

Gildredge House Admissions Policy 2025/26

Gildredge House (hereinafter ‘the school’) is a co-educational all-through school.

The school’s Governing Board is responsible for admissions to the school. The Governing Board will be the Admissions Authority for the school. Any applications to the school will be in accordance with the arrangements below.

Admissions to the school will be in accordance with the School Admissions Code, the School Admissions Appeals Code and admissions law. Our Admissions Policy will seek to be fair and transparent.

Admissions to the school

Main entry points

The Admissions Authority of Gildredge House welcomes applications at its two main entry points:

- Reception Class (Primary Phase)
- Year 7 (Secondary Phase)

As an all-through school (age 4-16) Gildredge House does not have a main entry point at Year 3.

Applications outside the normal annual admissions rounds for the two main entry points are dealt with as In-Year Admissions (see guidance page 7 ‘Other Admissions’ below).

For applications for a place at the school in Year 7 and Reception an application must be made direct to East Sussex County Council. The Common Application Form for both Reception and Year 7 will be available from September. Parents can apply online:

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/education-learning/schools/admissions/apply-primary>

Paper application forms may be obtained from your primary school (for Year 7), Nursery (for Reception) or direct from ESCC at the following address:

Admissions Team

Children’s Services
PO Box 4, County Hall
St Anne’s Crescent
Lewes BN7 1SG
Tel: 0300 330 9472

Email: admissions@eastsussex.gov.uk

For information on all dates regarding applications please refer to the East Sussex County Council website:

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/education-learning/schools/admissions/find-school>

The school will also publish its dates for applications and events on the school website.

Published admission number

The admission number to the school each year will be 56 students entering Reception and 84 entering Year 7.

Admission of children below compulsory school age and deferred entry to school

In accordance with section 2.16 of the School Admission Code, Gildredge House will provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. We will allow parents to:

- a) request that the date their child is admitted to school is deferred until later in the academic year or until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age, and
- b) request that their child takes up the place part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Admission of Summer Born Children

In accordance with section 2.17, 2.17A and 2.17B of the School Admission Code 2014, Gildredge House will provide for the admission of all Summer Born Children (children born within the period 1st April - 31st August).

When making an application for the school on the Common Application Form parents should:

- a) request that their child is considered for a place outside of their normal age group and specify the reason why this request is being made. The school is unable to hold a school place for any child who wishes to be admitted within their normal age group the following academic year. There is no guarantee that a place will be available or that the child will rank high enough within the over-subscription criteria at the time of application, to be allocated a place. For Reception and Year 7, applicants will need to make an application as part of the usual admissions process for the following academic year.

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/education-learning/schools/admissions/summer-born>

- b) provide the School Admission Authority with all relevant documentation to substantiate that request.
- c) meet with the School Admission Authority and/or Head Teacher to discuss the application and the reasoning behind the request.

The application will be considered, taking into consideration the view of the Head Teacher and the School Admissions Authority. Parents will be informed of the decision made and the reasons for that decision. There is no right to Appeal if the request is declined and the school offer a place within the child's normal age group.

Admission of Year 6 (Primary) students to Year 7 (Secondary)

Gildredge House is classed as an all-through school. This means that children attending Year 6 at the primary school have an automatic entitlement to transfer to Year 7 of the secondary school but may, if preferred, apply for a place at an alternative school during the normal secondary transfer process.

Late applications

Late applications are dealt with under the same admissions priorities, but not until after 'on time' applications have been processed.

Should spaces be available after the normal annual admissions rounds then eligible students will be offered a place. In the event that the school is full late applicants join the waiting list.

Any offers made will be in accordance with our over-subscription criteria outlined below.

Waiting list

The waiting list is the list of children held and maintained by the school when the school has allocated all of its places, on which children are ranked in priority order against the over-subscription criteria. Each new application will mean that the list will be ranked again in line with the over-subscription criteria.

In the event that the year group for which you are applying is full, unsuccessful applicants can apply direct to the school to be placed on the waiting list for that year group.

The waiting list for children starting or transferring school in the September at the beginning of the academic year will be maintained until the end of the Autumn Term. From that date on the waiting list for children joining an existing class or age group will run until the end of the full term in which the application is processed.

Applicants who wish for their child's name to remain on the waiting list must make a fresh application at the beginning of each full term.

Children with a Special Educational Need statement

In accordance with the law, children with statements of Special Educational Need or an Education, Health and Care Plan will be admitted to the school where their statement has specifically named the school as the most appropriate placement.

Over-subscription Criteria

In the event that the school receives more applications than there are places, those places will be ranked in accordance with the criteria below:

1. Looked after children (LAC) (as defined under section 22 of the Children Act 1989) and children who were looked after but ceased to be so (PLAC) because they were adopted or became subject to an Arrangement Order or Special Guardianship Order (Please see Definition of Terms below). This includes children who appear (to the Admissions Authority), to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (Internationally adopted previously looked after children (IAPLAC)).
2. Children whose parents are founders of Gildredge House Free School and who have been granted this provision by the Secretary of State for Education.
3. Children of staff (as determined within the Definition of Terms set out below on Pg6) who are employed at the school.

4. Children who have siblings attending this school at the time of application and on the date of admission. In the event where the number of siblings exceeds the number of places available the published over-subscription criteria will be applied.
5. To fulfil the school's role as a community hub, after places have been filled under the first four criteria, 60% of any remaining places will be offered to those children who live nearest to the school based on a straight line distance measurement.
6. To provide fair and open access to the wider community, after places have been filled under the first five criteria, any remaining places will be offered to children living within the East Sussex County Council Electoral Divisions of Eastbourne, Polegate, Willingdon and East Dean. Where the number of applicants in this category exceeds the number of places available, offers will be determined by random allocation.
7. After places have been filled under the first six criteria any remaining places will be offered to children from other areas. Where the number of applicants in this category exceeds the number of places, offers will be determined by random allocation.

Methods for random allocation

The tie-breaker process will be overseen by a responsible person who will be independent of the school.

Those applications that are subject to random allocation will:

- a) Have their details entered into a computer programme.
- b) Each application will be given a Unique Identification Number.
- c) The programme will randomise all the applications and present the names in a randomised list.
- d) The relevant number of places to be filled under category 6 will be offered to students in position order from the list of randomised applications.

In the event that a qualifying application triggers another admission (for example a sibling in the same year group), the sibling will also be offered a place.

A copy of the Gildredge House Application Randomisation Policy can be obtained from the school direct or viewed on the school's website.

Tie-breaker

In the event where the number of applicants within a specific criterion from 1 to 4 exceeds the number of places available (e.g. two staff children for one available place) the next relevant over-subscription criterion will be applied (e.g. distance).

In the event that two or more children live at the same distance from the school (as can happen with families living in blocks of flats) the tie-breaker will be decided by random allocation.

This will be done using the same computer system as defined above. The tie-breaker process will be overseen by a responsible person who will be independent of the school.

These criteria are in keeping with our inclusive vision and ethos, as we will be admitting an all ability intake of students regardless of background.

Verification

In the event of over-subscription the school will seek verification of address when it is unclear whether the applicant meets the over-subscription criteria. Proof of residence (e.g. council tax bill) and proof of identity may be required. The Governing Board reserves the right to seek verification from other official sources.

False or misleading information that materially affects the decision to award a place will result in the withdrawal of that place. If the place has been awarded, accepted or taken up, that place may still be withdrawn.

Notification

Applications for Year 7 and Reception places will be notified of the decision by email or First Class post. For notification dates refer to the East Sussex County Council website:

https://new.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schools/admissions/completed/decision/offer_dates/

Successful applicants will be required to complete and return the Acceptance and Admission Form to Gildredge House.

If the school do not hear from parents within 14 days they may be sent a reminder letter. If parents decide not to take the place please contact the school or ESCC in writing.

Appeals

The school will engage the services of an Independent Appeals Panel immediately admissions are opened. The school will publish details of admissions and appeals on the school website so that families know immediately what steps they need to take to lodge an appeal, and what deadline(s) apply to the process including in terms of the decision date.

- Year 7 Appeals will normally be heard in May and June.
- Reception Appeals will normally be heard in June and July.
- The decision of the Appeals Panel will be binding on all parties.

See the following website for advice on how to lodge an appeal:

<https://new.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schools/admissions/completed/decision/appeal>

Definition of terms (in alphabetical order):

Adopted Children - This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (Section 12) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 (Section 46)

Arrangement Order - A Child Arrangement Order replaces a Residence Order and any Residence Order in force prior to 22nd April 2014 is deemed to be a Child Arrangements Order.

Education, Health and Care Plan - An Education, Health and Care Plan is made by the Local Authority under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 specifying the special education provision required for that child.

Founders - Founders are those members of the steering group who were instrumental in the set-up of the school as determined by the Governing Board in 2012 and who have been granted this provision by the Secretary of State for Education. A list of these names is held with the Department for Education.

Looked After Child - 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 function as defined in Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989, at the time of making an application to a school.

Main Dwelling - Main dwelling will be defined as your child's only or main residence and not an address at which he or she might sometimes stay or sleep. If your child regularly stays with another parent or relative and you give two addresses, the Admissions Authority at Gildredge House will decide which address should be used as the main residence for the purpose of processing your application because we can only accept one current address.

Where parental responsibility is split between two parents living at alternative addresses and residency is split equally between the parents (and there is a Court Order present to confirm this) then parents may decide which address to apply from. A copy of the Court Order will be requested as proof of equal residency. In the absence of a Court Order, 'Main Dwelling' will ultimately be determined by the address to which Child Benefit is paid.

After a place is offered, a Council Tax bill and one other proof of address (such as a utility bill) will be requested. Further evidence may be required to confirm the address given and we reserve the right to check the information you supply. In some instances it may be necessary to obtain evidence from the GP as to which address the child is registered. The offer of a place will be withdrawn if it was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

Main dwelling is also defined as the main address at which the student lives at the time of application. A place cannot be offered on the basis of a possible future move. A place can only be offered on the basis of a planned future move as evidenced by:

- a) A letter from the solicitor (or equivalent) confirming exchange of contracts to buy a property relevant to the application, together with a copy of the signed and dated contract;
- b) A signed and dated tenancy agreement confirming the renting of a specific property relevant to the application for a minimum term of twelve months;
- c) A letter from a housing association confirming that the parent(s)/carer(s) will be living at a specific address relevant to the application and when that residency is to commence;
- d) A letter from an employer, social services or other official agency to support the declaration of a return to the UK including evidence of planned Main Dwelling as defined within paragraphs (a) - (c) above. In the case where an applicant is returning to the UK to a residential address to which they already have legal title - Office Copy Entries (available from the Land Registry) will be required.

Supporting documentation of a planned future move **must** be supplied at the time of application.

Special Guardianship Order - 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).

Staff - Staff will include all those who are permanently employed directly by the school. Staff will need to be employed for 2 years or more at the time when the application for admission to the school is made and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. This is set out in paragraph 1.39 of the School Admissions Code (December 2014). Staff does not include Contractors or Peripatetic Teachers.

Same Year Siblings - Where applications are received for same-year siblings the following procedure will be followed: if one child is selected for a place within their criterion, the

twin / triplet / same-year sibling will be ranked in their own band immediately below founders' children.

Sibling - The term 'sibling' means brother or sister, half brother or sister, legally adopted brother or sister, step-brother or step-sister, or the child of the parent / carer's partner, brother or sister of a child who is a Looked after Child or a child who is the subject of an Arrangement Order or Special Guardianship Order, and in every case, the child must be living in the same family unit at the main dwelling.

Applicants should be aware that entry for siblings is not guaranteed. In the event that the number of siblings exceeds the number of places available the published over-subscription criteria will be applied.

Statement of Special Educational Need - A Statement of Educational Need is a statement made by the Local Authority under Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 specifying the special educational provision requires for that child.

Straight Line Distance Measurement - East Sussex County Council uses a Geographical Information System (GIS) that East Sussex County Council applies to all school applications. East Sussex County Council uses Ordnance Survey Mapping data to measure the distance, as the crow flies, from a point designated by Gildredge House (this being the entrance to the Waterfield building - the front entrance at the main reception area). This point is defined by an Ordnance Survey grid reference and is mapped to the Ordnance Survey address point for the applicant property. An address point is the official Ordnance Survey location of a property within the UK and is unique to that property.

For applicants that share an address point, the tie-breaker process (see above) will be used.

The School Year - The school year at Gildredge House is divided into three Terms: Autumn, Spring and Summer. Therefore, each full Term runs from September to December, January to March/April (depending on when Easter falls) and April to July. Should a place become available within a half term holiday then the most recent term's Waiting List will be referred to and the space offered to the applicant who ranks highest on that list.

Other admissions

Gildredge House processes new applications during the course of the year. For further information and guidance, please contact the school direct.

In-Year or casual admissions will arise when a place becomes available outside the normal annual admission round for the school. Should you wish to apply for a place, please contact the school. Where there are two or more applicants for a place, the school's over-subscription criteria will be used to rank the applications.

Where a student has not previously applied for a place at Gildredge House under the normal annual admissions round, the student must make a formal application directly to ESCC using the Common Application Form, which can be accessed at this website:

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/education-learning/schools/admissions/apply-primary>

Once this has been actioned, if a space is available, the student will be considered for a place. In the event of no place being available in that year group, a decision letter from the Governing

Board will be sent out. The student can then apply direct to the school to be placed on the waiting list.

The school may refuse admission to applicants who have been permanently excluded from two or more other schools. The ability to refuse admissions runs for a period of two years since the last exclusion. Exclusions which took place before the child concerned reached compulsory school age do not count for this purpose.

January 2024
Gildredge House