



## **Buckland St Mary CofE Primary School**

### **School Admission Arrangements for 2026/27 Academic Year**

These arrangements apply to admissions into reception in 2026 and admissions to any year group in the 2026/27 academic year.

<b>Policy determined on:</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> February 2025
<b>Admissions Authority:</b>	Academies for Character and Excellence
<b>Policy determined by:</b>	ACE Board of Trustees

Our Ethos - we ask parents to respect our ethos and its importance to the school community. This does not affect the right of all parents to apply and be considered for a place here.

Buckland St Mary C of E primary School is a member of the Academies for Character and Excellence (ACE) who also act as our admissions authority.

The Vision, Mission and Values of The Academies for Character and Excellence (ACE).

Our vision is for educational excellence. It is not only what our children are able to do, know and understand, but what they are like as human citizens.

Each of our schools in the Trust have their own set of values which sit under the Trust's mission of: 'Achieving Excellence through Cultivating Character, Sharing Talents and Pursuing Innovation'

The Academies for Character and Excellence (ACE) is a self-improving organisation with a mission of collaborative partnerships to Achieve Excellence through Cultivating Character, Sharing Talents and Pursuing Innovation.

'Cultivating Character' is the focus on the whole child. We develop our children's character through our Character Education gateways of Citizenship, Leadership, Exploration, Expression and Flourishing.

'Sharing Talents' demonstrates our total commitment to collaboration. Children and staff will be given opportunities to fulfil their potential so that all schools within the Trust improve.

'Pursuing innovation' means we use the best research to inform our practice. We cannot expect our children to be great learners if we are not also passionate about learning and curriculum design.

The Trust's underpinning values of Uncompromising Excellence, Community, Equity, Collaboration and Integrity are firmly embedded.

We want our Trust to engender a passion for uncompromising excellence. As educators, we will inspire those around us with our passion and desire to be the best version of ourselves. However, we recognise that excellence cannot be achieved without equity – personal or social circumstances should not be an obstacle to achieving an education.

Our children will become courageous advocates for change in local, national and global communities.

As a trust, we have prioritised working with the elderly, local volunteering and working with local communities.

We believe in collaboration the power of working together towards a common goal, sharing and developing talents as we recognise that we are stronger together.



We can depend on one another, but we also have responsibility to play our part in looking after ourselves and others.

We want to be connected to our community: locally, nationally and globally. We believe in service to our community as a fundamental approach of our trust.

We want our children to develop integrity and compassion. We will value the ultimate of worth of each person supporting our children to know their place in the world.

Finally, this vision is of a Trust that can deliver living and breathing character education. This vision not only nourishes the individual but also nourishes society.

## **Part 1 - General information**

### **1.1 About our school**

Buckland St Mary Primary school and Nursery is a small, co-educational Primary school in the village of Buckland St Mary providing education for 2 to 11 year olds.

### **2. Contact details**

**School website:** [www.bucklandstmaryceprimaryschool.co.uk](http://www.bucklandstmaryceprimaryschool.co.uk)

**Admissions contact :** Mrs Ethne Staniland

Tel: 01460 234251

**School Office:** [admin.buckland@acexcellence.co.uk](mailto:admin.buckland@acexcellence.co.uk)

**Somerset Local Authority website:** [www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions)

### **3. The Published Admission Number**

Buckland St Mary Primary School has an admission number of 12 for entry in the reception year in 2026..

The school will accordingly admit this number of pupils each year if there are sufficient applications. Where fewer applicants than the published admission number(s) for the relevant year group are received, the Admissions Committee will offer places at the school to all those who have applied.

### **1.4 Relevant documents: Please read this information before applying for a school place**

Important documents published by your Local Authority are relevant to some areas of school admissions procedure. Applicants are strongly advised to contact their 'home' Local Authority (the area in which the child lives) or access the Local Authority website and ensure that they read and understand this information before



proceeding with an application for a school place. Related documents of particular importance are:

- The Local Authority Coordinated Admissions Scheme (this applies to starting and transferring school for the first time)
- The Local Authority Fair Access Protocol
- The Local Authority School Transport policy
- Free School Meal Entitlement

## Part 2 - Over-subscription criteria

**2.1** When the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care plan naming the school, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in priority order:

It is important to note that being on roll at the nursery does not give a priority for a school place in the reception year. Places are allocated strictly according to the over-subscription criteria.

1. A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence/child arrangements, or special guardianship order. Children 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. (See important note 1).
2. Places will be allocated to pupils who have a parent who teaches at the academy and has done so for at least 2 years as of the closing date for applications.
3. Places will then be allocated to pupils who have a sibling attending at the time of admission.
4. Places will then be allocated to other pupils who live within the catchment area.
5. Places will then be allocated to other pupils who live outside the catchment area.

## Important notes

1. A "Looked After Child" means any child who is in the care of a local authority in accordance with Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989. A child who was "a previously Looked After Child" means a child who after being Looked After became subject to an Adoption Order under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, a Residence Order under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 or Special Guardianship Order under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989. As well as those children 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. Relevant evidence will be required to be submitted.
1. The address that will be taken into consideration for the purpose of allocating school places is the address at which the child is resident at the closing date or an



address at which the child will be resident at before the start of the new academic year providing the change of address is notified and evidence provided by the exceptional circumstance deadline as outlined in the Local Authority primary admissions guide available on their website.

## **2.2 Tie breaker:**

If in categories 1-5 above a tie-break is necessary to determine which child is admitted, the child living closest to the school will be given priority for admission. Distance is measured in a straight line by a Geographical information System (GIS) method from the geocoded point of the school site to the geocoded point of the pupil's home.

Random allocation by drawing lots supervised by someone independent of the school, will be used as a tie-break in categories 1-5 above to decide who has highest priority for admission if the distance between a child's home and the school is equidistant in any two or more cases.

However, if children of multiple birth (twins and triplets) are tied for the final place, those siblings will be admitted over PAN as permitted by infant class size rules.

## **Part 3 – Starting school in the reception year group for the first time in September 2026**

Applications must be submitted to the home LA. If this is Somerset applications can be made on-line at [www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions). Paper applications are available to download from the Somerset County Council website at [www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions), or upon request by telephoning Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224.

Applications must be received by 23:59 hours on 15 January 2026, otherwise the application will be recorded as late. Late applications will be considered after those received on time. Please see the Somerset LA co-ordinated scheme for full details.

Outcomes for on time applications will be sent out by email (for online applicants) or second class post on 16 April 2025 (or next working day if this falls on a weekend or bank holiday).

## **Part 4 - Admission to any year group during the 2026/27 academic year (in- year admission)**

In-year applications must be submitted directly to the school using the in-year application form which can be obtained on the school website or by request to the school office.

The admissions committee will consider batches of applications on a weekly basis with a 4pm deadline every Friday (term time only) for receipt of applications. If more applications are received than there are places available, the over-subscription criteria will be applied



A decision will be notified in writing to the applicant within ten school days.

Proof of address may be required to be submitted with the application. This will be either the formal 'exchange of contracts' letter from the solicitor for a house purchase, a recent utility bill or the signing of a minimum of a six month tenancy agreement. The Admissions Committee reserve the right to seek further documentary evidence to support a claim of residence.

Where there are more applications than places available within a particular year group, applications will be considered against the published oversubscription criteria and allocated up to the admission number/ limit.

Places will not be allocated more than six school weeks or half a term in advance of being required. The only exceptions are children of UK service personnel and other crown servants (including Diplomats) returning to the UK with a confirmed posting to the area (see Children of UK service personnel).

## **Part 5 - Appeals procedure**

All applicants refused a place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code.

Details of how to appeal are included in the outcome email or letter.

Information on the timetable for the appeals process is published on our website by 28 February each year.

## **Part 6 – Important information**

### **6.1 Waiting lists**

The Admissions Committee operates waiting lists for every year group. Where a child is formally refused admission to any year group, parents may request that his/her child's name is placed on the appropriate waiting list. Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. The waiting list will be reordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever anyone is added to or leaves the waiting list. Waiting lists will be maintained until the end of the academic year.

### **6.2 Deferred entry for infants**

Parents offered a place in reception for their child have a right to defer entry, or to take the place up part-time, until the start of the term beginning immediately after their child has reached compulsory school age. However, places cannot be deferred beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made.



Children reach compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their 5th birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 August, 31 December and 31 March.

### **6.3 Full-time schooling**

Parents have a right to a full-time place at school for their child from the September following their fourth birthday.

### **6.4 Summer Born Children**

Parents of summer born children may request that they are admitted into reception rather than year one when they become of compulsory school age. Applications will be considered as set out below (see admission of children outside their normal age group).

### **6.5 Admission of children outside their normal age group**

Parents may request that their child is admitted to a year group outside their normal age range, for instance where the child is summer born or where the child is gifted or talented or where a child has suffered from particular social or medical issues impacting his or her schooling.

When such a request is made, the Admissions Committee will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the views of the headteacher and any supporting evidence provided by the parent. If a request is refused, the child will still be considered for admission to their normal age group.

The parent is required to make an on-time application for the child's normal age group (if relevant) but can submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time. The LA will ensure the parent is aware of whether the request for admission out of age group has been agreed before National Offer Day and the reason for any refusal.

Requests for admission out of the normal year group will be considered alongside other applications made at the same time. An application from a child who would 'normally' be a year 1 child for a reception place will be considered alongside applications for reception.

If a request for delayed admission is agreed, the school place application may be withdrawn before a place is offered and a new school place application will need to be made as part of the normal admissions round the following year.

If a request for a child to be admitted to school a year early is agreed, the school place application will be processed and an outcome will be sent on the National Offer Day.

If a request for delayed admission is refused, the parent must decide whether to accept the offer of a school place for the normal age group, or to refuse it and make an in-year application for admission to year one for the September following the child's fifth birthday.



If a request for a child to be admitted to school a year early is refused, the school place application will not be processed and a new school place application will need to be made as part of the normal admissions round the following year.

There is no right of appeal against the decision not to allow your child to be admitted outside of their normal age group.

One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parents, therefore, should consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all their preference schools, rather than just their first preference schools.

For further information and important things you should consider please visit;

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/education-learning-and-schools/choosing-a-school/starting-or-transferring-school-early-or-late/>

## **6.6 Children from overseas**

The Admissions Committee will treat applications for children coming from overseas in accordance with European Union law or Home Office rules for non-European Economic Area nationals.

The Admissions Committee will process applications for children who are citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA) and for UK citizens living abroad. If proof of the Somerset address is not available the application will be considered on the current address. The only exceptions are children of UK service personnel and other crown servants (including Diplomats) returning to the UK with a confirmed posting to the area (see Children of UK service personnel).

The Admissions Committee will not allocate a place to any non EEA citizen moving into Somerset from outside the UK prior to their arrival in the country. In such cases the LA will require copies of the passports, appropriately endorsed visas and proof of residency – see home address definition. Applicants who are citizens of countries from outside the EEA should first check that their visas will not be invalidated by taking up a maintained school or academy place before applying. If in doubt, parents should contact the Home Office.

## **6.7 Siblings**

For the purpose of school admission, the Admissions Committee definition of a sibling is a child living at the same address as a half or full brother or sister, an adoptive brother or sister, or children of the same household at the time of application and remaining so at the time of admission.

Please see the information on shared residency arrangements which will apply if necessary in order to determine the sibling's permanent home address.

## **6.8 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 that person who looks after the child and with whom the child lives, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child.

## **6.9 Home Address**

For the purposes of school admission, the Admissions Committees' definition of a child's home address is considered to be where the child spends 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 residence 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 the signing of a minimum six month formal lease agreement from a letting agency in place at the time of application. Please note private letting agreements may not be accepted as proof of residence. An address change due to a move to live with family or friends will not be considered until the move has taken place and suitable proof of residency has been obtained. Proof that a move from the previous address has taken place may also be required e.g. proof of exchange of contracts, a tenancy agreement showing the end date of the tenancy or a notice to quit from the landlord or repossession notice. The Admissions Committee reserves the right to seek further documentary evidence to support any claim of residence which could include contacting the estate agent, solicitor, landlord or relevant professional.

An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place. The Admissions Committee may withdraw the offer of a school place if the child's home address is subsequently found to be fraudulent.

Where shared residence arrangements are in place and it is necessary to determine the home address, each parent may be required to write to the Admissions Committee and inform them of the number of days each week the child spends with them. Where the child spends equal time with both parents the Admissions Committee may ask for additional information including evidence of which parent/carer is in receipt of child benefit, and/or the name of the GP surgery at which the child is registered.

## **6.10 Withdrawing an allocated place**

The Admissions Committee will expect parents to confirm by post or email within 21 school days, their acceptance of any place offered at the school. The child must then be attending school within five weeks of the date of the original offer letter. The Admissions Committee reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place if these conditions are not met and to reallocate the place to the highest ranked child on a waiting list, or to a new applicant where no waiting list exists.

Should the Admission Authority become aware that a place was secured for a child at the school on the basis of misleading or false information, it will consider withdrawing the offer, or where a child has already started to attend the school may



remove the child from the school roll. The circumstances of the case will be fully discussed with the parent and, if the decision is taken to withdraw the offer of a place, the application will be considered afresh, taking account of any new information.

### **6.11 Catchment map**

A copy of the school catchment map is available to view on the school website and the Local Authority website or a copy can be made available by contacting the school office.

### **6.12 Children of UK service personnel**

The Admissions Authority endeavours to ensure that their admission arrangements support the Admissions Committee commitment to removing disadvantage for service children. In-year applications are usually considered for admission up to a maximum of half a term in advance of the place being taken up. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area and crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area where a place can be made available up to a year in advance of being required providing the appropriate documentation is provided as proof of posting (an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting.)

Usually, a place may be allocated prior to actual residency, only on receipt of exchange of contracts or a formal signed rental agreement. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area and crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area. This means that, providing the application is accompanied by an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting, the admissions authority will process the application. If proof of a home address is not available at this stage the admissions authority will accept a unit postal address or quartering area address.

If the parent/carer is moving to the area as a result of leaving the armed forces then no special consideration will be given to the application under the grounds of the application being made by a service family.

For further information please refer to the DfE explanatory note on Admission of Children of Crown Servants;

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/461481/Admission\\_of\\_children\\_of\\_crown\\_servants.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/461481/Admission_of_children_of_crown_servants.pdf)

### **Enquiries about these arrangements**

These Admission Arrangements reflect the statutory requirements of the Department for Education 2014 School Admissions Code and the 2012 School Admissions Appeals Code.

Please contact the school office if you have any enquiries about these Admission Arrangements.

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