

Putnoe Primary School
Admissions Policy
2026-27

Introduction

Following consultation with the Department for Education's Regions Group, it has been agreed that Putnoe Primary School will temporarily reduce its pupil admission number (PAN) from 90 pupils to 60 pupils for 1st September 2026. The following policy outlines the new arrangements.

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at a school in Putnoe Primary School
- Set out the arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

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

- [School Admissions Code 2021](#)
- [School Admission 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, as defined in section 22 of the Children Act 1989, are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- 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 (defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of Children and Families Act 2014), or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order (defined in section 14A of the Children Act 1989)

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.

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.

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

A **parent** is any individual who holds parental responsibility, as defined under the Children Act 1989, or any person who has care of a child, where the child lives with them either full or part time and they look after that child.

A **sibling** refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step-brother or sister, foster brother or sister where foster care has been arranged by a Local Authority or the child of the parent/carers partner, and in every case, the child should be living at the same address. The sibling must be in the school at the time of application and be likely to remain in the school at the proposed date of admission.

A pupil's **home address** will be regarded as the address of the parent/carers with parental responsibility, and with whom the child normally lives. This will not usually include grandparents, aunts or uncles. Where a child spends time with parents/carers at more than one address, the address used to allocate a school place will be the one at which the pupil is ordinarily resident and where the child spends the majority of the school week (Mondays to Fridays) including nights. If there is any query on the home address this will be checked against original official documentation e.g. council tax bill, a recent utility bill (gas, electricity or water), a rental agreement, child benefit annual statement or family tax credit information.

4. How to apply

Admission into the Reception Classes

Those children whose **fourth** birthday falls between 1st April, and 31st August are admitted into the Reception Classes in the September after their **fourth** birthday usually full-time following consultation with the school.

Those children whose **fifth** birthday falls between 1st September, and 31st March are admitted full-time in September (Autumn Term).

There is no obligation to send your child to school full-time at the stated time if you feel it is not in the best interests of your child to do so. **However, once your child reaches statutory school age (5 years), full-time attendance is compulsory.**

The Local Authority co-ordinates admission into the Reception year. Applications for admission in September (following a child's 4th birthday) should be made in accordance with the Local Authority's co-ordinated scheme. Parents **must** apply to the Local Authority in which they live and return the application form to that Authority by the date indicated on the application form. Parents can also apply online using the online application system for the Local Authority in which they live.

Parents will be notified in writing by the Local Authority in which they live if they have been allocated a place.

In Year Admissions

Requests for admission into other year groups should be made on the 'In Year' Application Form available from the school and parents should apply directly to the Local Authority (LA) for an 'in-year' place (see Section 7).

4+ Class Admissions

Children are admitted into the 4+ Class on the following basis:

There is a maximum number of 30 places in the 4+ class which cannot be exceeded

Those children whose **fourth** birthday falls between the 1st September and

31st December are admitted, if places are available, to the **4+ Unit** the **January** after their fourth birthday.

This place is usually full-time but can be part-time if parents prefer.

Those children whose **fourth** birthday falls between the 1st January and 31st March are admitted, if places are available, to the **4+ Unit** in the **April** after their fourth birthday. This place is usually full-time but can be part-time if parents prefer.

Children do not have to attend the 4+ Unit before being admitted into Reception.

The school administers applications into the 4+ Unit. This does not guarantee a place in the Reception Classes in September, and parents must apply for a Reception Year place in accordance with the Local Authority's co-ordinated scheme for admissions.

5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and 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

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place but it is not in their preferred age group.

6. Allocation of places

6.1 Published admission number (PAN)

Our school's published admission number (PAN) for entry into 2026/27 is 60 pupils.

6.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose education, health and care plans (EHCP) name Putnoe Primary School will be admitted to the school before any other places are allocated.

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

In the event that the school receives more applications than the number of places available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in order, until all places are filled.

1. Highest priority will be given to looked-after children and all previously looked-after children who apply for a place at the school
2. Pupils living in the catchment area with siblings at the school
3. Other pupils living in the catchment area

4. Very exceptional medical grounds
5. Other siblings
6. Any other children

If a pupil moves into the catchment area outside the normal admissions round (or after the allocation process has begun) it may be more difficult to offer a place at the catchment area school if this would mean exceeding the admission number at the school. In this case, a place will normally be offered at the next nearest school or academy which caters for pupils of the same age and has places available.

Pupils who have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) are required to be admitted to the school which is named on the EHCP, even if the school is full. Pupils identified for admission through the Fair Access Protocol will also be admitted even if the school is full.

6.3 Tie break

If applying these criteria results in there being more children with an equal right to admission to the school than the number of available places, the determining factor will be the distance the pupil lives from the school, measured in a straight line, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.

The Local Authority will measure the distance from the address point of the pupil's home to the Headteacher's office. The Governors will not give priority within each criterion to children who meet other criteria.

6.4 Waiting list

Putnoe Primary School will maintain a clear, fair and objective waiting list for children entering Reception until 31 December of each school year of admission.

If your application is unsuccessful, your child's name will be added to the waiting list. Where places become available, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria outlined in section 6.2. Priority will not be given to children based on the date their application was received, or when their name was added to the list.

Under the School Admissions Code, looked-after children, previously looked-after children, and those allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol (see section 6.5 below) must take precedence over those on the waiting list

6.5 Fair Access Protocol

We participate in our Local Authority'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 and before anyone is considered from the waiting list. Eligibility for the Fair Access Protocol does not limit a parent's right to make an in-year application to any school for their child. Any application will be processed in accordance with the usual in-year admission procedures.

6.6 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. The exception to this is where we may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) 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, in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraphs 3.10 to 3.13) apply.

6.7 Children of UK service personnel and crown servants

Families of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, will be allocated a place in advance of the family arriving in the area, provided a place is available and the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date.

We will use the address at which the child will live when applying our oversubscription criteria, provided the parents provide some evidence of their intended address. Alternatively, the unit or quartering address will be used as the child's home address when considering the application against the oversubscription criteria, where this is requested by a parent.

6.8 Withdrawing an offer of a place

We will not withdraw an offer unless it has been offered in error, a parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

Where a parent has not responded to the offer, we will give them a further opportunity to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not respond.

If an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, we will consider the application afresh and a right of appeal will be offered if an offer is refused.

We will not withdraw an offer of a place once a child has started at Putnoe Primary School except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In these circumstances, we will consider the length of time that the child has been at the school before deciding whether to withdraw the place.

7. In-year admissions

Requests for admission into other year groups should be made to Bedford Borough Council.

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to the waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by 1 of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6.2 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Bedford Borough Admissions Forum has agreed the following exceptions which may result in the admission number for a school being exceeded:

1. The admission of catchment area pupils, where the parent has expressed a preference (whether first, second or third preference) for the catchment school as part of the normal admissions round and in accordance with the published admissions arrangements. This is not however the guarantee of a place.
2. The admission of pupils who have an EHCP which names the school, when that pupil has either been assessed or moved into the area outside the normal admissions round.
3. The admission of pupils in accordance with the In-Year Fair Access Protocol.
4. The admission of pupils who have moved into the area, where there is no other suitable school within a reasonable travelling distance, or where the admission of an additional catchment area child would not prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources. Before admitting children under this exception, the Governing Body will consult with the Local Authority who will be able to advise whether the first of these conditions applies.
5. The admission of a looked after child outside of the normal admissions round as a result of a direction by the local authority acting as a corporate parent.
6. The admission of a child in very exceptional circumstances in which the Local Authority and the Headteacher are in agreement that not to agree to admit the child would be perverse.
7. The admission of a twin or children from multiple births provided the admission would not cause a breach of infant class size limits

8. Appeals

If your child's application for a place at Putnoe Primary School is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals.

If we do not offer a child a place at this school, it is because to do so would prejudice the education of other children by allowing the numbers of children in school to increase too much.

If parents wish to appeal against a decision to refuse entry, they can do so by applying to the LA. An independent appeals panel then meets to consider all appeals by parents who have been refused a place at our school and who wish to appeal against this decision. An appeals panel's decision is binding for all parties concerned. If the appeals panel decides that we should admit a child to our school, then we will accept this and continue to do all we can to provide the best education for all the children in our school. (Details of appeal arrangements are set out in the Code of Practice on Schools Admission Appeals, which came into force in September 1999.)

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the board of trustees every year.

Whenever changes to the admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the PAN), the board of trustees will publicly consult on these changes.

The board of trustees will consult on the admission arrangements at least once every 7 years, even if there have been no changes during that period. Consultation will be for a minimum of 6 weeks and will take place between 1 October and 31 January of the school year before the arrangement are to apply.