



Great Totham Primary School Admissions Policy 2026-27

Reason for Consultation

Following the Governing Body decision to remove the paragraph on medical circumstances (highlighted), to bring the school policy in line with the LA policy for maintained schools, a public consultation will be undertaken. This will commence on the 1st October and last for 6 weeks until the 12th November 2024.

Parents, interested members of the community, local Primary Schools and the LA will be included in the consultation. All responses will be collated and discussed by the Governing Body before any final decision made.

Written comments regarding the deletion of the highlighted paragraph can be made to the school via the following email address:

Admissionsconsultation@greattotham.essex.sch.uk

Parents are advised that it is the Governing Body of Great Totham Primary School which is responsible for the Admission Arrangements and not the Essex LA. This means the Governing Body determines the admission criteria that are adhered to when considering requests for the admission of pupils of statutory school age.

Applying for a Reception place in September (In-rounds admission)

The Local Authority is responsible by law for coordinating all primary places for starting Reception each year in September (in-rounds admission). Places will be allocated according to the following criteria.

1. The Published Admission Number is 60. The Governing Body will admit up to a maximum of 64 children in KS2 (years 3, 4, 5, 6).

Where applications for admission exceed this number the following criteria will be applied, in the order set out below, to decide which children will be offered a place:

- i) **Looked after children**
- ii) Children living within the **school priority admission area** with a **sibling** attending the school at the time of application and admission
- iii) Children living within the school priority admission area
- iv) Children living outside the school priority admission area with a sibling attending the school at the time of application and admission
- v) 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, residence or 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 the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

Definition of a 'Sibling'

Great Totham Primary School has adopted the Essex LA definition of a 'sibling' as follows:

'a child living in the same family unit, in the same family household and address as a child who attends the preferred school or partner school in any year group excluding the final year. This includes brothers, sisters, adopted brothers and sisters and stepbrothers and sisters. In addition, biological siblings, in any year group excluding the final year, will 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'

Priority Admission Area

A map is available for viewing at the school clearly highlighting the priority admission area. A postcode check facility is also available on Essex LA Admission page. The governing body cannot however, necessarily guarantee a place to all priority admission area applicants.

Home Address

Applications are processed on the basis of the home address for the child at the time of application and determination, unless, where there is a new home address, proof of an exchange of contracts or copy of a tenancy agreement can be provided by 3rd February 2026. The home address is considered to be the address at which the child resides on a permanent basis or is 'ordinarily resident', including overnight for the majority of the school week.

SEND

All children whose Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) that names the school will be admitted regardless of their place in the priority order. All other children with identified SEND remain part of the normal ranking procedures.

Oversubscription

In the event of oversubscription within any of the admission criteria, priority will be determined by straight line distance, those living closest being accorded highest priority. Straight line distances are calculated by Essex Local Authority. In the unlikely event of identical distances competing for a single place, the place is offered through the drawing of lots by a Governor (not involved in the admissions process) of the school.

In the event that the last place is offered to a twin, then the Governing Body will offer a place to both children. In the case of triplets etc. If the majority of children are offered a place, then the remaining children will also be offered a place. This does not apply when children are moving schools but not relocating.

Medical Circumstances **Proposed paragraph for deletion**

Exceptional medical circumstances of the child (not diagnosed special educational needs) may override admission criteria (other than Looked after Children) and would be considered on an individual basis by the Governing Body Admissions Committee. Supporting evidence (including evidence by an appropriate medical professional) must be submitted directly to the school when the application is made, stating clearly why the school is best placed to meet the child's medical needs.

Withdrawal of an offer

If a school place has been secured through false information or has been offered in error, the offer of the place may be withdrawn.

2. All Reception Year children, (other than those moving into the school priority admission area during the course of the academic year), who have been offered and have accepted a place at Great Totham Primary School, will be admitted during the Autumn Term.

Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in the school year. Where entry is deferred, the school will hold the place for that child and not offer it to another child. Parents would not however be able to defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the academic year for which the original application was accepted.

Parents can also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. For parents opting to take up a part time place this would be mornings only.

Where parents choose to defer entry, the school may reasonably expect that the child would start at the beginning of a new school term/half term.

Where a parent of a 'summer-born' child (1 April – 31 August) wishes their child to start school in the autumn term following their fifth birthday, they will need to apply for a place at the correct time for the normal admission round for the following academic year. Supporting evidence from relevant professionals working with the child and family stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age appropriate cohort must be submitted. The Governing Body will decide whether the application for a Reception place will be accepted or whether it will be treated as an application for a Year 1 place, the child's normal age appropriate cohort. If the application for a Reception place is not accepted this does not constitute a refusal of the place and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal.

3. The application process is in accordance with the co-ordinated scheme for primary admissions and involves completion of the Common Application Form – either online or by paper. Offers of places will be sent in April.
4. Parents of children who have not been allocated a place at Great Totham Primary school can appeal against the decision. Appeals should be lodged within 20 school days of being refused a place. Full information on this procedure can be obtained from Essex LA; the LA will establish arrangements for appeals against non-admission to be heard by a fully independent panel. The school will agree any changes to its admission arrangements with the Secretary of State for Education. Details of admissions and appeals arrangements will be published annually.

Parents should be aware that legislation restricts appeal panels with regards to Year R admissions where admission would exceed the class size limit.

- It finds that the admission of additional children would not breach the infant class size limit; or
- It finds that the admission arrangements do not comply with admission law or were not correctly applied and finds that a place should have been offered; or
- It decides that the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would make in the circumstances.

This means that appeals for a place in Year R, Year 1 and Year 2 have limited grounds for success and any parent should consider carefully whether to submit an appeal to avoid unnecessary disappointment.

5. A waiting list, ranked in distance order, will be kept by Essex LA until the 31st December and thereafter by the school. Parents should contact the school directly at this time to ensure their continued interest in a place is recorded.

Applications for school places outside the normal admissions round

All mid-year applications should be made directly to the school, using the mid-year application form available on our website. Mid-year applications (sometimes called in-year applications) are any application for a school place made to a year group, apart from September admissions to Reception.

For applications into existing year groups, a place will be offered when the number of pupils in the relevant group is below the admission number for that year group.

Please contact the school office for any additional advice or information regarding mid-year applications.

Policy Evaluation & Review

This policy will be evaluated and reviewed annually. Any amendments to admission criteria will be consulted with publicly as determined in the Admissions Code 2014.

In addition, every seven years if there have been no changes to the admissions criteria during that period, this policy will go out for public consultation.

This policy has been approved following public consultation (21-22). Six responses were taken into account and following careful consideration no changes were made to the admission criteria.

Following a public consultation in 24-25, the next public consultation will be 31-32.