
From: Sarah Hammond, Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education
To: Rory Love, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Subject: Co-ordinated Schemes for Primary and Secondary Schools in Kent and Admission Arrangements for Primary and Secondary Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools 2026/27

Decision no: 25/00022

Key Decision : Yes

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: 27/02/2025

Future Pathway of report: *Cabinet Member Decision*

Electoral Division: All

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary: To finalise the scheme for transfer to Primary and Secondary schools from September 2026 including the process for non-coordinated In-Year Admissions, the In-Year Admission process for Primary & Secondary schools in Kent and the admission arrangements for the 2026/27 school year.

Recommendation(s):

That the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills to determine:

- a) The Coordinated Primary Admissions Scheme 2026/27 incorporating the In Year admissions process as detailed in Appendix A
- b) The Co-ordinated Secondary Admissions Scheme 2026/27 incorporating the In Year admissions process and Kent Test process as detailed in Appendix B
- c) The oversubscription criteria relating to Community and Voluntary Controlled Infant, Junior and Primary Schools in Kent 2026/27 as detailed in Appendix C
- d) The oversubscription criteria relating to Community and Voluntary Controlled Secondary Schools in Kent 2026/27 as detailed in Appendix D

- e) The Published Admissions Number for Community and Voluntary Controlled Infant, Junior and Primary Schools 2026/27 as set out in Appendix C
 - f) The Published Admissions Number for Community and Voluntary Controlled Secondary Schools 2026/27 as set out in Appendix D
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Authority (LA), as the admissions authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, is required to determine its admission arrangements for these schools each year.
- 1.2 The Education Act 2002 includes a duty on each LA, to formulate a scheme to co-ordinate admission arrangements for all maintained schools in its area and to take action to secure the agreement to the scheme by all admission authorities.
- 1.3 All admission arrangements identified in this document are outside the arrangements for pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP).
- 1.4 KCC has consulted the Headteachers and Governors of all Kent Primary and Secondary schools on its proposals to co-ordinate admissions to all Kent Primary and Secondary schools for September 2026.

2. Key Considerations

- 2.1 An LA consultation ran from 10 December 2024 and 29 January 2025 and considered the following aspects:

The Primary Co-ordinated Admission Scheme including the In Year admissions process for 2026/27;

The Secondary Co-ordinated Admission Scheme including the In Year admissions process for 2026/27;

- 2.2 Further LA consultations ran from 2 December 2024 and 13 January 2025 which adjusted the Published Admissions Number (PAN) of the following schools, which were proposed as a result of reduced forecasted demand in the locality around the school:

- Sevenoaks Primary School - reduce PAN from 90 to 60
- Woodlands Primary School - reduce PAN from 90 to 60
- Tunbury Primary School - reduce PAN from 90 to 60
- Downs View Infant School - reduce PAN from 90 to 60
- Bodsham CofE Primary School - reduce PAN from 13 to 10
- Herne Bay Infant School – reduce PAN from 90 to 60
- Guston CofE Primary School - reduce PAN from 22 to 20 and addition of Service Pupil Premium criterion

3. Background

The Co-ordinated Primary Admissions Scheme 2026/27 incorporating In Year admissions process

a.i All Admissions Authorities within Kent agreed to the proposed Co-ordinated Primary Admissions Scheme for 2026/27. No Infant, Junior or Primary schools or Academies have refused to accept the scheme. The scheme dates are set out in a similar way to last year with small adjustments for variations in weekdays and weekends from one year to the next. The scheme specifies a process for schools to follow when making offers for in year applications and includes a requirement to inform the LA of all applications and outcomes to enable continued monitoring of pupil movement to maintain essential safeguarding duties.

a.ii The LA is required to assist parents where they have difficulty securing a school place. Schools and academies must keep the LA informed about the vacancies in each year group as they arise in order for the LA to carry out its statutory duty to ensure every eligible child has a school place.

a.iii The details of the scheme are located in Appendix A

(b) The Co-ordinated Secondary Admissions Scheme 2026/27 incorporating the In Year Admissions Process

b.i The Secondary Co-ordinated Scheme was agreed by all Kent Admissions Authorities. No Secondary schools or Academies refused to accept the proposed scheme. The scheme specifies a process for schools to follow when making offers for in year applications and includes a requirement to inform the LA of all applications and outcomes to enable continued monitoring of pupil movement to maintain essential safeguarding duties.

b.ii The Secondary Co-ordinated Scheme continues to include provision of a centralised assessment process for Kent Grammar schools (The Kent Test). This will allow Officers to ensure that suitable arrangements are made for the provision of this assessment process within the forthcoming academic year.

b.iii The LA is required to assist parents where they have difficulty securing a school place. Schools and academies must keep the LA informed about the vacancies in each year group as they arise in order for the LA to carry out its statutory duty to ensure every eligible child has a school place.

b.iv The details of the scheme are located in Appendix B

(c) The Over-subscription Criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Infant, Junior and Primary Schools in Kent 2026/27

c.i The over-subscription criteria for most Community and Voluntary Controlled Infant, Junior and Primary Schools are the same as those used in 2025. The LA is not required to widely consult where there are no proposals to change Community or Voluntary Controlled school's oversubscription criteria.

c.ii However, a consultation was held to add a new criterion to Guston CofE Primary School's oversubscription criteria. This new criterion provides priority to children in receipt of Service Premium (i.e. children of Armed Forces Service personnel). This new criterion is added as a third priority, after the legally required first criterion of Looked After and previously Looked After Children and priority for children with siblings attending the school.

c.iii Details of the over-subscription criteria for all Community and Voluntary Controlled Infant, Junior and Primary Schools, including Guston C of E Primary are located in appendix C.

(d) The Over-subscription Criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Secondary schools in Kent 2026/27

d.i The proposed over-subscription criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Secondary Schools is the same as that used in 2025. Because there are no changes proposed, no consultation was required. However, they still require legal determination by the admission authority for those schools.

d.ii Details of the over-subscription criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Secondary Schools in Kent are located in appendix D

(e) The Published Admissions Number for Community and Voluntary Controlled Infant, Junior and Primary Schools 2026/27

e.i The PAN for Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary, Infant and Junior schools are identified in Appendix C. The LA can only determine the admission number for schools where it is the admissions authority and the schools listed fall into this category, at the time of going to print.

e.ii The LA is not required to hold a local consultation where Published Admissions Numbers are proposed to stay the same or increase. Assistant Directors for Education worked with Community and Voluntary Controlled schools to monitor interest in PAN increases and these are included within Appendix C where agreement was reached.

e.iii Consultations are required where a school wishes to reduce its PAN. PAN reductions are vital to support schools in areas of reduced local demand from receiving a greater number of pupils than they are able to deliver teaching capacity for, within provided funding. Local Assistant Directors for Education worked with schools to support the following reductions:

- Sevenoaks Primary School - reduce PAN from 90 to 60
- Woodlands Primary School - reduce PAN from 90 to 60
- Tunbury Primary School - reduce PAN from 90 to 60
- Downs View Infant School - reduce PAN from 90 to 60
- Bodsham CofE Primary School - reduce PAN from 13 to 10
- Herne Bay Infant School – reduce PAN from 90 to 60
- Guston CofE Primary School - reduce PAN from 22 to 20

(f) The Published Admissions Number for Community and Voluntary Controlled Secondary Schools 2026/27

f.i The PAN for Community and Voluntary Controlled Secondary schools are detailed in Appendix D. The LA can only determine the admission number for schools where it is the admissions authority and the schools listed fall into this category, at the time of going to print.

f.ii The LA is not required to hold a local consultation where Published Admissions Numbers are proposed to stay the same or increase. Assistant Directors for Education worked with Community and Voluntary Controlled schools to monitor interest in PAN increases and these are highlighted within Appendix D where agreement was reached.

(g) Relevant Statutory Consultation Areas 2026/27

g.i Relevant statutory consultation areas have not changed for 2026/27. Details for the Primary arrangements are in Appendix A and Secondary arrangements in Appendix B.

4. Options considered and dismissed, and associated risk

KCC is legally required to determine new admissions schemes and arrangements each year, even if they remain unchanged. As such, KCC is compelled to complete this activity, limiting alternative options. Theoretically, KCC could have maintained previous arrangements for schools where changes are proposed. However, this would have been detrimental to the pupils and schools in those areas, so the proposed changes were preferable.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 Delivery of related admissions functions are to be resourced through existing staffing models. No additional financial requirements are identified or expected.

6. Legal implications

6.1 The Education Act 2002 includes a duty on each LA, to formulate a scheme to co-ordinate admission arrangements for all maintained schools in its area and to take action to secure the agreement to the scheme by all admission authorities. Agreement to this scheme and admission arrangements fulfills KCC's legal obligations in this area.

7. Equalities implications

7.1 The Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed in full and is attached. Kent's admissions scheme is designed to fulfil underlying legislation, which itself is compliant with the Equalities Act and ensures admissions authorities are fundamentally unable to disadvantage pupils with protected characteristics. As such there is extremely limited opportunity for pupils to be treated differently as a result of those characteristics, although KCC monitors nonetheless to ensure proper adherence to legislation.

8. Other corporate implications

8.1 No direct implications on other corporate priorities

9. Governance

9.1 Following the decisions, Director of Education will be required to ensure statutory duties are fulfilled. This role is delegated to the Assistant Director – Fair Access

10. Conclusions

10.1 Following determination, all scheme and admission arrangements documents will be made available on admissions related pages on KCC website for reference. They will inform the administration of KCC's admissions processes and school based decision making for the offering of school places for the 2026/27 academic year.

Recommendation(s):

That the Cabinet Member consider the following proposal:

- a) The Coordinated Primary Admissions Scheme 2026/27 incorporating the In Year admissions process as detailed in Appendix A
- b) The Co-ordinated Secondary Admissions Scheme 2026/27 incorporating the In Year admissions process and Kent Test process as detailed in Appendix B
- c) The oversubscription criteria relating to Community and Voluntary Controlled Infant, Junior and Primary Schools in Kent 2026/27 as detailed in Appendix C
- d) The oversubscription criteria relating to Community and Voluntary Controlled Secondary Schools in Kent 2026/27 as detailed in Appendix D
- e) The Published Admissions Number for Community and Voluntary Controlled Infant, Junior and Primary Schools 2026/27 as set out in Appendix C
- f) The Published Admissions Number for Community and Voluntary Controlled Secondary Schools 2026/27 as set out in Appendix D

10. Background Documents

- Appendix A - Coordinated Primary Admissions Scheme 2026/27 (including relevant statutory consultation areas)

- Appendix B - Coordinated Secondary Admissions Scheme 2026/27 (including relevant statutory consultation areas)
- Appendix C – Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Infant, Junior and Primary Schools 2026/27 (including oversubscription criteria and published admission numbers)
- Appendix D – Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Secondary Schools 2026/27 (including oversubscription criteria and published admission numbers)
- Appendix E – Scheme Equality Impact Assessment

11. Contact details

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