

Southampton City Council

Admission Policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled Infant and Primary Schools for 2026/27

Southampton City Council is the admission authority for all Community and Voluntary Controlled Infant and Primary schools in the city. These schools are:

School	Year R PAN
Bitterne C of E (VC) Primary School*	60
Bitterne Park Primary School	90
Mansel Park Primary School	60
Mason Moor Primary School	30
Sinclair Primary and Nursery School	30
St Mark's CE All-Through School*	60
St Mary's CofE (VC) Primary School*	60
Valentine Primary School	90

Each school has a Published Admissions Number (PAN), which is the number of children the school will admit into Reception Year in September 2026.

*These schools are Church of England Schools and give a priority for children on denominational grounds under Category 7 of this policy. Category 7 does not apply to the other schools in this list.

Applications

For an application to be **on-time**, it must be made by 23:59 on the 15 January 2026.

If a school has fewer applications than its PAN, all children will be offered a place.

If a school under this policy has more applications by the 15 January 2026 than its PAN (called 'oversubscription'), applications will be ranked by the oversubscription criteria and places offered from this ranking.

Children with Education, Health and Care Plans (**EHCPs**) that name a school must be admitted to that school, even if it is full. This process sits outside of the normal admissions arrangements and this policy. Children with EHCPs will still count towards the PAN of the school.

Applications received after 15 January 2026 will be **late applications**. They will be dealt with after all on-time applicants have been offered school places. Places can't be 'held back' for late applicants. You may not get a place at your preference school if you apply late and the school has already been filled by on-time applications.

Oversubscription Criteria:

1. Looked After/Previously Looked After Children
2. Children subject to a Child Protection Plan, or who the Local Authority consider to be vulnerable due to safeguarding concerns
3. Children who have a sibling on roll at the school, who will continue to attend that school the following year
4. Children who have evidence that they must attend the school for medical/psychological reasons
5. Children who qualify for the Service Premium, as the child of a member of the Armed Forces
6. Children who live in the school's designated catchment area
7. Children whose parents are applying for their child to attend a Church of England school on denominational grounds*
8. Children whose parents are employed at the school they are applying for, as defined below
9. Children who live closest to the school

If a school oversubscribes within any of the 9 categories, distance will be used to prioritise the applications in that category. Should two or more identical distances exist for the last vacancy, lots will be drawn by a senior manager at Southampton City Council.

Distances are measured based on the shortest, safest, walking distance using public roads and footpaths. They measure from the home address to the mid-point of the nearest pedestrian gate of the school that would be open during school hours, using a computerised mapping system with data supplied by the Ordnance Survey.

Waiting Lists

If a place cannot be offered to an applicant at a preference school, they will automatically be added to that school's waiting list.

Waiting lists are kept in the order of the school's oversubscription categories, and not how long a child has been on the waiting list for. This means that each new application will cause the list to be re-ranked, and children could move down as well as up the list.

Places will be offered from the waiting list if a vacancy arises at the school.

Waiting lists will be held until 31 July 2027. Any parent wishing to remain on the waiting lists after this date will need to make a new in-year application to the school.

Unplaced Children

If a child cannot be offered any of their preference schools, they will be offered either their catchment school (if this has spaces available), or the nearest school to their home that has spaces available.

In-Year Admissions

In-Year admissions for any year group in the 2026/27 academic year will be processed according to the oversubscription criteria in this policy.

Definitions

Looked After/Previously Looked After Children: Looked After Children are those who are in the care of a Local Authority. A Previously Looked After Child is one who was in the care of a Local Authority until they were adopted or became subject to a Child Arrangements or Special Guardianship Order. This also applies to children who were in state care outside of England before being adopted.

Sibling: A sibling is defined as a brother or sister living in the same family unit for most of the school week. This included half, step, foster or adopted brothers and sisters. This criterion cannot be applied to cousins.

Catchment Area: Catchment areas are set out in catchment maps held by Southampton City Council. Parents can find their catchment school on the council website (www.southampton.gov.uk) 'My Southampton' feature.

Medical/Psychological: A child will be able to apply under this category if they have a medical or psychological condition that means only the preference school can meet their needs. This must be evidenced by the relevant consultation/psychologist. It will not apply simply if a child has a diagnosis of an illness, allergy or Special Educational Need, as all schools are expected to manage the needs of all pupils.

Service Premium: A child will qualify for the Service Premium if:

- One of their parents is serving in the regular armed forces (including if a parent is on full commitment as part of the full-time reserve) OR
- One of their parents died whilst serving in the armed forces and the pupil receives a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation or War Pension Schemes.

Proof of this criteria should be provided by a letter from Service parent's commanding officer confirming employment, or evidence of receipt of a Service pension.

Denominational Grounds: To apply under this category, parents must evidence regular attendance to worship at a Church of England, or other Christian fellowship, by having the vicar or leader in their church confirm this using the Southampton City Council's Supplementary Information Form (SIF).

'Regular' is defined as attending worship services at a Church of England church or local ecumenical partnership at least twice a month for the previous two years.

'Christian fellowship' is defined as 'a worshipping fellowship who confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Bible and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; who are members or participant observers of the World Council of Churches of the World Evangelical Alliance.'

Children of Parents Employed at the School: A child will qualify for this category at any school where their parent:

- Has been employed at the school for two or more years from the time of application
- Has been employed to fill a vacant position for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage

Entry into Year R

The offers made for Reception classes are full-time places for the start of term in September 2026.

If you feel your child is not ready to start school the September after they turn 4, it is possible for them to access:

- Part-time admission to the offered school from September following their child's 4th birthday. This should be discussed with the Headteacher of the school.
- Defer their child's entry until later in the school year. They must be attending by the term after their 5th birthday, or the final term of the school year, whichever is first. This should be discussed with the Headteacher of the school.

Parents of children who are born between 1 April and 31 August ('summerborn' children), may choose to send their child to school the September after they turn 5 instead. They can either:

- Apply in-year for a place for their child to start Year 1 in the September after they turn 5.
- Request for their child to be admitted outside of their normal age group into Reception the September after they turn 5.

Requests for a child to be educated outside of their normal age group can be made online via the Southampton City Council website.

Requests for education outside of the normal age group must be considered by the admissions authority for the school and other admission authorities do not have to honour this decision.

Requests for education outside of the normal age group must be made at each transition, and there is no guarantee that any agreement will continue through the child's whole school life.