



Admission Policy for Hope Community School for 2026/27

Hope Community School is a Free School. We work with families to increase children's aspirations, encourage adventure and maximise each child's talents and gifts. We want to inspire children to be people who not only value their community but also have the desire, ability and tools to transform and enrich it through innovation and aspirational visions.

We want children to enjoy and achieve their full potential at school. No matter what their ability, ethnicity or background, each child should thrive throughout their education.

HCS is a school of Christian Designation. The school seeks to be an inclusive school expressing a twenty-first century Christian ethos welcoming children and families of all faiths and no faith and drawing together a wide range of people from different backgrounds to work towards the good of the whole community.

At HCS we understand how important the choice of school for your child is for you, and we want to do everything we can to support you and give you all relevant and helpful information, so please do contact us for clarification if you require this

The school's Published Admissions Number (PAN), which is the number of children the school will admit to Reception Year in September 2026, is 30.

Applications

For an application to be **on-time**, it must be made by 23:59 on the 15 January 2026.

If a school has fewer applications than its PAN, all children will be offered a place.

If a school under this policy has more applications by the 15 January 2025 than its PAN (called 'oversubscription'), applications will be ranked by the oversubscription criteria and places offered from this ranking.

Children with Education, Health and Care Plans (**EHCPs**) that name a school must be admitted to that school, even if it is full. This process sits outside of the normal admissions arrangements and this policy. Children with EHCPs will still count towards the PAN of the school.

Applications received after 15 January 2026 will be **late applications**. They will be dealt with after all on-time applicants have been offered school places. Places can't be 'held back' for late applicants. You may not get a place at your preference school if you apply late and the school has already been filled by on-time applications.

Oversubscription Criteria

1. Looked After/Previously Looked After Children
2. Up to 6 Faith Based Places, in the following priority:
 - a. Children whose parents are regular attenders of Pioneer Churches, Southampton and who have a sibling on roll at the school, who will continue to attend that school the following year
 - b. Children whose parents are regular attenders of Pioneer Churches, Southampton and who have evidence that they must attend the school for medical, social or welfare reasons
 - c. Children whose parents are regular attenders of Pioneer Churches, Southampton and are living closest to the school
 - d. Children whose parents are regular attenders of a Churches Together in England and/or Evangelical Alliance Church and who have a sibling on roll at the school, who will continue to attend that school the following year
 - e. Children whose parents are regular attenders of a Churches Together in England and/or Evangelical Alliance Church and who have evidence that they must attend the school for medical, social or welfare reasons
 - f. Children whose parents are regular attenders of a Churches Together in England and/or Evangelical Alliance Church and are living closest to the school
3. Children who have a sibling on roll at the school, who will continue to attend that school the following year
4. Children who have evidence that they must attend the school for medical, social or welfare reasons
5. Children living closest to the school

If a school oversubscribes within any of the 5 categories, distance will be used to prioritise the applications in that category. Should two or more identical distances exist for the last vacancy, lots will be drawn by a senior manager at Southampton City Council.

Distances are measured using straight-line ('as the crow flies'). They measure from the home address to the mid-point of the nearest pedestrian gate of the school that would be open during school hours, using a computerised mapping system with data supplied by the Ordnance Survey.

Waiting Lists

If a place cannot be offered to an applicant in Year R, they will automatically be added to the school's waiting list.

Waiting lists are kept in the order of the school's oversubscription categories, and not how long a child has been on the waiting list for. This means that each new

application will cause the list to be re-ranked, and children could move down as well as up the list.

Places will be offered for Year R from the waiting list if a vacancy arises at the school.

The Year R waiting list will be held until 31 July 2027.

In-Year Applications and Reserve Applicant Lists

In-year applications will be considered against this policy and its oversubscription criteria.

If a place cannot be offered to an applicant in Years 1-6, they will automatically be added to the school's reserve applicant list, unless they ask not to be.

The reserve applicant list will be kept in the order of the school's oversubscription categories on the basis of the information provided in their first applicant, and not how long a child has been on the list.

When vacancies arise, the applicant(s) at the top of this list will be invited to reapply.

This does not guarantee that a place will be offered at this time, as the application will need to be considered freshly against the Admissions Code 2021 and the school's admissions policy.

Definitions

Looked After/Previously Looked After Children: Looked After Children are those who are in the care of a Local Authority. A Previously Looked After Child is one who was in the care of a Local Authority until they were adopted or became subject to a Child Arrangements or Special Guardianship Order. This also applies to children who were in state care outside of England before being adopted.

Sibling: A sibling is defined as a brother or sister living in the same family unit for most of the school week. This included half, step, foster or adopted brothers and sisters. This criterion cannot be applied to cousins.

Medical/Social/Welfare: A child will be able to apply under this category if they have a medical or psychological condition, or social or welfare need that means only the preference school can meet their needs. This must be evidenced by the relevant consultation/psychologist or social care professional. It will not apply simply if a child has a diagnosis of an illness, allergy, Special Educational Need, or is open to a Social Worker as all schools are expected to manage the needs of all pupils.

Entry into Year R

The offers made for Reception classes are full-time places for the start of term in September 2026.

If you feel your child is not ready to start school the September after they turn 4, it is possible for them to access:

- Part-time admission to the offered school from September following their child's 4th birthday. This should be discussed with the Headteacher of the school.
- Defer their child's entry until later in the school year. They must be attending by the term after their 5th birthday, or the final term of the school year, whichever is first. This should be discussed with the Headteacher of the school.

Parents of children who are born between 1 April and 31 August ('summerborn' children), may choose to send their child to school the September after they turn 5 instead. They can either:

- Apply in-year for a place for their child to start Year 1 in the September after they turn 5.
- Request for their child to be admitted outside of their normal age group into Reception the September after they turn 5.

Requests for a child to be educated outside of their normal age group can be made online via the Southampton City Council website.

Requests for education outside of the normal age group must be considered by the admissions authority for the school and other admission authorities do not have to honour this decision.

Requests for education outside of the normal age group must be made at each transition, and there is no guarantee that any agreement will continue through the child's whole school life.