QUANTOCK
EDUCATION TRUST

Admissions Policy 2028-2029

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1. Introduction & Aims

The Quantock Education Trust (QET) is a caring, inclusive and ambitious family of schools working in partnership to provide the highest quality of education which values each child and focuses on developing character and academic potential. Each individual school fosters a culture of high expectation and standards across all areas. The Trust welcomes admission applications on behalf of any child.

In accordance with the requirements of the 2021 School Admissions Code, the QET has developed and published these admissions arrangements to help explain the admission application process clearly and comprehensively so that parents and children are suitably informed when choosing and applying for a preferred school setting. Every admission application received will be administered in a fair and equitable way, in strict accordance with published policy and practice.

The Board of Trustees delegates to the Local Governance Committee (LGC) established in each school, the responsibility for operating the school waiting list and making decisions regarding in year admissions.

The 'day to day' management of school admissions is delegated to an Admissions Committee established within each school. If parents have specific requirements or need further help, they should contact the school or visit the school's website which provides a lot of useful information.

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at one of the schools in the Quantock Education Trust
- Set out the arrangements for allocating places to the students who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

For details of our Boarding admissions, please see our separate policy on the QET Website

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE):
School Admissions Code
School Admissions Appeals Code

We are required by our funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

The normal admissions round is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at a school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority.

Looked after children are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or

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- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

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

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order, or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order

This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

4. How to apply

The Board of Trustees is the Admissions Authority for the Trust and is responsible for agreeing admission numbers for each of its schools for each of the years of admission. The published admission number (PAN) for each school is set out in this policy (see Section 8). The Board of Trustees delegates to the Admissions Committee/LGC established in each school, the responsibility for operating the school waiting list and making decisions regarding in year admissions.

The Local Authority (LA) is responsible for coordinating all school place applications for children starting school in reception or transferring schools at 11+ throughout Somerset via the LA's coordinated admission scheme.

The Trust will adhere to the Somerset coordinated scheme which can be found at https://www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/applying-for-school/. The Trust also adheres to the local in-year Fair Access Protocol which can also be located at this website address.

Applications must be submitted to the Local Authority. Applications can be made online at https://www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/applying-for-school/. Paper applications are available to download from this website or upon request by telephoning 0300 123 2224. Details of deadlines for the receipt of secondary and primary applications can be found on the Local Authority website. When the deadline is missed, the application will be recorded as late. Late applications will be considered after those received on time. Outcomes for on time applications will be sent out by email (for online applications) or second class post (or next working day if this falls on a weekend or Bank Holiday).

For applications in the normal admissions round parents should use the application form provided by the home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools are in). Parents can use this form to express their preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order.

Parents will receive an offer for a school place directly from their local authority.

Please note, children already attending a nursery will not transfer automatically into reception in the main school. A separate application must be made for a place in reception.

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5. In year admissions

Parents can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose EHC plan names a school will be admitted to that school.

Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group they are applying for, the child will always be offered a place, unless admitting the child would prejudice the efficient provision of education or use of resources, in line with the Schools Admission Code guidance - see para 2.28.

If there are no spaces available at the time of the application, the child's name will be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group at the school. See Section 10 for further details.

Applications for in-year admissions should be sent directly to the school you are applying and will be considered within 15 school days.

Parents will be notified of the outcome of their in-year application in writing within 15 school days. If a place if offered and parents do not respond within 10 days, a reminder letter will be sent. If there is no further response after 5 days, the offer of the place will be withdrawn.

Proof of address may be required to be submitted with the application. This will be either the formal 'exchange of contracts' letter from the solicitor for a house purchase, a recent utility bill or the signing of a tenancy agreement. The Governing body reserve the right to seek further documentary evidence to support a claim of residence.

Where there are more applications than places available within a particular year group, applications will be considered against the published oversubscription criteria and allocated up to the admission number/ limit.

Places will not be allocated more than six school weeks or half a term in advance of being required. The only exceptions are children of UK service personnel and other crown servants (including diplomats) returning to the UK with a confirmed posting to the area (see Children of UK service personnel).

6. In Year Admissions Process

The Trust must allocate places on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only. A decision to offer or refuse admission will not be made by one individual in the school or Trust. The LGC, must make such decisions. The LGC must keep a clear record of any decisions on applications, including in-year applications. Decisions will be made by the LGC admissions committee, comprising of at least 3 governors.

Where it is not possible to convene a face to face meeting of the LGC in order to make a decision on an application, decisions may be made 'virtually', provided members are 'present' – for example via telephone or video conference.

7. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents may request that their child is admitted to a year group outside their normal age range, for instance where the child is summer born or where a child has suffered from particular social or medical issues impacting his or her schooling.

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If this occurs after admission, the school will discuss the options and reach a decision on the appropriate year group in the pupil's best interests.

The parent is required to make an on-time application for the child's normal age group (if relevant) but can submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time (delayed or accelerated school admission). The Admission Authority will ensure the parent is aware of whether the request for admission out of age group has been agreed before National Offer Day and the reason for any refusal.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parents' views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- Headteachers' views

If a request for delayed admission is agreed, the school place application may be withdrawn before a place is offered and a new school place application will need to be made as part of the normal admissions round the following year.

Where an Admission Authority agrees to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group the parent must apply for that year group according to the published timescales. If a school place application is submitted after the closing date it will be considered as late and processed according to the relevant timescales.

There is no right of appeal against the decision not to allow your child to be admitted outside of their normal age group.

One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parents, therefore, should consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all their preference schools, rather than just their first preference schools.

<u>Deferred Entry</u>

Parents offered a place in reception for their child have a right to defer entry, or to take a place up part-time, until the start of the term beginning immediately after their child has reached compulsory school age. However, places cannot be deferred beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made.

Children reach compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their 5th birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 August, 31 December and 31 March.

<u>Full-time schooling</u>

Parents have a right to a full-time place at school for their child from the September following their fourth birthday.

Summer Born Children

Parents of summer born children (born between 1st April and 31st August) may request that they are admitted into reception rather than year one when they become of compulsory school age. Applications will be considered as set out below (see requests for admission outside the normal age group).

8. Allocation of places

8.1 Admission numbers

Our schools have the following published admission numbers (PAN) for entry in:

Ashlands C of E Primary School	Entry for Reception:	PAN for 2028 is 15
Haselbury Plucknett C of E Primary School	Entry for Reception:	PAN for 2028 is 8
Haygrove School	Entry for Year 7:	PAN for 2028 is 214
Merriott Primary School	Entry for Reception:	PAN for 2028 is 15
Sexey's School	Entry for Year 7:	PAN for 2028 is 120 80 day students 40 boarding students
Spaxton C of E Primary School	Entry for Reception:	PAN for 2028 is 12
St Bartholomew's C of E Primary School	Entry for Reception:	PAN for 2028 is 15
Stogursey C of E Primary School	Entry for Reception:	PAN for 2028 is 12

8.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan names a school, will be admitted before any other places are allocated. This applies to all our Trust schools.

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

Each school uses the Trust's oversubscription criteria. In the event that any school receives more applications than the number of places available, places will be given to those children who meet the Trust's criteria.

When the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with 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. Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After*[1] – Children who are currently in the care of a Local Authority or have previously been and are now formally adopted or subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. Previously looked after children also 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.
2. Children living in the catchment area, with a sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.
3. a) Children living in the rural catchment area.*[2]
   b) Children living in the catchment area*[3]
4. Children eligible for pupil premium funding*[4]
5. Children living outside the catchment area, with a sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.

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6. a) Children of staff employed by the school for at least two years prior to the application closing date.
   b) Children of staff employed by the school recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
7. Children not satisfying a higher criterion.

**[1] A "Looked After Child" means any 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 in accordance with Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989.*

A child who was "a previously Looked After Child" means a child who after being Looked After became subject to an Adoption Order under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, a child arrangement order under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 or Special Guardianship Order under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989, as well as 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. Relevant evidence will be required to be submitted.

**[2] 'Rural catchment' is defined as living in the catchment area of a school and there is no alternative school within the statutory walking distance of the home address (2 miles for a child aged under eight years old and 3 miles for a child aged eight years old and over).*

**[3] Catchment areas for Somerset schools can be viewed here: School catchment*

**[4] Pupil Premium Funding is additional funding paid annually to schools under Section 14 of the Education Act 2002 for the purposes of supporting the attainment of disadvantaged children.*

Sixth Form

Every Year 11 child already attending Sexey's School will have a place in the Sixth Form, providing the minimum academic entrance requirements are met. They are required to submit an internal sixth form preferences form by the deadline set by the school.

Students attending Year 11 at an alternative school may apply for a place in the Sixth Form. Application Forms are available from the school website or by contacting the Admissions Office. Where there are more applications than places available within the published Sixth Form Admission Number, the over-subscription criteria will be applied and places allocated up to Published Admission Number to those students who achieve the minimum academic entrance requirements.

In the first instance, a provisional offer of a Sixth Form place will be notified to applicants by 1st March in the year of entry, which will be confirmed when GCSE results are known.

Students not allocated a place in the Sixth Form will have the legal right of appeal against the decision to refuse a place.

Where there is a clear measurable local demand for a particular course, it will be possible to exceed the Published Admission Number and accept additional students who meet the minimum academic entrance requirements in accordance with the published Admissions Code.

8.3 School Websites

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Please access the relevant school website for more information.

- Ashlands: https://www.ashlandsprimaryschool.co.uk/our-school/admissions/
- Haselbury: https://haselburyplucknettschool.co.uk/school-admissions/
- Haygrove: https://www.haygroveschool.co.uk/Admissions/
- Merriott: https://merriottfirstschool.co.uk/school-admissions/
- Sexey's: https://www.sexeys.somerset.sch.uk/reports_policies/admissions-policies/
- Spaxton: https://www.spaxton-school.co.uk/web/admissions/210983
- St Bartholomews: https://www.st-bartholomews.somerset.sch.uk/?page_id=2659
- Stogursey: https://www.stogurseyprimaryschool.co.uk/web/admissions_information/497900

8.4 Tie break

If a tie-break is necessary to determine which child is admitted in any of the categories of the over-subscription criteria, the child living closest to the school will be given priority for admission. Distance is measured in a straight line by a Geographical information System (GIS) method from the geocoded point of the school site to the geocoded point of the pupil's home. Random allocation by drawing lots supervised by someone independent of the school, will be used as a tie-break to decide who has highest priority for admission if the distance between a child's home and the school is equidistant in any two or more cases. 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.

8.5 Siblings

For the purposes of Admissions, a sibling is defined as a child living at the same address as a half or full brother or sister, an adoptive brother or sister or children of the same household who, in any of these cases, will be living with them at the same address at the date of their entry to the school

Please see the information on shared residency arrangements which will apply if necessary in order to determine the sibling's permanent home address.

8.6 Parent or parent/carer

Natural parents, whether they are married or not, any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person. Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the chid, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child is considered to be a parent in education law). This includes all people who have parental responsibility for a child who fall under the definition of 'parent' as set out in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996.

8.7 Home Address

The home address is important as school places are allocated on the basis of the home address of each child. A child's home address is considered to be where the child spends the majority of their time with the person(s) who have care of the child.

Documentary evidence of ownership or rental agreement may be required, together with proof of actual permanent residence at the property concerned. Places cannot be allocated on the basis of intended future changes of address unless house moves have been confirmed through the exchange of contracts or the signing of a formal tenancy agreement from a letting agency. Please note private letting agreements may not be accepted as proof of residence. An address change due to a move to live with family or friends will not be considered until the move has taken place and suitable proof of residency has

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been obtained. Proof that a move from the previous address has taken place may also be required e.g. proof of exchange of contracts, a tenancy agreement showing the end date of the tenancy or a notice to quit from the landlord or repossession notice. The LGC reserves the right to seek further documentary evidence to support your claim to residence which could include contacting the estate agent, solicitor landlord or relevant professional. A representative of the LGC may carry out a home visit/s without prior notice to verify a pupil's home address.

It should also be noted that an address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place. A fraudulent claim to an address may lead to the withdrawal of the offer of a place.

Where shared residence arrangements are in place and it is necessary to determine the home address, each parent may be required to write to the LGC and inform them of the number of days each week the child spends with them. The LGC may also ask for evidence of which parent/carer was in receipt of child benefit at the point of application. If the parent/carer is not in receipt of child benefit, the LGCwill ask for proof of the child's home address as held by the GP surgery at the point of application. If the child's home address cannot be verified the LGC reserve the right to request **further documentary evidence to support any claim of permanent home address.**

You must notify The Admissions & Entitlements Team, County Hall, and Taunton of any change of address during the admissions procedure.

8.8 Challenging behaviour

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. We may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8, 3.10 and 3.11) apply, i.e. where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that isn't the normal point of entry, only in such a case that we have good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour that may adversely affect the provision we can offer. In this case, we will refer these pupils to the Fair Access Protocol. We will not refuse admission on these grounds to looked after children, previously looked after children and children with EHC plans listing the school.

8.9 Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Somerset County Council's Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible.

9. Appeals

Applicants whose school place application is turned down have the legal right to appeal against the decision to refuse admission. Quantock Education Trust will arrange for the appeal to be heard by a fully independent group. Details concerning how to appeal are explained in the decision letters sent out when a place is refused.

This appeal should, as a first step, be submitted in writing via the appeal form on the Local Authority website. Appeals are heard by an independent Appeals Panel Committee from the Local Authority. The procedures will be followed in accordance with the School Standards Framework Act 1998 as amended

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by the Education Act 2002. Parents may attend the hearing of their appeal and may be accompanied by a friend. They will be notified of the arrangements for the hearing and their rights for the appeal meeting by the Clerk to the Local Authority.

For more information regarding appeals, including the admissions appeals timetable, please visit https://www.somerset.gov.uk/education-and-families/appeal-a-school-admissions-decision/ or see details below from the Somerset Council's website:

- To lodge an appeal, you will need to complete and return an appeal form following the instructions in your refusal email or letter. Your appeal form must be submitted within 20 school days of the date of your refusal letter, however you are advised to submit your form as soon as possible.
- You need to include all information requested on the form, any additional evidence, as well as all the reasons why you want your child to attend your preferred school. Please make sure you sign the form.
- In most cases the local authority will arrange the appeal. The Appeals Officer will write to you to confirm that your appeal form has been received. The officer will make arrangements for your appeal to be heard as soon as possible and will write to you to inform you of the date of your hearing – you will be given at least 10 school days' notice (unless you indicate on your form that you would not need this much notice).
- A reasonable time before your hearing, the local authority or Admissions Authority will send you their appeal statement, which sets out the reasons why the place at your preferred school was refused. This will be sent to the Appeal Panel at the same time.
- Your hearing will be held virtually, as an audio telephone conference. We recommend that you take part in the appeal hearing, if possible, as the Appeal Panel will be able to ask you any questions they may have. You can ask a relative or friend to be with you if you wish and you should tell the Appeals Officer if you intend to do this.
- Decision letters will be sent within 5 school days of the hearing wherever possible.

10. Waiting List

Where in any year the school receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until the end of the academic year to which the application applies. This will be maintained by the LGC and any child refused a place will automatically be placed on the waiting list. 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. The waiting list will be reordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever anyone is added to or leaves the waiting list.

11. Children of UK Service Personnel

The LGC endeavour to ensure that their admission arrangements support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children. In year applications are usually considered for admission up to a maximum of half a term in advance of the place being taken up. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area and Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area where a place can be made available up to a year in advance of being required providing the appropriate documentation is provided as proof of posting (an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting.)

Usually, an in year place may be allocated prior to actual residency, only on receipt of exchange of contracts or a formal signed rental agreement. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel

with a confirmed posting to the area and Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area. This means that, providing the application is accompanied by an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting, the LGC will process the application. If a home address is not available at this stage the LGC will accept a unit postal address or quartering area address. If the parent/carer is moving to the area as a result of leaving the armed forces, then no special consideration will be given to the application under the grounds of the application being made by a service family.

For further information, please refer to the DfE explanatory note on Admission of Children of Crown Servants;
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1060223/Admission_of_children_of_crown_servants_-_explanatory_note.pdf

12. Children from overseas

The Admission Authority will treat applications for children coming from overseas in accordance with Home Office rules for Foreign nationals.

This is the most recent guidance;

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-admissions-applications-from-overseaschildren

12. Monitoring arrangements

The Chair of the Board of Trustees and Trustees will establish a system for monitoring the application of the Admissions policy in each School and ensuring that it is being correctly applied. There will be an annual review of the implementation of this policy by the Board of Trustees to consider whether changes need to be made to the process or procedure whenever changes to admissions arrangements are proposed.

13. Useful Contact Details

School Admissions Team
Somerset County Council
County Hall
The Crescent
Taunton
Somerset
TA1 4DY

Website: https://www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/

Email: schooladmissions@somerset.gov.uk

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	School	Published Application Number (PAN)	Website / Email
	Ashlands CofE Primary School	15	https://www.ashlandsprimaryschool.co.uk/ office@ashlandsprimary.school
	Haselbury Plucknett CofE Primary School	8	https://haselburyplucknettschool.co.uk/ office@haselburyplucknettschool.co.uk
	Haygrove School	214	www.haygroveschool.co.uk SchoolOffice@haygrove-get.co.uk
	Merriott Primary School	15	https://merriottfirstschool.co.uk/ office@merriottfirstschool.co.uk
	Sexey's School	80 day students, 40 boarding students	https://www.sexeys.somerset.sch.uk/ reception@sexeys.somerset.sch.uk
	Spaxton C of E Primary School	12	http://www.spaxton-school.co.uk office@spaxton-get.co.uk
	St Bartholomew's CofE Primary School	15	https://www.st-bartholomews.somerset.sch.uk/ Office@stbartsprimary.co.uk
	Stogursey C of E Primary School	12	http://www.stogurseyprimaryschool.co.uk stogurseyschool@Quantockedtrust.co.uk

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