



New Generation Schools Trust

Hope Community School (Sidcup) Admission Arrangements for 2024/25

1. Introductory statement

This document sets out the admission arrangements for Hope Community School (HCS) for entry in 2024/25.

Hope Community School, Sidcup, is a one form entry Primary School at the heart of the community. We work with families to increase children's aspirations, encourage adventure and maximise each child's talents and gifts. We want to inspire children to be people who not only value their community but also have the desire, ability and tools to transform and enrich it through innovation and aspirational visions.

We want children to enjoy and achieve their full potential at school. No matter what their ability, ethnicity or background, each child should thrive throughout their education.

Hope Community School is a school of Christian Designation. The school seeks to be an inclusive school expressing a twenty-first century Christian ethos welcoming children and families of all faiths and no faith and drawing together a wide range of people from different backgrounds to work towards the good of the whole community.

At HCS we understand how important the choice of school for your child is for you, and we want to do everything we can to support you and give you all relevant and helpful information, so please do contact us for clarification if you require this.

Compliance with the Schools Admissions Code 2021

Hope Community School will comply with the School Admissions Code 2021 to ensure the admissions arrangements are fair, clear and objective. HCS will make sure that all communication is targeted and accessible to all in our community, including the hard to reach, and those requiring information in additional languages.

2. Admission number(s)

HCS will admit 30 pupils to Reception in 2024/25. This admission number relates to the year group of normal entry to HCS (Reception). Once admitted to HCS pupils will automatically transfer from one key stage to another.

For how to apply please see point 11; Timeline for Applications.

3. Oversubscription criteria

When the academy/free school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan naming the school, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in priority order:

1. Looked after and previously looked after children: 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).

A previously looked-after child is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted, this includes children adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders). Children subject to a special guardianship order or child arrangements order immediately after being looked after are considered to be previously looked after children. This category 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 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.

Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

Child arrangements orders are defined in s.8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by s.12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders determine a) with whom a child is to live, spend time or otherwise have contact, and (b) when a child is to live, spend time or otherwise have contact with any person. They replace residence orders and any residence order in force immediately after the child was in care is deemed to be a child arrangements order.

2. Faith based places: As a school designated as having a Religious Character, up to 20% of places (6) will be allocated on the basis of the Christian faith¹ according to the following

Children whose parents/carers are regular attenders of New Generation Church, Sidcup²;

2a. who already have a sibling³ on roll,

2b. with exceptional medical, social or welfare needs which means the child must, because of those needs, attend the school. Appropriate evidence from a doctor or social worker must be provided.

2c. living closest (using Bexley Council's definition of straight line distance⁴.)

¹ For admission purposes, an applicant is considered to be a Christian if they are practising Christians who regularly attend church. See Supplementary Information Form for further explanation of faith based criteria.

² As confirmed by completion of Supplementary Information Form completed by parent/carer and signed by Church leader.

³ When we use the term siblings we mean: children with a sibling (the term "sibling" means a full, half, adopted or fostered brother or sister, or other child living permanently within the same household) on roll at Hope Community School at the closing date for application.

⁴ Measurements of home to school distance are provided by Bexley Council's School Admissions Team. Since 2016, all primary schools measure home to school distance as a straight line. Home to school distances are measured by the Council's GIS system using the intersection of the geographical grid co-ordinates (known as eastings and northings) supplied by the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG), or equivalent database, for the home address and for the nearest school entrance approved by the Governors as an official entrance, the measurement will be taken from the intersection of the NLPG co-ordinates of the home address to the nearest official school entrance. The system measures in miles and is accurate to three decimal points. The home address will be taken as the child's home address on 15th January 2024, unless there is a qualifying change of address by 9th February 2024. It must be the address at which the child lives with the parent or registered guardian who is the main carer, i.e., the parent eligible to receive Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit.

Then, if the 20% faith based places (6) are not filled in criteria 2a to 2c, the remaining faith based places will be open to:

Children whose parents/carers are regular attenders of a Churches Together in England and/or Evangelical Alliance Church²;

2d. who already have a sibling³ on roll

2e. with exceptional medical or social needs which means the child must, because of those needs, attend the school. Appropriate evidence from a doctor or social worker must be provided.

2f. living closest (using the Council's definition of straight line distance⁴).

If more children apply under faith based criteria than places available, those not successful in gaining a faith based place will be considered under 'open places' alongside other applicants without the school taking any account of faith.

3. Open places (all remaining places):

3a. Siblings³

3b. Children with exceptional medical or social needs which means the child must, because of those needs, attend the school. Appropriate evidence from a doctor, social worker etc. must be provided.

3c. Children living closest (using the Council's definition of straight line distance⁴.)

4. Tie-break

In the event of a 'tie-break' situation (i.e. if home to school distance is equal, for example two children living in the same block of flats or in the same house) a rank order will be determined by HCS and a method of random selection will be used. This process will be independently verified. However, if children of multiple birth (twins and triplets) are tied for the final place, those siblings will be admitted over PAN as permitted by infant class size rules.

5. Reception age children

- ⌚ Parents offered a place can defer entry until the start of the term within the academic year that their child reaches compulsory school age, or
- ⌚ Can take up the place part-time until the start of the term within the academic year in which their child reaches compulsory school age. The pattern of attendance must be agreed with the school and be beneficial to the child.

Places cannot be deferred until the next academic year. Children become of compulsory school age on the first prescribed day following their 5th birthday: 31 August, 31 December or 31 March, or on that day if any of these dates are the child's birthday.

Parents of a summer-born child may choose not to send their child to school until he or she reaches compulsory school age (the September following their fifth birthday) and may request that they are admitted to Reception rather than Year 1 (see section 6 below). Parents should note that Year 1 is not a normal point of entry and places will, therefore, likely be limited.

6. Admission of children outside their normal year group

Parents may request that their child is admitted out of year group for example if the child is gifted and talented, has experienced problems such as ill health or because they are a summer-born child

of compulsory school age who their parents wish to be admitted to reception rather than year 1. Parents/carers wishing to request consideration for a place outside their child's normal year group should contact the Admissions Authority, which is New Generation Schools Trust. Further detail is available on our website www.hopecommunityschool.org.

Decisions will be made in the best interests of the child taking into account the views of the parents/carers and Principal as well as any evidence from health/social care professionals.

If accepted, such an application will be treated in exactly the same manner as all applications, and will be subject to the oversubscription criteria and waiting list arrangements as detailed in this policy. Parents have the right of appeal against the refusal of a place at the school, but have no right of appeal against the refusal of a place in a particular year group. If the child has priority for admission we may agree to admit them into an older or younger year group, or offer a place in the normal year group.

7. Infant class size limit

Infant classes (i.e. those where the majority of children are 5, 6 or 7) must not be larger than 30 pupils to a teacher. If twins, triplets or children of other multiple births are tied for the last place, they will all be admitted and will be classed as exceptions to the infant class size limit until they leave Year 2 or until the class size reduces to 30 or below.

8. Late applications

All applications received by the school after the deadline will be considered to be late applications. Late applications will be considered after those received on time have been processed and offers made to them. If, following consideration of all applicants the school is oversubscribed, children will be automatically placed on the school's waiting list. Parents/carers can request to not be placed on this list.

9. In-year admissions

All in-year applications should be made to Bexley Council, who will inform HCS of the application. In-year applications will be considered using the same criteria as those used for Reception places.

10. Waiting lists

HCS will operate a waiting list for each year group. Where in any year the academy/free school receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until the end of the academic year. This will be maintained by New Generation Schools Trust and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.

Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. If all faith-based places are full, then only non-faith based criteria will be used.

Waiting lists will be re-ordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever a child joins or leaves the waiting list.

11. Appeals

Applicants who are not offered a place at HCS will be given a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code (DfE, October 2022).

Appellants should contact the School for information on how to appeal.⁵ Information on the timetable for the appeals process is on our website at www.hopecommunityschool.org.

12. Timeline for application to Reception

1st July 2023	HCS Prospectus available.
1st September 2023	Application period starts. Weekly tours during autumn term TBC time. Please book in with the school office.
15 January 2024	Closing date for applications.
9 February 2024	Last date for address or other essential changes or for applications that are late with good reason.
16 April 2024 – National offer day	Places will be allocated and parents will be informed by email
2 May 2024	Parents/carers must accept or decline their offer by this date.
15 May 2024	Last date for submitting an appeal. Appeals should be submitted within 20 school days of the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful.
May to August 2024	Offers from waiting lists.
June to July 2024	By July, in accordance with the Appeals Code 2022, all appeals submitted by the deadline will be heard by an Independent Appeals Panel within 40 days of that deadline.
September 2024	Start of the autumn term 2024/25 (exact date and time to be advised).

⁵ Parents/carers have 20 school days from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful to lodge an appeal.