

Compassion

Courage

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Admissions Policy

Academic Year
2024-2025

We strive to support all members of our community to feel valued, nurtured and empowered as they embark upon their journey to become the very best that God intended. Throughout their voyage of discovery with us, we ensure all children are provided with a rich curriculum, experiences which promote school based valour and a strong moral purpose underpinned by our Christian values; preparing them to become compassionate citizens within our rural community and the wider world.

'On a voyage of discovery; learning and growing together in the light of God.'

Wittersham Church of England Primary School is a Voluntary Aided Church School. The Governing Body is responsible for the Admissions Policy and education provided. They welcome admissions from all faiths and none, who are living in the local area. The school was founded with a distinctly Christian ethos at its heart. It serves its whole community by providing a high-quality education within the context of Christian belief and inclusive practice. We ask all parents to respect the Christian ethos of our school and the values this brings.

The school's published admission number is 20 pupils per year group. Pupils are in 5 mixed-age classes from Foundation Stage to Year 6. Parents are advised that the school is part of the County Admissions Scheme and parents should complete a Common Application Form which is available online (please speak to the school office if you cannot access the online form).

Children are admitted into our Early Years Foundation Stage during the academic year in which they reach their fifth birthday.

Parents' right of deferment of entry to the Foundation Stage and parental right to take a part-time placement for a child starting reception until the term after their 5th Birthday will be considered on an individual basis, considering all options. However, children born between the 1 April and 31 August must start school at the beginning of the April term if they wish to keep their offer.

Requests for admission outside of the normal age group:

In special circumstances, and in accordance with the Department for Education's School Admissions Code Section 2.17, parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group - for example, if the child is gifted and talented, or has experienced problems such as ill health.

Such requests should be discussed with the Headteacher as early as possible in the admissions round associated with that child's date of birth. This will allow the school sufficient time to make a decision regarding the request before the closing date for applications and national offer day. Decisions to admit a pupil outside of their normal age group will be based on the circumstances of each case and based on what is in the best interests of the child concerned. We may request supporting professional evidence to assist in the decision-making. There is no legal requirement for this medical or educational evidence to be secured from an appropriate professional. However, failure to provide this may impede our ability to make an informed decision. If the request is agreed, the application will be considered for the year group sought and ranked alongside any and all other applications. There is no guarantee that a place will be offered at this stage. Parents should complete an application for the usual point of entry at the same time, in

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case their request is declined, or they do not receive a place in the year group requested. This application can be cancelled if the school agrees to accept an application for entry into a different year group.

Applications must be made via paper **Common Application Form** to the Local Authority, with written confirmation from the school attached. Deferred applications will be processed in the same way as Wittersham CEP School's Admissions Policy for all applications for the cohort in the following admissions round, and offers will be made in accordance with the oversubscription criteria specified for that round. Where a child has been educated out of their normal age group, it is important for the parent to consider that this is not binding when they transfer to secondary or any other school/academy. It will be for the admission authority of that school/academy to decide whether to admit the child out of their normal age group.

Before the application of oversubscription criteria, children with a statement of special educational need which names Wittersham School will be admitted. As a result of this the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly. Remaining places will be allocated in rank order based on the over subscription criteria below. In the unlikely event that two or more children in all others have equal eligibility for the last available place at the school the names will be issued a number and drawn randomly to decide which child should be given the place. Governors will apply the following criteria in the order set out below:

•**Children in Local Authority Care**—a child under the age of 18 years for whom the local authority provides accommodation by agreement with their parents/carers (Section 22 of the Children Act 1989) or who is the subject of a care order under Part IV of the Act. This applies equally to children who immediately after being looked after by the local authority became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order, including those who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. (As defined by Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 or Section 8 or 14A of the Children Act 1989)

•**Children with a church affiliation providing Wittersham is their closest Church Aided School** -In order for parents to meet the Church affiliation at least one member of the family must have attended church on at least a monthly basis within the 12 months preceding application. The supplementary form for Admissions(attached)should include a statement from Rector/Vicar or Minister to confirm church attendance.

•**Children with siblings at the school at the time of entry** -Children who live as brothers and sisters in the same house including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, step-brothers or sisters and foster brothers or sisters. The sibling link is maintained as long as the family live at the same address as when the first child applied, or have moved closer to the school than when the first child was offered a place, or has moved to an address that is

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less than 2 miles from the school using the distance measured by the method outlined in the distance/nearness of children's home to school criterion.

•Health and Special Access Reasons - Medical, health, social and special access reasons will be applied in accordance with the school's legal obligations, in particular those under the Equality Act 2010. Priority will be given to those children whose mental or physical impairment means they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Equally, this priority will apply to children whose parents/guardians physical or mental health or social needs means they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Such claims will need to be supported by written evidence from a suitably qualified medical or other practitioner which can demonstrate a special connection between these needs and the particular school that parents feel is the only school that can accommodate their child's needs. This must be sent to the Primary Admissions Team with the application form.

•Nearness of children's homes to school- we use the distance between the child's permanent home address and the school, measured in a straight line using the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) address point data. Distances are measured from a point defined as within the child's home to a point defined as within the school as specified by NLPG. The same address point on the school site is used for everybody.'

- ★ A pupil's home address is considered to be a residential property that is the child's only or main residence and not an address at which your child might sometimes stay or sleep due to your own domestic or special arrangements. The address must be the pupil's home address on the day you completed your application form and which is either owned by the child's parent, parents or guardian or leased to or rented by the child's parent, parents or guardian under a lease or written rental agreement. If you live separately from your partner but share responsibility for your child, and the child lives at two different addresses during the week, we will regard the home address as the one at which the child sleeps for the majority of weekdays.

After a place has been offered the school reserves the right to withdraw the place in the following circumstances:

1. When a parent has failed to respond to an offer within a reasonable time (deadlines are specified by the KCC at the time of offer); or
2. When a parent has failed to notify the school of important changes to the application information; or
3. The admission authority offered the place on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent.

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Waiting List:

If there is no place available for a child for whom an application has been received, the child's name will, at the request of the parents, be added to the school's Waiting List for a maximum period of six months from the date of initial refusal. If a place subsequently becomes available at Wittersham CEP School, the child to be offered the place will be selected in accordance with the over subscription criteria above. Each time a child is added the school's Waiting List will be re-ranked in line with the published subscription criteria.

In-year casual admissions are admissions which take place outside of normal entry in the Early Years Foundation Stage and may be taken at any time of the school year, depending on vacancies. Waiting lists are held in school for each year group, using the same oversubscription criteria as itemised within this policy.

Appeals:

All parents have the statutory right to appeal against any decision refusing them a school place.

Where parents have lodged an appeal against the refusal of a place and a place becomes available at the school, the place can then be offered without an appeal being heard, provided there are no other applicants at that time ranked higher on the school's waiting list.

Further information or support with queries may be obtained from the school office on telephone: **01797 270329** or email on office@wittersham.kent.sch.uk

Valid for 25/26 admissions

SUPPLEMENTARY FORM FOR ADMISSION

Governor's Admission Criteria to Wittersham CEP School

Please complete and return to:

The Headteacher

Wittersham CEP School

The Street

Wittersham

Tenterden

TN30 7EA

In respect of an application for admission to the School.

For completion by parent/guardian

Name of child: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Name of Parent(s) Guardian(s)

Address

Note if you are applying under category 1 please provide evidence of the appropriate care order with your application.

If your child will have a sibling attending Wittersham CEP School at time of entry please provide details below

Name of Child: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Continued...

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For completion by rector/vicar/minister

I CAN CONFIRM THAT THIS FAMILY ARE KNOWN TO ME AND AT LEAST ONE MEMBER OF THE FAMILY HAS ATTENDED MY CHURCH ON AT LEAST A MONTHLY BASIS WITHIN THE 12 MONTHS PRECEDING APPLICATION.

YES / NO

Please circle as appropriate

Name of Church attended:

Address of (Rector/Vicar/Minister):

Telephone number of
(Rector/Vicar/Minister):

Name of (Rector/Vicar/Minister):

Signature (Rector/Vicar/Minister):

Date:

Please note - Under the terms of the Appeals Procedure parents wishing to appeal have the right to see all correspondence relating to their application for admission.

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