Hartwell Primary School

Admissions Policy 2026/27

Hartwell Primary is an Academy and, recognising its historic foundation, works to preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England. This includes the active promotion of Christian and British values and the respecting of those of other faiths or none.

Determined: **10/12/2024**

1. Introduction

This document sets out the admission arrangements for Hartwell Primary School. Hartwell Primary School is a Church of England Academy and serves the Parish of Hartwell. The Governors have responsibility for admissions and the admissions policy. In determining their policy the Governors seek to serve families of the local community, providing education of the highest quality with high moral values at the heart of our provision. We develop trust, self-discipline, friendship, good manners and mutual respect for each other and the environment.

The Published Admission Number (PAN) for the Reception year of entry is 30.

Please note the deadline for applications for admission in September 2026 is 15th January 2026.

2. Priority Area

The school serves the priority area of the Parish of Hartwell.

3. Starting School

As a Primary School (4 -11yrs) Hartwell admits children in the September following their fourth Birthday, the children stay until they transfer to Secondary School in the September following their eleventh Birthday.

Parents who are considering Hartwell as the school for their child are encouraged to make an appointment to visit the school and meet the Head Teacher.

All applications for Reception class are administered through the Local Authority Admissions Service and considered together during the Spring Term, in line with dates published by the West Northamptonshire Local Authority's School Admissions Service. Places are offered in the Spring for the following September.

4. Timetable for Admissions to Reception class

Applications for a Reception place should be made to your home local authority. If you live in West Northamptonshire, this will be via:

https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/primary-school-places

Hartwell Primary School should be named as one of your preferences. The Governors will adhere to the co-ordinated scheme for 2026 admissions determined by the local authority.

Governors are responsible for the allocation of places. West Northamptonshire Local Authority will notify parents, on behalf of Hartwell Primary School, regarding the outcome of any preference made in accordance with the timetable adopted by West Northamptonshire Council.

5. Late Applications

Late applications i.e. those received after the deadline for the normal admissions

round will not be considered until after National Offer Day (16th April or the next working day) when all of those which were received on time have been processed by the Admissions Service.

6. Waiting List

If the school is oversubscribed for children due to start in Reception or in any other year group where a request for a place has been made, a waiting list will be maintained by West Northamptonshire Local Authority. At the start of the autumn term or during the course of the year, parents may request that the names of children for whom a place is unavailable be put on the waiting list by confirming this to the local authority. A new application must be made for each new academic year.

The position on the list will be determined by applying the published over- subscription criteria and not by date of receipt. This means that a position on the list will change if a later application is received from someone with higher priority according to the over-subscription criteria. The existence of a waiting list does not remove the right of appeal against any refusal of a place from any unsuccessful applicant. Names will only be removed from the list if a written or verbal request to do so is received or if the offer of a place is made and taken-up or declined.

7. Admission of children below compulsory school age and deferred entry to primary school

Children are required to start their compulsory education from the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday (based on a 3 term year with terms starting in September, January and April). Where children below compulsory school age are offered a place at the school, they will be entitled to attend the school full-time in the September following their fourth birthday.

Parents/carers may defer their child's entry to the allocated school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age, and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made when the place will cease to be available for the child. Please discuss this with the school directly once a place has been offered.

Where parents/carers wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. Please discuss this with the school directly once you have received an offer of a school place.

8. Infant class size "exceptions"

Infant classes (those where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6 or 7 during the school year) **must not** contain more than 30 pupils with a single school teacher. Additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an 'excepted pupil' for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit.

The excepted children are:
a) children admitted outside the normal admissions round with statements of special educational needs or Education, Health and Care Plans specifying a school;

b) looked after children and previously looked after children admitted outside the normal admissions round;
c) children admitted, after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the admission authority or local authority in the original application process;
d) children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal;
e) children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance;
f) children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round;
g) children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil;
h) children with special educational needs who are normally taught in a special educational needs unit attached to the school, or registered at a special school, who attend some infant classes within the mainstream school.

9. In-Year Admissions

Parents should apply via West Northamptonshire Local Authority Schools Admissions Service, which coordinates admissions throughout the course of the year.

Upon receipt of an in-year application, the local authority, should aim to notify the parents of the outcome of their application in writing within 10 school days, but they **must** be notified in writing within 15 school days;

When it is not possible to offer a place, parents will be advised of the reason for the refusal and will be given information about the right to appeal.

Where an applicant is offered a school place following an in-year application, and the offer is accepted, arrangements should be made for the child to start school as soon as possible, especially where the child is out of school (5 school days).

10. Over-subscription Criteria

When the school has more applications than there are places available, the Governors will admit pupils according to the following criteria listed in order of priority.

Governors will first offer places to children with an Education, Health and Care Plan which names the school as appropriate provision.

Criteria:

i. Looked after and all previously looked after children (see definitions below)
ii. Children with specific medical and social needs where professionals have clearly identified that the school can best meet the needs of the child (see social/medical need definition/evidence required below).
iii. Children of staff employed by the Academy at the date of admission (see definition below).
iv. Children living with their parents/legal guardians in the civil Parish of Hartwell who also have a sibling attending the school at the time of admission (see residence definition below).
v. Children living with their parents/legal guardians in the civil Parish of Hartwell (see residence definition below).

vi. Children with a sibling attending the school at the time of admission (see definition below).
vii. Other children ranked by the proximity of the child's permanent residence to the school, with those living nearer to the school being accorded higher priority.

Tie breaker:

Where there are more applications in any one category, applications will be prioritised on the distance from the child's home to the address point of the school, (priority being given to the children who live closer to the school).

Distances are measured on a straight line basis from the address point of the child's home to the address point of the School, using a geographical information system. Each address has a unique address point established by the most valuable elements from the National Land and Property Gazeteer (NPLG), Ordnance Survey Master Map, Royal Mail Postal Address File and The Valuation Office Agency. The address point for a property does not change.

In the case where there are multiple applications from the same shared dwelling (e.g. Flats) or where there are two homes where the distance from the address point of the home to the address point of the school (using the system referred to above) is identical, random allocation, supervised by a suitable independent person, will be used to decide the priority in which applicants are selected in the event of a tiebreaker.

Social/Medical need definition/evidence required

If you believe that your child has exceptional medical or social needs you will need to provide evidence of this from an appropriate professional. The needs must relate to your child and the evidence must detail how the needs of your child can only be met at your preferred school. This can be sent in a sealed envelope if you prefer. If accompanied by a professional's letter, they MUST demonstrate in their judgement why Hartwell Primary School can meet your child's needs, and also demonstrate why other local schools cannot meet your child's needs. It is not sufficient for a professional to say in their judgement only Hartwell Primary School can meet your child's needs, they must state why schools B or C cannot meet the needs.

The decision as to whether the application is met by this criterion is made by the School Governors.

Residency Definition

The child's place of residence is the address of the parent or legal guardian with whom the child spends the majority of time during the school week. Should the child's time be split evenly between two residences, the parent/legal guardian should agree on the address to be used. Parent/s / legal guardian(s) may be asked to produce evidence of residency/home address at any time during the admissions process.

Definition of Staff

Staff are defined as a permanent member of all types of staff, full or part time.
b) the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

The definition of children of staff includes step children where the child's main residence is that of the staff member.

Definition of Looked After Children

A "looked after child" is a child who, at the time of making an application to a school is:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989)

Definition of Previously Looked After Children

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders), or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order (as defined in Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 and as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014), or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order (see Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which 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 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 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, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

Definition of Siblings

A sibling is defined as a child's brother or sister. A sibling must be living at the same permanent address and as part of the same family unit (one or two parents plus children) to qualify under this criterion. For School Admissions purposes, the term sibling includes:

- half-brothers and half-sisters
- step-brothers and step-sisters
- adopted children
- children in foster care
- children living in the same family unit, even if they are not biological brothers and sisters – for example when the parents are not married/in a civil relationship.

Cousins are not regarded as siblings

11. Children of UK service personnel and crown servants

Our Admission Authority will:

- use the address at which the child will live when applying our oversubscription criteria, as long as the parent provides some evidence of their intended address;
- Use a Unit or quartering address as the child's home address when considering the application where a parent requests this.

12. Multiple Births

Where the final place in any year group is offered to one of twins or other multiple births both twins would be admitted (or all siblings in the case of multiple births).

13. Appeals

If a child is refused admission to the school either for September entry or during the course of the year, the parents have formal rights of appeal to the Independent Admission Appeals Panel against the decision of the Governing Body. The independent Admissions Appeals Panel is arranged by Peterborough Diocese Board of Education. The Governors cannot consider repeat appeals in the same year unless there has been a significant change in circumstances.

14. Admission of children out of their normal age group

- Parents/carers may seek a place for their child out of their normal age group e.g. if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. Additionally;
- Parents/carers of a summer born child (i.e. a child born in the period from 1st April to 31st August) may not want to send their child to school until the September following their 5th birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – e.g. to Reception rather than to Year 1 – *please refer to the section on Summer Born children below.*

Process for requesting a place out of normal age group (*not Summer Born*)

Parents/carers may seek a place for their child out of their normal age group. If parents/carers wish to do so, they must contact the Headteacher at the School.

The Admissions Committee of the School Governing Board will convene a meeting to consider the request and will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of:

- the parent's/carer's views;
- information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
- where relevant, the child's medical history and the views of a medical professional;

- whether the child has previously been educated out of their normal age group;
- whether the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely;
- the Headteacher's views.

Please note – if the Admissions Committee does not agree to this request to be admitted out of cohort, there is no right of appeal against that decision.

Requests for admission out of normal age group (S*ummer Born children*)

All children are entitled to a full time school place in the September following their 4th birthday and most parents are happy for their child to start school at this point. However, parents/carers of summer born children (those born between 1 April and 31 August) who do not reach compulsory school age until a full year after they would normally start school, may wish to delay their child's start to school until the September following the child's 5th birthday.

If parents wish to delay their summer born child's start at school until the September after their 5th birthday, there are 2 options:

1. Parents can make an in-year application for a place for the September following their child's 5th birthday. The child would normally start school in **Year 1** (their correct chronological age group) as other children in the child's age group already attending school will be moving from Reception to Year 1 at this point. It is important to remember that some schools are likely to be full in Year 1 and unable to offer a place;
2. If parents do not want their child to miss their Reception year, they may request that children are admitted out of their normal age group i.e. into Reception instead of Year 1. Please note, this is a 'request' and parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group. The school's admission authority is responsible for making the decision about which year group a child should be admitted to.

Parents/carers of summer born children who could start school in September 2026, but wish to delay their child's school start and apply for a Reception place to start in September 2027, should still make their application for a Reception place for their child's normal year of entry before the primary application deadline of **15 January 2026.** If a delay is agreed, this application can be withdrawn.

Parent/carers should also, if possible, make their request for admission out of the normal age group to their preferred schools by the same date - **15 January 2026** This is to enable sufficient time for requests to be processed prior to National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day). Requests will however still be considered after this date.

Parents/carers requests to apply for a Reception place at Hartwell Primary School for the September following their child's 5th birthday, should be made in writing (email should be sufficient) to the school in the first instance. In their request, parents/carers should provide some information about their child to explain why they think that their child should be educated out of their normal age group. It is important for parents/carers to provide any additional evidence to support their request as this information will help the admission authority to make their decision e.g. parents/carers may be able to provide a report from the child's Early Years setting or evidence from a health or social care professional.

The request will then be considered by our admission authority who have to decide if they will allow the request. The decision must be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. The School Admissions Code (2021) requires admission authorities to consider a number of factors:

- the parent's/carer's views;
- information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
- where relevant, the child's medical history and the views of a medical professional;
- whether the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely;
- the Head teacher's views.

What happens next?

Parents/carers will be informed of the admission authority's decision on which year group the child should be admitted to when they start school (i.e. Reception or Year 1) and will set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

What happens if the request is approved?

If the request to be admitted outside normal age group is approved by the admission authority of the school, parents/carers will need to forward this approval to their local authority's School Admissions team to ensure that an application will be accepted in the normal admission round for the September following the child's 5th birthday.

Parent(s)/carer(s) will then need to make an application for a place in Reception for the normal round of admissions in the following academic year.

Please note – this does not mean that a child has been, or will be, offered a place in the Reception year at their chosen school. If, in the following normal admissions round, the school is oversubscribed, all applications (including delayed applications) for the school will be ranked in accordance with the school's oversubscription admission criteria and places offered up to the school's published admission number.

What happens if the request is refused?

If the request to be admitted outside normal age group is rejected by the admission authority of the school, parents/carers have to decide whether to accept a Reception place in the normal year of entry, delay their child's start until the September after their 5th birthday and apply for a Year 1 place or make an application to other schools to see if they will accept a delayed start in Reception.

Parents/carers who are unhappy with the admission authority's decision to refuse their child a place out of their normal age group, should complain directly to the admission authority.

Parents/carers whose requests for delayed entry into Reception are refused, do not have the right to appeal this decision. They have the right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied but this right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group.

13. Contacts

For further information please contact:

Admissions: Mrs Jac Johnson, Headteacher, Hartwell Primary School, 01604 862880
jjohnson@hartwell.school

Appeals: Enquiries should be made via the school who will then direct the appeal through Peterborough Diocese Board of Education
Admissions and Appeals - Diocese of Peterborough

West Northamptonshire Council for both the composite prospectus "Applying for a Primary School Place in West Northamptonshire – 2026-2027" and to complete an application form: School Admissions | West Northamptonshire Council (westnorthants.gov.uk)