

Downton Church of England VA Primary School

Admissions Policy 2025/2026



Part 1: General Information

1.1 Introduction

This document sets out the 2025/2026 Admission Arrangements for Downton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School. The Governing Body of Downton CE Primary School is the admissions authority responsible for the production of this document and for admission decisions in connection with the school.

Recognising its historic foundation, the school/academy will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the churches at parish and diocesan level. The school aims to support children and their families by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils. However parents have the right to withdraw their children from the daily Christian act of worship and from Religious Education.

- 1.2** Every year the governing body will review and publish admission arrangements. The admissions authority will set a Published Admission Number (PAN), which indicates the number of places available within the year(s) of entry. This policy will explain how places will be allocated until the PAN is reached at which point the governors will consider whether the resources available at the time will enable additional places to be made available. If not, the decision will be to refuse all applications that would lead to the admission of a pupil above the PAN.

The PAN for entry into the School in September 2025 is 45, which will be split across two classes. The School will admit up to the PAN in the normal year of entry which is the Reception Year. Where there are more applications for admission than places available at the School, then places will be offered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria at section 7 of this policy.

Infant Class Size Regulations apply to the normal year of entry (Reception Year) and Year 1 and Year 2. These regulations require classes to be no bigger than 30 children although the PAN may be much lower than 30.

A non-statutory admission limit has been set for all other year groups. This may be increased or decreased from time to time according to the level of resource available at the school and the preferred year group/class organisation.

Part 2: Aims

- 2.1** These admission arrangements have been designed so as to be simple to use and to assist parents/guardians when deciding on (a) preferred school(s) for their children.
- 2.2** The school aims to maximise parental preference as fully as possible. However, the number of places that can be offered is dependent on the resources available to the school, which will be reflected by the Published Admission Number set for the year of entry.
- 2.3** The school aims to provide a place for all children whose address is within the designated area, defined as being the area within the ecclesiastical boundaries of the parishes of

Downton and Charlton All Saints. Designated or catchment area means the area of benefit as defined in the school's Trust Deed. A map of the designated area can be viewed by entering the names of the two parishes into the 'Parish Finder' search engine at www.achurchnearyou.com, or upon request at the school office.

Part 3 – Starting School in Reception in September 2025

3.1 The procedure for applying to start school for the first time in Reception must be co-ordinated by the home local authority (the local authority responsible for the area in which the child subject to the application lives). Before applying for a school place, applicants are advised to refer to the Wiltshire Council Determined Co-ordinated Scheme for Primary School Admissions for 2025/2026.

3.2 The application round for entry into Reception 2025 opens on 1st September 2024. The application form (referred to as 'the Common Application Form') is available from the 'home' local authority. This must be completed and returned to the 'home' local authority by midnight on the 15th January 2025. This is available online or as a paper application form. Applications can be made on line from the 1st September 2024 at www.wiltshire.gov.uk.

3.3 Full time or part time attendance below statutory school age

Parents may apply for their child to start school for the first time in the September following his/her fourth birthday and, where offered a place, may choose for their child to start school either full time from day one, or on a part time basis as preferred. However, a child becomes of statutory school age during the term following his/her fifth birthday and, where registered at a school, must be accessing full time education from this point onwards.

3.4 Deferred entry below statutory school age

Parents of children who have not yet reached statutory school age may choose to defer entry for their child until later in the school year, but cannot defer beyond statutory school age or the start of the last term in the school year.

3.5 Applications submitted on behalf of summer born children

In the case of children born between 1st April and 31st August (summer born), parents may choose to delay – or 'decelerate' - their child's entry to school until the following September (2026), but must still apply during the 2025 admissions round making clear on the application form the intention to delay his/her child entry to school for one year.

Before deciding to decelerate your child's admission, you should first contact Downton CE Primary School. Staff will be able to explain the provision on offer to children in Year R, how it is tailored to meet the needs of summer born children and how those needs will continue to be met as the children move up through the school. They may also be able to allay any concerns that you may have about your child's readiness for school.

If you still wish to decelerate your child's admission to school you must seek approval from the Admissions Authority of the school. Downton CE Primary School is a Voluntary Aided School and as such the Admissions Authority is the governing body of the school. Consequently it is the Admissions Committee of Downton CE Primary School that will consider and decide upon requests for delayed admission.

All parents who wish to apply for delayed entry into Reception must first submit a formal application to the Local Authority. Following the submission of the formal application to the Local Authority, the parent should contact the governing body of Downton CE Primary School to discuss their request.

The request must be supported in writing with completion of the 'Request form for decelerated admission to Year R', which is appended to this policy and which must be returned to the

school. You may provide evidence in support of your request, but it is not mandatory. However, the Admissions Committee would expect a reasonable level of information in order to make an informed judgement on the circumstances of the case.

The Admissions Committee will look at the following factors when considering the case put forward by the parent, but these are not exhaustive:

- The parents' views.
- The needs of the child and the possible impact on them of entering Year 1 without having first attended the reception year.
- In the case of children born prematurely the fact that they may have naturally fallen into the lower age group if they had been born on their expected date of birth.
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development.
- Any other information which the parent requests the Admissions Committee to consider.

The decision to admit children outside of their normal age group is made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and what is in the best interest of the child concerned.

The Admissions Committee may at its discretion call upon the services and advice of an Educational Psychologist to assist in its deliberations.

All requests should be made in the September following the child's third birthday, in order to give sufficient time for the case to be considered by the admissions authority prior to the deadline for applications of 15 January.

If the parental request for delayed admission into Reception is agreed the application for a 2025 start would need to be formally withdrawn and a new application will need to be made as part of the main admission round for the following year. This application would be considered along with all the other applicants for admission in that year at the preferred school. There would be no guarantee that a place would be able to be offered in the preferred school. If the preferred school is over-subscribed and you are not offered a place, the Local Authority will make an alternative offer. However please note that delayed admission into Reception in the alternative school may not be possible.

Any agreement to decelerate a child's admission to Year R does not guarantee a place at DPS, nor does it provide any additional priority for a place. The application to DPS will be considered alongside all other applications in accordance with the school's published oversubscription criteria.

If the parental request for delayed admission into Reception is refused, the formal application which has already been submitted will be processed, unless the Local Authority receives a request from the parent to withdraw the application. If no request to withdraw the application is received, then after the offer of a school place had been made the parent can then inform the Local Authority and the school that they want to defer entry as outlined above.

If the school is oversubscribed, all applications (initially those received on time) will be assessed according to the published oversubscription criteria in order to determine a priority for the offer of available places. The availability of any place will depend entirely on the outcome of the 2026 application ranking exercise.

3.6 Consideration of applications

The 'home' Local Authority will forward details of any applications submitted for Downton CE Primary School to Wiltshire Council. The Admissions Committee at Downton Church of England VA Primary School will meet and consider all application forms that indicate a preference for the school and where oversubscribed with applications the committee will apply the oversubscription criteria in order to prioritise applications and so determine a priority

for admission. Applications submitted before the 15th January 2025 deadline will be administered and available places provisionally allocated before the consideration of any later application.

3.7 Decisions

Decisions will be notified to applicants by the 'home' local authority. A letter and/or email will be sent on behalf of the Governing Body on or around 16th April 2025 (dependent on the date published in the Local Authority Coordinated Admissions Scheme).

Part 4: Waiting Lists

- 4.1** During the normal admissions round it is always necessary to complete a Local Authority Common Application form to apply for a school place. Registering interest with the school before the admissions round guarantees neither a place nor priority on any subsequent waiting list.
- 4.2** If the school is oversubscribed for children due to start in reception in 2024-2025 a waiting list will be maintained until 31 December 2025. The position on the waiting list will be determined by applying the published oversubscription criteria and not by date of receipt. Each name added will require the list to be re-ranked. The existence of a waiting list does not remove the right of appeal against any refusal of a place from any unsuccessful applicant.
- 4.3** Names will be removed from the waiting list ahead of the waiting list formally shutting down, if a written request is received or if the offer of a place that becomes available is declined. Looked after children and previously looked after children, as defined within these admission arrangements, or children who are the subject of a local authority direction, or who are allocated to a school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over any child on the waiting list.

Part 5: Applications outside the normal admissions round (In-Year Admission)

- 5.1** Applications for a place required during the academic year may be submitted to the Local Authority at any time, but will not be administered more than six school weeks in advance of a place being required, except in particular circumstances applying to Crown Servant or Service family children (see section 9.3). The In-Year application form is available from the Local Authority, or a copy can be provided upon request to the school office.
- 5.2** The Admissions Committee will consider applications during term time only and strictly in the order (by day) that they are received. Applications that arrive during a school holiday will be held and processed when school resumes. If the governors receive more than one application on the same day for the same year group they will apply the published oversubscription criteria in order to determine a priority for admission where insufficient places exist within the PAN or admission limit applying at that time.
- 5.3** The non-statutory admission limits (applying to years 1 – 6) indicate the number of places available in a particular year group at a particular time. The governors are permitted to adjust these limits according to the level of resource available to support the year group concerned. If the Admissions Committee determines that the admission of a further child would impact on the efficient delivery of education or the efficient use of resources the application will be refused.
- 5.4** Applicants will receive a written decision by first class letter post within 10 school days of receipt of the In-Year application form or receipt of any supplementary information where this is subsequently provided in support of an application and is deemed necessary in order to determine the admission decision. If an application is refused, the decision letter will set out the reasons for refusal and explain how to appeal against the Admission Authority's decision.

In all cases, a decision letter will be sent out by the local authority within twenty school days of receiving the application form and this will provide information, if appropriate, about the statutory right of appeal.

- 5.5** The applicant must confirm his/her acceptance of an In-Year offer within ten school days of the offer being made. The place will then remain available for the remainder of six school weeks from the date on the offer letter. If the child concerned is not on roll and attending before this deadline, the Admissions Committee will consider withdrawing the offer of a place.
- 5.6** Subject to the information provided on the application form and the circumstances at the school the Admissions Committee may decide to refer a refused application to the Local Authority in order that the Fair Access Protocol may be applied. This would be where that child satisfies one or more of the criteria set out in the local authority Fair Access Protocol and is deemed to require a higher level of support than can be provided at the school. The Fair Access Protocol enables the local authority to engage, where necessary, directly with a family in order to help identify a suitable educational placement as soon as possible.

Part 6: Oversubscription generally

- 6.1** The policy of Downton CE Primary School is to always offer a place, where one is available, irrespective of gender, religion, ethnicity or country of origin, disability or academic ability. However, where more applications are received than there are places available to offer, the oversubscription criteria set out in Part 7 will be applied for all applications received, in order to rank applications and so determine a priority for the offer of available places.
- 6.2 Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**
A child who is the subject of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is admitted to school in accordance with a separate process managed and administered by the Local Authority in whose area the family lives. The Admission Authority must always admit a child to the school named in the Plan, irrespective of the Published Admission Number or any admission limit applying at that time and before the consideration of any other applications.
- 6.3** Where a parent wishes his/her application to be prioritised on the grounds of complying with a faith criterion he/she must submit the school's Supplementary Information Form (SIF), which is appended to this policy. This form must be fully completed and returned to the school at the same time as the application is made otherwise it will not be considered during the admissions process. Confirmation of status may be requested from the relevant priest/pastor.

Part 7: Oversubscription Criteria

- 7.1** Where more applications have been received than there are places available within the required year group, the following priorities shall apply in order:
1. A 'looked after child' 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. For admission purposes, a looked after child is a child who, at the time of application, 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 (section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 applies).
 2. Vulnerable children, i.e. children with one or both of the following needs:

Medical need means where written evidence has been provided from a senior clinical medical officer or the child's general practitioner / specialist showing that the child's condition would make it detrimental to the child's health not to admit him/her to the School. This may include written evidence where the parent has a medical need

and/or disability which would make it detrimental for the child to attend a different school; this may be supported by evidence of the child as a young carer. Evidence to be relied upon must be submitted with the Supplemental Information Form (appended to this policy) and sent to the School on or before 15th January 2025.

Social Need means where the child is of confirmed refugee status. Written evidence of this from the home LA must be submitted with the Supplemental Information Form and sent to the School on or before 15th January 2025.

3. Children with a sibling (see section 7.2) living within catchment area (see section 2.3) at the time of application who will still be on roll at the time of admission and who lives at the same address.
4. Children living within catchment area (see section 2.3) who are regular (defined as attending church every month for the 12 months prior to the application) practising Christians, of whatever denomination, at a recognised church or religious group. A recognised church or religious group means a church that is the same denomination as (or is in fellowship with or partnership with) a member of:
 - Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (see ctbi.org.uk);
 - The Evangelical Alliance (see eauk.org);
 - The Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (see www.fiec.org.uk);
 - Affinity fellowship of Churches (see www.affinity.org.uk).

In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church [or, in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship] has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these admissions arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church [or in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship] or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

5. Children living within catchment area (see section 2.3) who do not qualify under one of the criteria above.
6. Children living outside catchment area (see section 2.3) with a sibling (see section 7.2) on roll at the time of application who will still be on roll at the time of admission and who lives at the same address.
7. Children of staff employed at the school for two or more years, or who have been recruited to meet a school's particular skills shortage.
8. Children living outside catchment area (see section 2.3) who are regular (defined as attending church every month for the 12 months prior to the application) practising Christians, of whatever denomination, at a recognised church or religious group. A recognised church or religious group means a church that is the same denomination as (or is in fellowship with or partnership with) a member of:
 - Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (see ctbi.org.uk);
 - The Evangelical Alliance (see eauk.org);
 - The Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (see www.fiec.org.uk);
 - Affinity fellowship of Churches (see www.affinity.org.uk).

In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church [or, in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship] has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these admissions arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the

period when the church [or in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship] or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

9. Children living outside catchment area (see section 2.3) not satisfying a higher criterion.

7.2 Siblings

A child is considered in this category if an older sibling is attending the school at the deadline date, and will still be attending at the time of admission, and lives at the same address as the older sibling.

Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling.

7.3 Tie breaker

If there are not enough places to satisfy all the applications under any one criterion, priority will be given to those living nearest the school. The school will adopt the measurement system of Wiltshire Council to determine the distance from the school to the home address. Where two or more applicants live an equal distance from the school and it is not possible to differentiate between them, priority will be determined by random allocation through the drawing of lots supervised by someone independent of the school.

Registration at any nursery or pre-school unit will **not** be considered as a criterion for over-subscription and no priority will be given to such children even if the pre-school is linked to the school.

Once an offer of a school place has been made it may only be lawfully withdrawn in very limited circumstances, which include an offer of place based upon a fraudulent or misleading application. Where an offer of place is withdrawn the application will be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if an offer of place is refused.

Part 8: Appeals Procedure

- 8.1 Applicants whose school place application has been turned down will have the legal right to appeal against the decision of the Admissions Authority, providing a formal application for a school place was submitted and a decision letter received. Full details explaining the appeal process will be set out in the decision letter.
- 8.2 An appeal timetable is published on the school website by 28th February every year. This sets out the timeframe for the various stages in the appeal process and includes statutory dates by which appeals must be heard. The Admissions Authority does not organise appeal hearings during school holiday periods and any appeal received when the school is closed will not be administered until school resumes.
- 8.3 An appeal form can be downloaded from the school website or obtained from the School Office. This must be completed and submitted directly to the school office.

Part 9: Further General Information

9.1 Applications for children to enter a year group other than chronological age

The governors will consider applications on a case by case basis for retained or accelerated entry in cases where parents would like their child to be admitted to a year group either side of the chronological age year group. The reasons for the request must be fully explained in writing and included with the school place application form.

9.2 Multiple birth applications (for example twins)

In the case of multiple birth applications the Published Admission Number or admission limit will be exceeded, or increased, at the point of allocation in order to ensure that multiple birth siblings (applying the definition of siblings in section 7.2) can be allocated places at the same school provided it is practicable.

9.3 Children from Overseas

The Governors will process admission applications for children living overseas providing they have European Economic Area (EEA) citizenship, are United Kingdom (UK) citizens returning to the UK, or they hold an appropriate Home Office Visa at the time of application. All overseas applications will be considered according to the child's home address at the time of submission unless proof of the child's future UK address is provided with the application (see section 9.5 Home Address). The only exceptions are children of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants (including Diplomats) returning to the UK with a confirmed posting within the area.

9.4 Parent

A parent in education law includes natural parents, whether they are married or not and a person other than the natural parent(s) who has parental responsibility or care of a child or young person. Having care of a child or young person means the person who looks after the child and with whom the child lives irrespective of what their relationship is with the child.

9.5 Home Address

For the purposes of school admission, the governors' definition of a child's home address is considered to be where the child resides for the majority of their time with the person(s) who legally have care of the child. Documentary evidence of house ownership, or a minimum six-month rental agreement, may be required together with proof of the child's residency at the property concerned. Places will not be allocated on the basis of a future house move unless this can be confirmed through the exchange of contract or a signed formal lease agreement in place at the time of application. An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place.

9.6 Supplementary Information Forms (SIF)

The governors' Supplementary Information Form must be submitted in connection with oversubscription criteria 7.1(4) and 7.1(8). The governors define regular church attendance as 'at least once per month for a minimum period of 12 months prior to application'. Applicants must ensure that the governors' Supplementary Information Form is completed by the vicar, priest, minister, pastor or warden of their church and returned according to the instructions set out on the form.

9.7 Withdrawing the offer of a school place

In the case of In-Year admissions, the child must be attending school within six school weeks of the date of the original offer letter. The governors reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a place if this condition is not met and to reallocate the place as necessary. The governors may also withdraw the offer of a school place if the child's home address is subsequently found to be fraudulent.

9.8 Relevant Documents

Important information published by local authorities applies to some areas of school admissions procedure. If you are considering submitting an application for your child to start or transfer school, you are advised to refer to your local authority's website. Documents of particular importance include:

- The Local Authority Coordinated Admissions Scheme for Primary School Admissions for 2025/2026
- The Composite Prospectus 'Primary Admissions Guide for Parents' (this will include detailed information about how to apply for a child to start school for the very first time in the Reception year group)

- The Local Authority School Transport policy
- The Local Authority Fair Access Protocol (this document applies only for applications made in connection with a place required during the academic year)

9.9 Enquiries about these arrangements

These Admission Arrangements reflect the statutory requirements of the Department for Education 2021 School Admissions Code and the 2022 School Admissions Appeals Code, which can be viewed at www.education.gov.uk.

Please contact the school office if you have any concerns about the content of these admission arrangements, or would like to discuss your particular circumstances in more detail. Where matters concerning the Admission Arrangements cannot be resolved locally, you may raise a complaint with the Office of The Schools Adjudicator.

Admissions contact: School Finance Officer (Mrs Becky Cornell)

Telephone: 01725 510556

School website: www.downton-pri.wilts.sch.uk

School Office Email: admin@downton-pri.wilts.sch.uk

Address: Downton Church of England VA Primary School
Gravel Close
Downton
SP5 3LZ

Agreed by the Governing Body

Signed: _____ (Chair of Governors)

Date: _____

**DOWNTON CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL
2025/2026 SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM - FAITH**

Part A – Please ensure that you read before completing

The oversubscription criteria set out in the governors' published Admission Arrangements will be used to prioritise the offer of school places where there are more applications received than places available. The oversubscription criteria includes a priority for:

Children who are regular (defined as attending church every month for the 12 months prior to the application) practising Christians, of whatever denomination, at a recognised church or religious group. (A recognised church or religious group is one that is a member of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (see ctbi.org.uk) or the Evangelical Alliance (eauk.org)).

If you wish your admission application to be prioritised on this basis, you must ensure that this Supplementary Information Form is completed by the vicar, priest, minister, pastor or church-warden of the attended Church in order to confirm that the requirements of the above statement have been met.

Part B – Submitting your Supplementary Information Form

- For a child to start in Reception in September 2025 - your completed Supplementary Information Form must be delivered directly to the school office on or before 15th January 2025.
- For a child to join any year group during the 2025/2026 school year - your completed Supplementary Information Form must be delivered with your admission application form directly to the school office.

Part C – Declaration to be made by vicar, priest minister, pastor or church warden

I have consulted with the local church leadership team and can confirm that

..... (enter child's name)

attends..... Church and has done so for at least once per month for the last twelve months

Signed.....

Print name.....

Position.....

Date.....

Note: The church leadership team includes clergy, church wardens and those responsible for Sunday School

**DOWNTON CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL
2025/2026 SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM –
VULNERABLE CHILDREN**

Part A – Please ensure that you read before completing

The oversubscription criteria set out in the governors’ published Admission Arrangements will be used to prioritise the offer of school places where there are more applications received than places available. The oversubscription criteria includes a priority for Vulnerable Children. A child is eligible in this category where the child has an identified social or medical need.

Medical need means where written evidence has been provided from a senior clinical medical officer or the child’s general practitioner / specialist showing that the child’s condition would make it detrimental to the child’s health not to admit him/her to the School. This may include written evidence where the parent has a medical need and/or disability which would make it detrimental for the child to attend a different school; this may be supported by evidence of the child as a young carer. Evidence to be relied upon must be submitted with the Supplemental Information Form and sent to the School on or before 15th January 2025.

Social Need means where the child is of confirmed refugee status. Written evidence of this from the home LA must be submitted with the Supplemental Information Form and sent to the School on or before 15th January 2025.

Part B – Submitting your Supplementary Information Form

- For a child to start in Reception in September 2025 - your completed Supplementary Information Form must be delivered directly to the school office on or before 15th January 2025.
- For a child to join any year group during the 2025/2026 school year - your completed Supplementary Information Form must be delivered with your admission application form directly to the school office.

Part C – Medical / Social Need Information

Please set out in detail the Medical or Social Need of the child. **Please remember** to attach relevant written evidence from (for example) the child’s general practitioner / specialist.

[please use additional paper if necessary]

Print name..... **Signed**.....

Date.....



Downton CE Primary
School, Gravel Close,
Downton, Salisbury,
Wilts SP5 3LZ

Telephone: 01725 510556 Fax: 01725 512335

Email: admin@downton-pri.wilts.sch.uk

Website: www.downton-pri.wilts.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Paula Carlton



Request form for decelerated admission to Year R

Before completing this form please read the guidance on decelerated admission for summer born (children born between 1 April to 31 August in any year) children on the Wiltshire County website.

Name of pupil:

Date of birth:

Address of Parents/Guardian:

Contact details:

Name of Early years provider:

Number of hours attended:

Was your child born prematurely? Yes/No

If yes please provide your child's due date:

Please explain below why you consider decelerated admission to Year R is in your child's best interests. If you wish to provide any professional evidence to support your request, please attach it to this form.

Communication and language reasons:

Personal, social and emotional reasons:

Physical reasons:

Signed:

Date:

Please return your form to Downton CE VA Primary School.