EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

'Together in God's love, we learn, inspire and grow'
'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength' (Matthew 22:37-39)

St Thomas' Church of England Aided Primary School – Winchelsea

Friars Road, Winchelsea, East Sussex, TN36 4ED Tel: 01797 226479

Admissions Policy 2026-2027

The name of the Headteacher in our school is: Dale Saxby (Headteacher)

The names and contact details of the school staff members whom pupils and parents should contact on a day-to-day basis are: Sue Hollands (School Secretary) and Lea Paine (School Business Manager) office@st-thomas-winchelsea.e-sussex.sch.uk
01797 226479

The name of our linked Governor with responsibility for monitoring this policy is: Jonathan Murphy (Chair of Governors)
jmurphy@st-thomas-winchelsea.e-sussex.sch.uk

The School's Chair of Governors is: Jonathan Murphy (Chair of Governors)
jmurphy@st-thomas-winchelsea.e-sussex.sch.uk

Approved By	March 2026
Staff Consulted	FGB
Ratified by the Governing Board	March 2026
Review Date	March 2027

Admissions Policy 2026-2027

As a Church of England Aided Primary school, the Governing Body is responsible for admissions (admissions authority). Our policy sets out the process followed by the Governing Body in making decisions about admissions applications.

The school takes part in the East Sussex County Council coordinated admission arrangements for admission from age 4.

Our Published Admission Number (PAN) is 22

Admission from age 4

All children who have been offered a place in the Reception Class can be admitted full-time in September of the school year following their fourth birthday. For children below compulsory school age:-

- Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school be deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year.
- Parents can request that their child attend part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. A child becomes of compulsory school age when they reach the age of five and, where registered at a school, must be attending on a full-time basis in the term following their fifth birthday.

The admission number for the school is 22, meaning that if there are 22 applicants, we will take them; 22 is the maximum number of pupils the school will admit to the Reception intake.

If the school receives more applications than there are places available, the Governors will admit children according to the following criteria, which are listed in the order of priority:

1) Looked After Children or previously Looked After Children, including those who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and were adopted. *(see note 1)*
2) Children living in the ecclesiastical parish of Winchelsea and Winchelsea Beach.
3) Children of any member of staff who, at the time of application, has been employed at the School for two or more years or staff recruited to address a shortage.
4) Children with brothers or sisters already attending the school at the time of entry. *(see note 2)*
5) Children whose parents are regular worshippers at St Thomas', in Winchelsea *(see note 3)*
6) Other Children.

In the event of oversubscription within any priority, place allocation will be decided by prioritising applications based on home-to-school distance measured in a straight line (as the crow flies).

If applicants cannot be prioritised using the tie-breaker above because the distance measurements are the same, the school will use random allocation to determine which children will be offered the remaining places. This will be done electronically using the Local Authority's admissions software.

All applications will be judged equally according to the above criteria, regardless of whether they are 1st, 2nd, or 3rd preference.

Notes

1) A Looked After Child (LAC) or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order*, including those 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 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).

*An adoption order is an order under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders). A 'child arrangements order' is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014. 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).

2) A sibling is a full, half or stepbrother or sister living permanently in the same household, including an adoptive or foster brother or sister.

3) For parents applying under category 5, 'regular' is defined as those who attend church at least once a month and have done so for the previous twelve months. Written evidence must be provided by the priest/minister of St Thomas', where they regularly worship. A form is available from the school, which the minister will need to sign. The form will then need to be returned to the school with the admission form. (Document found at the end of this policy).

4) Reference to parents includes legal guardians and applies to either or both parents, or a sole parent.

5) Where only one parent/guardian satisfies a criterion, the application will be treated equally with one where two parents meet the requirement.

6) Maps of boundaries of the ecclesiastical parish of Winchelsea and Winchelsea Beach can be viewed at the school and also through this link: Parish boundaries

7) Late applications are considered after all those applications received by the specified deadline.

Multiple birth applications (for example, twins)

In the case of multiple-birth applications, the Published Admission Number or admission limit will be increased at the point of allocation, or exceeded, to ensure that multiple-birth siblings can be allocated places at the same school (the sibling definition still applies).

Special Educational Needs – Education Health & Care Plans (EHCPs)

A child with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) that identifies a specific educational placement must be admitted to school through a separate process administered by the Local Authority (LA).

Procedure for unsuccessful applicants

Parents who are not offered a place for their child(ren) are entitled to appeal to an independent panel under the provisions of the 1996 Education Act. It is suggested that parents should also contact the Clerk of Governors, who can explain the appeal process. Parents who wish to appeal should do so in writing to the Clerk of Governors within 20 school days from the notification of the decision not to admit.

Children who are refused a place can, at their parents' request, be placed on a waiting list, where priorities will also be determined by the admissions criteria set out above. Children are kept on the waiting list until the end of the current academic year.

In-year admissions

Applications can be submitted at any time during the academic year. Admissions are dealt with as and when a space becomes available.

A panel of Governors approves in-year admissions during the school year. If there are more applications than places available, the criteria listed above will apply. Please get in touch with the school to apply for an in-year place.

St Thomas' Church of England Aided Primary School
Confirmation of Church Attendance
(Supplementary Information Form for Admissions)

Parent / Carer Details
Name(s) of Parent/Carer: _____
Contact Telephone Number: _____
Email Address: _____

Child's Details
Child's Full Name: _____
Date of Birth: _____
Proposed Year of Admission: _____

Church Attendance
Name of Church Attended: _____
How often do you attend public worship? (please tick)

- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Fortnightly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Other: _____

How long has this been your practice? _____

To be completed by the Vicar / Priest-in-Charge of St Thomas'
I confirm, to the best of my knowledge, that this family have attended worship at St Thomas' Church for at least **once a month over the previous twelve months**, as required under the school's admission criteria.
Name of Priest / Minister: _____
Position: _____
Contact Details: _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent / Carer Declaration
I declare that the information provided above is true and accurate.
Name of Parent / Carer: _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____

Note – As per the school's admission criteria, 'regular worship' is defined as attending St Thomas' Church at least once a month over the previous 12 months, as verified by the priest/minister of St Thomas' Church.

Data Protection: The information on this form is collected for the purpose of processing your application for a school place. It will be handled in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy