medical circumstances, supported by medical evidence specifying why the child should attend this school rather than any other, may override the above criteria.

There is no guarantee of a place for children living in the school's priority admissions area which is as follows (see Appendix 1):

Broadfields, Harlow, Essex
1 – 102 The Dashes, Harlow, Essex
The Downs, Harlow, Essex
The Hides, Harlow, Essex
Home Close, Harlow, Essex
Hughes Tower, Harlow, Essex
Greenhills, Harlow, Essex
Dads Wood, Harlow, Essex
College Place, Harlow, Essex
All town centre addresses (The High, Harlow, Essex)

In the event of oversubscription within any of the above criteria, priority will be determined by straight line distance from home to school; those living closest are given highest priority. In the unlikely event two applicants with identical distance are competing for a single space lots will be drawn. All distances are calculated by the Local Authority and the school using a Geographical Information System and parents are able to check our priority admission area by using the Catchment Area Finder on the Essex Admission website.

A waiting list will be held until the end of the Autumn Term.

During the Summer Term letters are sent to all parents who have been offered a place, inviting them to take advantage of the offer of a place and explaining our induction arrangements which will include a meeting for parents.

Sibling definition

A relevant sibling is a child who has a brother, sister, adopted brother or sister or stepbrother or stepsister living in the same family unit, in the same family household and address, who attends the preferred school in any year group excluding the final year. Biological siblings who attend the preferred school in any year group excluding the final year will also be treated as siblings, irrespective of place of residence. Children residing in the same household as part of an extended family, such as cousins, will not be treated as siblings.

Timing of Admissions

As required by law, we provide for the full time admission of all children offered a place in the reception year group from the September following their fourth birthday.

Compulsory school age is reached at the start of the term following the child's fifth birthday and the law does not require a child to start school before this point. Therefore parents can choose that the date their child is admitted to school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in the school year. Parents can also choose that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age – **At The Downs we provide a mornings only part-time provision.**

Therefore:

- Children turning five during the Autumn term may defer or attend part-time (mornings only) until the beginning of the Spring Term
- Children turning five during the Spring term may defer or attend part-time (mornings only) until the beginning of the Summer Term.
- Children turning five during the Summer term may defer or attend part-time (mornings only) until the beginning of the Summer term during which they will become compulsory school age. Parents are not able to defer beyond the academic year for which the original application was accepted.

It is expected that the children of parents who have chosen to defer or attend part-time will begin full time school at the beginning of a term.

Where entry is deferred we will hold the place for that child and not offer it to another child.

For details regarding delayed admission to reception for summer born children to a year group different from that determined by their date of birth, please refer to appendix 2.

2 Admissions other than new intake

2.1 Mid-year applications

If your child is already at primary school and you wish to transfer them to The Downs Primary School & Nursery, you should complete the [Mid-Year Primary School Application Form](#).

Parents requesting admission to The Downs Primary School & Nursery are encouraged to visit the school and meet the Headteacher.

Once you have completed the form and sent it to Essex County Council Planning and Admissions they will apply to all the schools you have listed.

If there are less than 60 children in the year group for which an application is being made, and The Downs Primary School & Nursery has no other children on their waiting list, the school will confirm with Planning and Admissions that a place can be offered.

If there is a space available, Planning and Admissions will offer you a place on behalf of the school by sending you **an offer letter**.

Once an offer letter has been issued, contact with the parents will be made, further information will be collected by the school and induction arrangements will be clarified.

For mid-year applications a sibling is a child who has a brother, sister, adopted brother or sister or stepbrother or stepsister living in the same family unit in the same family household and address as a child who attends or has been offered a place at the preferred school or partner school at the time of application and determination and with a reasonable expectation that the sibling will be attending at the time of admission

2.2 Admission of pupils with Special Educational Needs

Having received an offer of a place, the family will be expected to meet with the Headteacher to agree an appropriate start date. This will depend on the individual circumstances of the child and whether there is a need to organise additional adult support for the child prior to starting.

2.3 Admissions out of year group

For information on requests for pupils' admission into a year group different from that determined by date of birth, please refer to Appendix 2.

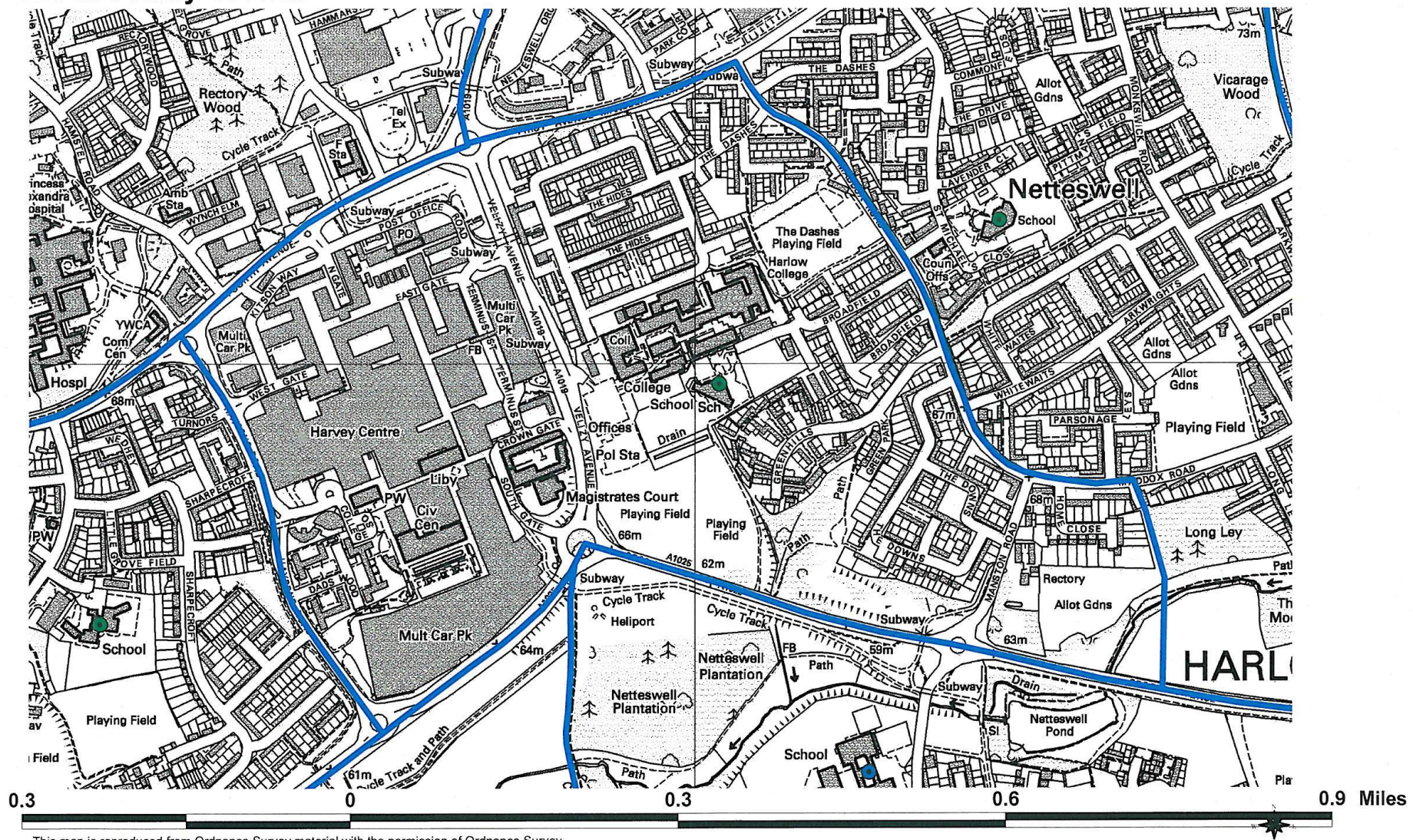
3 Appeals

New intake

If a child has not been offered a place at their preferred school their parents have the right to appeal via an Independent Appeals process. Detailed information about how to appeal can be found on the Essex County Council website.

This policy was approved by the Trust Board in consultation with the Local Governing Body October 2023 and will be reviewed annually.

Appendix 1 The Downs Primary School and Nursery Priority Area
Essex County Council



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PCLC Admissions Policy - Appendix 2

This appendix sets out the policy for responding to parental requests for children and young people's admission to PCLC schools, into a year group different from that determined by their date of birth. This includes delayed admission to reception for summer born children

The process is as follows:

1. On receipt of such a request, by telephone or in writing, the admissions team will confirm to the parent(s)/carer(s) that their request is to a year group different to that determined by a child's date of birth and advise them to discuss this with the principal or headteacher(s) of the schools (up to a maximum of 3 schools) they are interested in applying to in the first instance.
2. Admissions will also contact the principal/headteacher and advise/remind them of the procedure for dealing with 'out of year' group admission requests.
3. If, after discussion with the principal/headteacher, the parents/carers still wish to pursue an 'out of year' admission, they will be asked to complete and submit an application form together with supporting evidence.
4. The application form will ask for basic information about the child as well as:
 - The nature of the request
 - Clear reasons for the request
 - The child's educational history
 - Indication of the child/young person's wishes (opportunity for them to record their view directly where practical/age appropriate)
7. In addition they will be asked to provide specific information/documentation which may include:
 - School or other educational reports (from the previous school or Early Years Setting where this is available)
 - Existing professional reports and assessments e.g. educational psychology
 - reports from LA
 - Health information
 - Exam courses being followed
8. Parents/carers will be informed of the date that the Trustees of the PCLC will meet within 15 school days of receipt of their written request (application form and supporting evidence).
7. Parents/carers will be informed of the decision of the Trustees in writing within 5 working days of the meeting.
8. In the meantime, if the child is already attending a school, they should continue to attend the current school.

The decision making process

When requests for admission to a year group different to that determined by a child's date of birth are received, a Trustees' meeting will be convened to consider the written application and supporting information/evidence provided by the parent(s). A member of the Admissions Team will minute the meeting and inform the parent/carers of the outcome.

On occasion there may be insufficient evidence for the Trustees to reach a decision. In this instance the Trustees may request additional information or a meeting with the parent(s)/carer(s) which may include the child or young person.

Criteria for agreement to 'out of year' admissions

The Trustees will consider evidence relating to all aspects of the child's development and needs in coming to a decision.

For requests for change of year group where a child is already in school, issues to be considered will include:

- Whether there is clear evidence that the child has previously been educated in a year group above or below that determined by their date of birth and that this has had positive benefits.
- Whether there is clear, documented evidence that to place the child in his/her normal age group would be detrimental to his/her educational progress or likely exam performance.
- Whether there is clear evidence that it is in the interests of the child's social and emotional development to be educated in a year group above or below that determined by their date of birth.

For requests for delayed admission for summer born children the Trustees will consider the following:

- the needs of the child and the possible impact on them of entering year 1 without having first attended the reception class;
- in the case of children born prematurely, the fact that they may have naturally fallen into the lower age group if they had been born on their expected date of birth;
- whether delayed social, emotional or physical development is adversely affecting their readiness for school;
- relevant research into the outcomes of summer born and premature children.

Right of appeal following the decision

There is no right of appeal if a parent has been offered a place in the school but it is not in the year group they would like. However, parents/carers can make a complaint through the PCLC's complaints procedure. If a parent/carers is unhappy with the way the PCLC has handled their complaint, the parent/carers may then refer their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman <http://www.lgo.org.uk>

Mid-Year Application for a Primary, Infant or Junior School Place

You should not remove your child from their current school until a place has been secured elsewhere.

Section 1 – Pupil details

Pupil surname		
First name(s)		
Date of birth	Year group	Gender at birth: Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Current school (or last school attended)		
Town and postcode of current school		
Is the child still attending? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		If no, last date of attendance
If the child is known by another name please add it here		

Section 2 – Home address

House number or name		Street	
Village	Post Town	Postcode	

Section 3 – Parent/carer details

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms	Initials	Surname
Relationship to child		Home phone no.
Email address		Mobile phone no.

Section 4 – Reasons for change of school

a) Preferred date of admission		
b) If you are moving into the area, date of move		
New address if different to Section 2 (please attach copies of proof of address (e.g. Exchange of Contracts or signed tenancy agreement).		
House number or name		Street
Village	Post Town	Postcode
c) Have you discussed your reasons for wanting a different school for your child with your child's current school? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
d) Has your child attended any other primary school? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
If 'Yes' please give details:		
Name of school (1)		Date of leaving
Reason for leaving: Moved home <input type="checkbox"/> Permanently excluded <input type="checkbox"/>		
Other (please give reason)		

Name of school (2)	Date of leaving
Reason for leaving: Moved home <input type="checkbox"/> Permanently excluded <input type="checkbox"/>	
Other (please give reason)	

Section 5 – Other details

Is your child cared for by a Local Authority or are they a previously looked after child?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the child have an Educational Health Care Plan (previously known as a statement)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any exceptional medical reasons why the child should specifically attend this school (in accordance with the school's Admissions Policy)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If 'Yes', please attach supporting evidence from the child's doctor or other health care professional.	

Section 6 – School preference

Please state your preferred school in the box below). You do not have to give reasons for your preference. Any reasons you give should generally refer to the admissions policy.	
Preferred school	
Reasons	

Section 7 – Siblings

If you have another child at this school please enter their details below.	
Name	Date of birth

Section 8 – Other information

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Section 9 – Declaration

I have read the notes of guidance for the completion of this form. I confirm that the information I have given is true and that I am a parent for this child.

Signed	Date
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Please return this form directly to the school for which you are applying.

If you would like full details on how a school uses personal data, please visit the school website.

If you would like full details on how ECC uses personal data, please go to www.essex.gov.uk/privacy or call 03457 430430

Notes of Guidance on Completion of the Mid-Year Primary, Infant and Junior School Application Form

1. This form should be completed and then be sent directly to the Essex academy, foundation, or voluntary aided primary, infant or junior school that you wish to apply for. Contact details for every school in Essex can be found via the website www.essex.gov.uk/admissions using the “Admissions booklets” link.
2. You should be aware that there is no guarantee of a place at any school so you can and should apply for more than one school, unless you have established that your preferred school definitely has a place for your child. To find out if there are places, you will need to contact the school(s) directly.
3. If you do decide to apply for more than one academy, foundation or voluntary aided school, you need to make a separate application on a separate form for each school.
4. Once you have sent your application to the school, the school must write to you within 15 school days to confirm if a place is being offered or not. If you do not hear within this timescale, please contact the school directly to ask about your application.
5. If the school writes to you to offer a place, you should get in touch with the school to confirm if you are accepting the place and arrange a start date.
6. If you are refused a place, the letter you receive should explain that you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel against the decision. Appeals should be made in writing using the relevant form within 20 school days of the refusal letter. Information about appealing is available on the website www.essex.gov.uk/admissions from the ‘Submit an Appeal’ link.
7. Applying from overseas – For non-UK citizens, the child must be in the UK before the application can be processed and proof of residency such as an endorsed (stamped) passport or entry visa will be required with the application.
8. If, having applied for a place, you do not manage to secure a school for your child (and you are living in the Essex County Council area* or have a confirmed move into the County), please contact School Admissions at Essex County Council on Tel: 0345 603 2200 for further support and advice. The email address for School Admissions is admissions@essex.gov.uk.
9. **Please remember – applications must be sent direct to the academy, foundation and voluntary aided school(s) in question and not Essex County Council.**

* If you live in Essex you will pay your Council Tax to one of the following Borough/District Councils:
Basildon,
Braintree, Brentwood, Castle Point, Chelmsford, Colchester, Epping Forest,
Harlow, Maldon, Rochford, Tendring or Uttlesford.