

THE SWEYNE PARK SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS POLICY 2026-27

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at the school.
- Set out the school's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply.
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer a place.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DFE):

- Schools Admission Code 2021
- School Admission Appeals Code

As an academy, the school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

3. How to apply

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the application form provided by your home local authority. Applications must be made by 31st October 2025 for Year 7 in accordance with the Essex Local Authority co-ordinated scheme. This process is published by Essex County Council in the Secondary Education on Essex booklet.

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority.

4. Allocation of places

4.1: PAN

The school's **published admission number** is for **270** pupils for entry in Year 7.

4.2: Oversubscription criteria

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

When applications exceed the number of places we have available, and after the admission of pupils with Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs) where The Sweyne Park is named in the EHCP, the following criteria will be applied in this order:

1. Looked After Children and previously looked after children (see section 11.2).
2. Children with a sibling attending the school.
3. Children living in the priority admission area.
4. Children of teaching and non-teaching staff who have been:
 - a. employed at the school for two or more years at the time of application for the school place; or
 - b. recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

5. Children attending other schools within the Rayleigh Schools Trust¹.
6. Remaining applications.

In the event of over subscription within any of the above criteria, priority will be determined by straight line distance from home to the school, those living closest being given the highest priority.

Up to 5 places in each year group are allocated to pupils with an EHCP where hearing impairment is the primary area of need who are placed at the school due to its enhanced provision.

4.3: Tie-breaks

In the event that the distance between a child's home and the school is equidistant and there are therefore two or more applicants tied for the final place, random allocation will be used as a tie-break to decide who has the highest priority for admission. This will be independently conducted and verified. However, if children of multiple birth (e.g., twins) are tied for the final place, those siblings will be admitted over PAN.

5. In-year admissions

You can apply for a place for your child at any time outside the normal admissions round. If there are places in the year group you are applying for, your child will be offered a place.

If there are no places available at the time of your application, your child's name can be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group. (See below, section 9.4.) If a place becomes available, it will be filled by a pupil from the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 4.2 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis of the length of time they have been on the waiting list.

In-year applications for admission should be made using the mid-year application form, which is available on the school website and on the Admissions section of the Essex County Council website; paper copies are available from the school office. These should be returned to the following address:

By email:

admin@sweynepark.com (Please indicate "In year admission application" as the subject)

By post:

In-Year Admission
The Sweyne Park School
Sir Walter Raleigh Drive
Rayleigh
Essex
SS6 9BZ

6. Appeals

Unsuccessful applicants have the right to appeal against admissions decisions to an Independent Appeal Panel, as specified in the School Admissions Appeal Code, which will meet on a specified date. Information about how to appeal against the refusal of a school place can be found on the refusal letter.

¹ Currently Glebe Primary School.

7. 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 gifted or talented or where a child has suffered from particular social or medical issues impacting his or her schooling.

The process for requesting such an admission is as follows:

With the application, parents should request that the child is admitted to another year group (state which one), and the reasons for that request.

Parents will submit any evidence in support of their case with the application, for instance from a medical practitioner, headteacher etc. Some of the evidence a parent might submit could include:

- information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
- where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional;
- whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and
- whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.
- the views of the headteacher of the school the child currently attends.

All such requests will be considered on the basis of the circumstances of each case and the child's best interests, and either agreed or refused, on that basis. 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 8 child for a Year 7 place will be considered alongside applications for Year 7. They will be considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group. If a request is refused, the child will still be considered for admission to their normal age group. We will also ensure the parent is aware of whether the request for admission out of age group has been agreed before final offers are made, and the reason for any refusal. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

8. Challenging behaviour

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round. We may refuse admission in certain cases where the criteria listed in the School Admission Code (paragraph 3.8) apply.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that is not the normal point of entry, in such a case that we have good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour that may affect the provision we can offer. In this case, we will refer these pupils to the Fair Access Protocol. We will not refuse admission on these grounds to looked after children, previously looked after children and children with EHCPs naming the school.

9. Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Essex County Council's Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and potentially vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the **Local Governing Body** every year, and recommended for approval to the **Board of Trustees**.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the published admission number), the Local Governing Body will publicly consult on these changes. If nothing changes, the Local Governing Body will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements every 7 years. This is next due in October 2030.

11. Notes and definitions:

11.1: Normal admissions round

The normal admissions round is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry (Year 7 for the Sweyne Park School), using the common application form provided by their home local authority.

11.2: Looked After Children

Looked after children are children who, at the time of making an application, are

- (a) in the care of the Local Authority, or
- (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions at the time of making an application to the school.

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- (a) Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- (b) Became subject to a child arrangements order, or
- (c) Became subject to a special guardianship order.

This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

11.3: Priority Admissions Area

Details about The Sweyne Park Priority Admissions Area are available from the school office. Parents can use the priority area postcode finder on Essex County Council's website to find which priority admission area they live in.

There is no guarantee of a place for children living in the Priority Admission Area.

11.4: Waiting lists

The school will hold a waiting list for Year 7 from the first week of September until 31st December and will include all pupils who expressed a preference for The Sweyne Park School and were not allocated a place as directed by the Local Authority, and will allocate places as they become available in priority order according to the above oversubscription criteria. Parents should request that they wish their child to remain on the waiting list after 31st December. Looked After Children, previously looked after children and those allocated a place at the school in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those on the waiting list.

The school will maintain a waiting list for Years 8-10 until the end of each academic year.

It will be open to any parent to ask for their child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application. 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 it. Parents should request that their child remains on the waiting list at the end of each academic year.

11.5: Home address

Applications will be processed on the basis of the home address of the child at the time of application and determination. If the home address changes, proof of an exchange of contracts or copy of a tenancy agreement will need to be provided by 4th January 2026 to the Local Authority. The home address is considered to be the address at which the child lives on a permanent basis or is “ordinarily resident”.

Distance from the school is calculated by the Local Authority using the address point coordinates of the school provided by the Royal Mail and Ordnance Survey. For mid-year admissions, distance calculation function within Google Maps is used to calculate distance from the school.

11.6: Siblings

A sibling is defined as a child who has a brother, sister, adopted or fostered brother or sister, half-brother or sister, or stepbrother or stepsister, living in the same family unit in the same family household and address who attends The Swayne Park School in any year group where there is a reasonable expectation that the sibling will still be on roll at Swayne Park on admission of the applicant. Biological siblings who attend the school who live at a different address will also be treated as siblings. Children residing in the same household as part of an extended family, such as cousins, will not be treated as siblings.

11.7: Late applications

Applications received after the published closing date will be dealt with according to the agreed arrangement of the Local Authority’s co-ordinated admissions scheme. In summary, applications received after the closing date for applications will be treated as late applications unless there is evidence to show that the application or amendments could not reasonably have been made on time. Late applications will be given a lower priority and will be dealt with after all on-time applications.

11.8: Withdrawal of an offer

If a school place has been secured through the provision of false information, or has been offered in error, it may be withdrawn.

11.9: Admission to the sixth form

At the end of Year 11, students are admitted into the sixth form by appropriate prior qualification. The total intended number to admit is 140. We have 15 places reserved for external applicants to the Sixth Form. More external applicants may be admitted until we have reached our limit of 140 students. Further information regarding admission to the sixth form is in the Sixth Form Admissions policy, available from the school website or office.