Pathway Trust

Admissions Policy for admissions from September 2026 (Somerset)

Policy effective from	1 September 2026
Policy owner	Head of Governance
Policy applies to	Berrow Primary Church School Burnham-on-Sea Infant School East Huntspill Primary School Pawlett Primary School St Andrew's Church Junior School The King Alfred School West Huntspill Primary School
Policy changes since last version	Updated to reflect the transfer of schools in the Priory Learning Trust to Pathway Trust with effect from 1 September 2026.

Purpose and Principles

The purpose of this policy is to make the admissions process to schools within Pathway Trust clear and open.

The trust is the Admissions Authority and determines the Admissions Arrangements for its schools. The trust is supported by Somerset Local Authority (LA) in allocating places to Reception and Year 7 through the normal admissions round. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Somerset Admission to Primary and Secondary School Booklets. Further information is also available on schools' websites and at open days/evenings.

The Trust adheres to the statutory requirements and the principles expressed in the School Admissions Code (DfE September 2021). This policy was developed and amended through the Trust and LA's consultation processes. The policy is adopted annually by the Board of Trustees and published on the trust website before the end of February in the year prior to admission.

Published Admissions Numbers

School	Age range	Year of intake	Admissions number
Berrow Primary Church School	2-11	Reception	30
Burnham-on-Sea Infant School	4-7	Reception	80
East Huntspill Primary School	2-11	Reception	15
Pawlett Primary School	4-11	Reception	15
St Andrew's Church Junior School	7-11	Year 3	82
The King Alfred School	11-18	Year 7	250
West Huntspill Primary School	2-11	Reception	15

Burnham-on-Sea Infant School and St Andrew's Church Junior School also have additional places in specialist provision for children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). These are allocated by Somerset Council.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where a school is named in a child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the Admission Authority for the school is legally required to admit the child to the school. Such children will therefore be allocated places at the named school before the oversubscription criteria is applied.

If a school receives more applications than the admission number, the oversubscription criteria will be used to determine who will be allocated places. All applications will be ranked in accordance with the criteria given in order of priority.

Berrow Primary Church School

1. Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After – Children who are currently in the care of a Local Authority or have previously been and are now formally adopted or subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. Previously looked after children also includes 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. Children of trust staff and whose home school is Berrow Primary Church School, employed on a permanent contract by the trust for at least two years at the time of application, or where the member of staff has been recruited to fill a post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. This does not include staff who work on the school site for other employers (see important note 3).

3. Children living in the catchment area, with a sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.

4. Children living in the rural catchment area (see important note 4).

5. Children living in the catchment area.

6. Children living outside the catchment area, with a sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.

7. Children not satisfying a higher criterion.

Within each criterion, priority will be given to children living closest to the school measured in a straight line.

Burnham-on-Sea Infant School

Burnham-on-Sea Infant School is now part of the trust. However, the school still falls under Somerset admission arrangements for entry in 26/27. Please refer to their guidance for the relevant admission arrangements:

Our admission arrangements.

East Huntspill Primary School

1. Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After - Children who are currently in the care of a Local Authority or have previously been and are now formally adopted or subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. Previously looked after children also includes 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. Children of trust staff and whose home school is East Huntspill Primary School, employed on a permanent contract by the trust for at least two years at the time of application, or where the member of staff has been recruited to fill a post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. This does not include staff who work on the school site for other employers (see important note 3).

3. Children living in the catchment area, with a sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.

4. Children living in the rural catchment area (see important note 4).

5. Children living in the catchment area.

6. Children living outside the catchment area, with a sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.

7. Children not satisfying a higher criterion.

Within each criterion, priority will be given to children living closest to the school measured in a straight line.

Pawlett Primary School

1. Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After - Children who are currently in the care of a Local Authority or have previously been and are now formally adopted or subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. Previously looked after children also includes 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. Children of trust staff and whose home school is Pawlett Primary School, employed on a permanent contract by the trust for at least two years at the time of application, or where the member of staff has been recruited to fill a post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. This does not include staff who work on the school site for other employers (see important note 3).

3. Children living in the catchment area, with a sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.

4. Children living in the rural catchment area (see important note 4).

5. Children living in the catchment area.

6. Children living outside the catchment area, with a sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.

7. Children not satisfying a higher criterion.

Within each criterion, priority will be given to children living closest to the school measured in a straight line.

St Andrew's Church Junior School

St Andrew's Church Junior School is now part of the trust. However, the school still falls under Somerset admission arrangements for entry in 2026/27. Please refer to their guidance for the relevant admission arrangements:

Our admission arrangements.

The King Alfred School (Years 7-11)

1. Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After - Children who are currently in the care of a Local Authority or have previously been and are now formally adopted or subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. Previously looked after children also includes 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. Children of trust staff and whose home school is The King Alfred School, employed on a permanent contract by the trust for at least two years at the time of application, or where the member of staff has been recruited to fill a post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. This does not include staff who work on the school site for other employers (see important note 3).

3. Children living in the catchment area, with a sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.

4. Children living in the rural catchment area (see important note 4).

5. Children living in the catchment area.

6. Children living outside the catchment area, with a sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.

7. Children not satisfying a higher criterion.

Within each criterion, priority will be given to children living closest to the school measured in a straight line.

The King Alfred School – Sixth Form

If there are more external applicants than can be offered places, the following additional criteria in this order will be applied to candidates that have met the entry requirements:

a. Any applicant who is in Public Care ("looked after" child or a child that was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after becomes subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order).

b. Any applicant who appears to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

c. Any candidate who is in receipt of Pupil Premium funding during their secondary school education.

d. Applicants with the highest average GCSE grade 'score' in their best six separate full course subjects (see 3 above) In the event of a tie break between two or more applicants when applying the above criteria, a process of random allocation will be followed by the Sixth Form Leadership Team, which will be supervised by the lead Sixth Form Centre Governor.

Up to 120 places each year are available in the Sixth Form.

For further information, please refer to information on the school's website at:

Apply to Sixth Form — The King Alfred School.

West Huntspill Primary School

1. Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After - Children who are currently in the care of a Local Authority or have previously been and are now formally adopted or subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. Previously looked after children also includes 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. Children of the trust staff and whose home school is West Huntspill Primary, employed on a permanent contract by the trust for at least two years at the time of application, or where the member of staff has been recruited to fill a post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. This does not include staff who work on the school site for other employers (see important note 3).

3. Children living in the catchment area, with a sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.

4. Children living in the rural catchment area (see important note 4).

5. Children living in the catchment area.

6. Children living outside the catchment area, with a sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.

7. Children not satisfying a higher criterion.

Within each criterion, priority will be given to children living closest to the school - measured in a straight line.

Important Notes:

Children Looked After are defined as follows:

A “Looked After Child” means any 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 functions in accordance with Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989.

For Children Previously Looked After:

- A child who after being Looked After became subject to an Adoption Order under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.
- A child arrangement 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.
- A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.
- Relevant evidence will be required to be submitted.

‘Home school’ refers to the school that the member of staff spends the majority of their employment.

‘Rural catchment’ is defined as living in the catchment area of a school where there is no alternative school within the statutory walking distance of the home address.

Starting at a primary, infant, junior or secondary school

The following information should be read in conjunction with the 2026-27 Coordinated Admission Scheme published by the Local Authority (LA) in the area which the child lives (the home Local Authority).

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

Applications must be received by:

- Primary, Infant and Junior schools: **15 January 2026.**
- Secondary schools: **31 October 2025.**

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 sent out on:

- Primary, Infant and Junior schools: **16 April 2026.**
- Secondary schools: **2 March 2026.**

In year school transfer applications

In year applications must be submitted directly to the school using the LA in-year application form (hard copy only).

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 LA reserves 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).

General Information

Tie-break

If in any of the categories of the over-subscription criteria for any school 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.

When the furthest distance to qualify for a place relates to a household containing two or more children living at the same address for the majority of the time, for whom applications are made (e.g. twins), the place will be offered to one child, which will be determined by drawing lots, unless the admission authority agrees to admit the subsequent child(ren). If the

subsequent child(ren) from a multiple birth (e.g. twin, triplet etc) are admitted are for an Infant Class size year group, the admission would be considered as an excepted child under infant class size legislation (School Admissions Code 2021 section 2.16 g).

Home Address

The home address is very important as school places are allocated on the basis of the permanent home address of each child. A child's home address is considered to be where the child spends the majority of their time with parents or carers. (Please see shared care arrangements information below).

Documentary evidence of home ownership or suitable rental agreement may be required, together with proof of permanent residence at the property concerned. Places cannot be allocated on the basis of an intended future address, unless the house move can be confirmed through the formal 'exchange of contracts' or the signing of a minimum of a six month formal tenancy agreement from a letting agency. Please note private letting agreements may not be accepted as proof of residence. An address change due to a move to live with other family members 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 LA 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. A representative of the LA may carry out a home visit/s without prior notice to verify a pupil's home address.

An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place. Fraudulent claims relating to the home address of a particular child may lead to the withdrawal of any offer of a school place.

Proof of address will not be required for Traveller families where the address is confirmed by the Traveller Education Service. A foster carer will not be required to supply proof of address for a child placed with them by a LA.

The LA and/or Admissions Authority must be notified of any change of address during the admissions procedure.

Shared care arrangements

Where shared care arrangements are in place and parents/carers of the child submit two separate applications for different schools, the LA will only accept one application which will be the application made by the parent/carer that lives at the same permanent home address as the child. Where there are exceptional grounds such as on-going court proceedings for example, these applications will be considered on a case by case basis.

Where it is necessary to establish the permanent home address for the child, parents/carers will be asked to write to the LA stating the number of days each week the child spends with them. The LA may also ask for evidence of which parent/carer was in receipt of child benefit

at the point of application. If the parent/carer is not in receipt of child benefit, the LA will ask for proof of the child's home address as held by the doctor's surgery at the point of application. If the child's home address cannot be verified the LA reserves the right to request further documentary evidence to support any claim of permanent home address.

Parent/Carer

Natural parents, whether they are married or not, any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person. Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child is considered to be a parent in education law).

Sibling

For the purpose of admissions, a sibling is defined as children living at the same permanent home address. Please see section on 'shared care' which will apply if necessary in order to determine the sibling's permanent home address.

Siblings in post 16 education are not included as siblings for the purposes of admissions.

Appeals

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. National Offer Day. Information on the timetable for the appeals process is available on the Somerset LA website by 28 February each year.

Waiting lists

The Community Council will maintain a waiting list for every year group. Children will automatically be placed on the waiting list if a place is refused.

Waiting lists will operate until the end of the academic year for which the place has been requested. 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. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure the Community Council are informed of any changes that may affect their child's position on the waiting list.

Withdrawal of places

The Community Council will consider withdrawing the offer of a place if;

- The place has been offered on the basis of an application which is subsequently found to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading.
- The place is offered on the basis of an address that is subsequently found to be different from a child's permanent home address then that place is liable to be withdrawn.
- The parent/carer has not responded to the offer within a reasonable period of time and a further opportunity has been given for the parent to respond within 10 days having explained that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not.

Deferred entry for infants - Reception applications only

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.]

Full-time schooling - Reception applications only

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

Summer Born Children - Reception applications only

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.

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.

When such a request is made, the LA 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. For example, 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 or 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 or to transfer 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 for a child transferring school is refused, the school place application will be processed and an outcome will be sent on the National Offer Day.

If a request for delayed admission for a starting school child 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 1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday.

If a request for a child to transfer or 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 guidance please visit;

https://www.somerset.gov.uk/education-and-families/starting-school-early-or-late/

Children from outside the UK

Applications will be accepted for children who meet one or more of the following:

- They are resident in the UK.
- They hold full British Citizen Passports.
- They are from countries whose passports have been endorsed to show that they have the right to abode in this country.

Applications for children who do not meet one of the above will not be accepted until the child is in this country.

Children of UK Service Personnel

The Admissions Authority endeavours to ensure that their admission arrangements support the Government's 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 on that address. 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://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/461481/Admission_of_children_of_crown_servants.pdf

Alteration

It should be noted that this policy is subject to alteration to reflect any changes in legislation, case law, Council policy or to ensure legal compliance.