The Topsham School

Orchard Way, Topsham, Exeter, Devon EX3 0DN

Admissions Policy 2026-27

Our ethos – we ask parents and carers to respect our ethos and its importance to the school community. This doesn't affect the right to apply for a place here or how an application will be considered.

The Aim of The Topsham School is to offer a positive, safe, caring happy, creative and stimulating environment in which each child can reach their full potential.

We achieve this by staff, children, parent, carers, governors and the community working together to become:

1) Confident and independent learners able to make informed choices.
2) Self-disciplined, motivated and responsible learning.
3) Life-long learners who set themselves high expectations.
4) Respectful, open and trustworthy members of the community.
5) An active member of a diverse community.

Devon School Admissions Service

Key information. For glossary and explanatory notes, see Appendix A. Text in blue that is underlined like this is a link to further information, within this document or elsewhere.	
Policy consultation period	9 November 2024 to 10 January 2025
Policy determined	7 February 2025
Policy published on school website by	15 March 2025
Policy contact	Maria White, Head of School
Amendments after determination	Informed by a Determination of the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (REF4394 19 March 2025), a time restriction on in-year applications for children of Crown Servants and UK Service personnel was removed.
DfE school number	878-2090
Age range	4-11 primary school
Early Years provision[1]	No
Type of school	Community
Admission authority	Devon County Council[2]
Normal round intake	Reception
PAN for 2026-27	**30**
Priority for children to another setting[3]	Isca Academy
Priority for children from another setting	No
Designated religious character	No
Priority according to faith	No
Admissions catchment area	Yes – see below
Entitlement to local authority (LA) transport[4]	Yes – if this is the nearest available school to home Yes – if home is in the school's catchment area
School uniform	Yes
Application Form	devon.cc/admissionsonline or with a paper form available by calling 0345 155 1019 or at devon.cc/applicationforms or from the school office. If applying on an application form provided by another LA, please ensure that you mention anything that you feel could give you additional priority – for example priority for children of staff or an exceptional need.
Supplementary Information Form	Yes – only to be used for exceptional need priority. See below
When to apply, **normal round**	15 November 2025 to 15 January 2026. late applications accepted[5]
• Decision	16 April 2026
• When to submit an appeal	from 15 May 2026 or from 20 school days after the refusal[6]
• Deadline to submit appeal[7]	31 May 2026. Later appeals accepted.
• Deadline to hear appeal	24 July 2026
When to apply, **in-year**	from 1 June 2026 for Year Groups 1 to 6 from 1 September 2026 for Reception
• Decision	within 15 school days of an application
• When to submit an appeal	at any time after refusal
• Deadline to submit appeal	there is no deadline
• Deadline to hear appeal	within 30 school days of the appeal submission

[1] All children must apply for admission to the school. This includes children at any Early Years setting.
[2] This function is undertaken by Devon School Admissions Team.
[3] A receiving school names 'feeder' schools in its own admissions policy. This can change from one year to the next.
[4] The LA will provide free transport for eligible Devon-resident children where the primary or infant school is further than a walking distance of 2 miles. See Devon's Education Transport Policy for full details of eligibility.
[5] Late applications, made after the closing date, are considered after all timely applications. All places may have been offered to timely applications. Parents can make a case that they were unable to apply on time and if that is accepted the application will be considered as timely if possible.
[6] Parents can submit appeals sooner than this but must have at least 20 school days to prepare an appeal if they wish.
[7] Where possible, normal round appeals submitted after the deadline will be heard by 24 July. If that isn't possible, they will be heard within 40 school days of the appeal form being submitted. This may be after the autumn term has begun.

Contact details	
The school	01392 874498 http://www.topsham.devon.sch.uk/ admin@topsham.devon.sch.uk
United Schools Federation	01626 352854 https://unitedschoolsfed.co.uk
Devon School Admissions Service	0345 155 1019 admissions@devon.gov.uk
Devon policies and admission information	devon.cc/admissions
Devon common application forms	http://devon.cc/applicationforms
Devon Education Transport Team	0345 155 1019 devon.cc/schooltransport
Devon Virtual School	01392 384789 educate.virtualschool-mailbox@devon.gov.uk
Devon Admissions Appeals Panel	0345 155 1019 devon.cc/appeals
Children's Education Advisory Service	RC-DCS-HQ-CEAS@mod.gov.uk
Office of the Schools Adjudicator	www.education.gov.uk/schoolsadjudicator

Relevant Policies and Legislation

School Admissions Code 2021

School Admissions Appeals Code 2022

School Standards and Framework Act

The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012

The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012

The School Admissions (Appeal Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012

The School Information (England) Regulations 2008

Devon's Step by Step and In-Year Guides to Admissions

Devon's Normal Round and In-Year Co-ordinated Admissions Schemes

Devon's In-Year Fair Access Protocol

Devon's Education Transport Policy

Devon's advice on applications from overseas https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/school-information/apply-for-a-school-place/admission-advice-international-arrivals

Oversubscription Criteria
To be used only when there are more applications than there are places available. A child whose Education, Health and Care Plan names the school will be admitted without regard for these criteria.
1. Looked after children[1] and children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order[2] including those who appear to the admission authority to have been in state care outside England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. **2. Priority will next be given to children who have an exceptional social or medical need which means they should attend this school rather than any other (or whose parents have such a need).** *[The applicant must complete an Exceptional Needs Supplementary Information Form, supported by evidence from a medical specialist or social worker, explaining the need and why it necessitates the child's attendance at this school.]* **3. Priority will next be given to children living within the catchment area set out in the map[3] who are siblings[4] of pupils on roll at this school.** **4. Priority will next be given to other children living within the catchment area.** **5. Priority will next be given to children living outside the catchment area, who are siblings of pupils on roll at this school.** **6. Priority will next be given to children of members of staff[5] who have been employed at this school[6] for more than two years or recruited within the past two years to fill a vacancy for which there was a skills shortage.** 7. **Priority will next be given to other children.**
Tiebreaker – to prioritise applications in the same oversubscription criterion: a) straight-line distance from home to school and then, b) where distances are equal (within 2 metres) an electronic list randomiser will be used.

[1] Children who are Looked After by or provided with accommodation in the exercise of its functions (see the Children Act 1989 section 22(1)) by a local authority.

[2] An **adoption** order is an order under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders). A **child arrangements order** is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 as amended by Section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a **special guardianship order** as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

[3] A copy of the catchment area is included in the admissions policy for each school and can be seen, in greater detail, at www.devon.gov.uk/achoolareamaps.

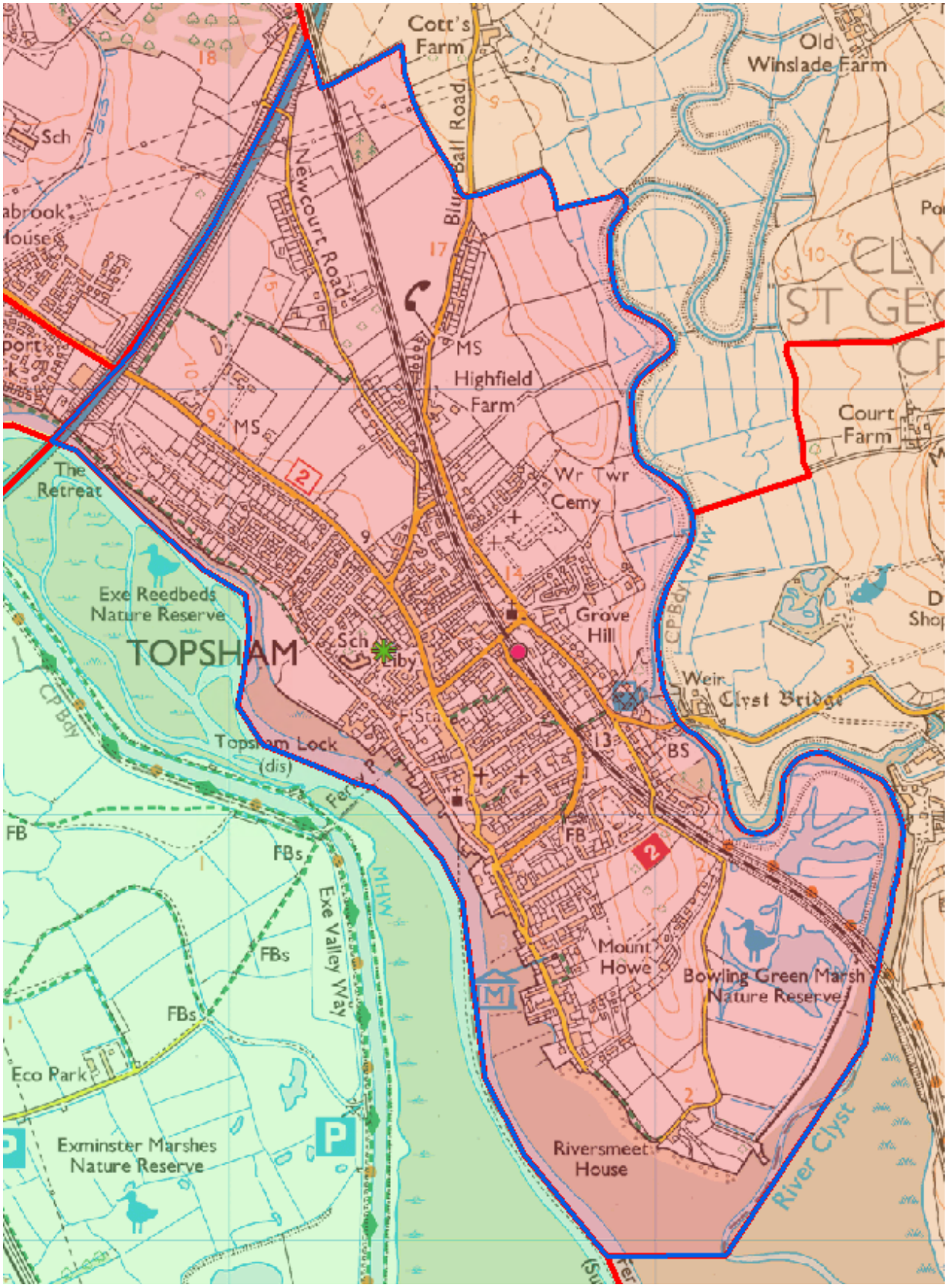
[4] **Sibling** means a natural brother or sister, a half brother or sister, a legally adopted brother or sister or half-brother or sister, a stepbrother or sister or other child living in the same household as part of a single-family unit at the date of their application for a place. **Siblings are those on roll in Reception to Year 6** or with a formal offer of admission to those year groups.

[5] A child will be eligible if the **member of staff** is either the natural or adoptive parent or other person with parental responsibility or any person living in the same household and acting as the child's parent.

[6] This will be any salaried person employed at this school when the application is made. Where the duties of a member of staff are undertaken at different schools in a federation or chain of schools, there will be admissions priority only at one school. This will be at the member of staff's base school, where he or she works for more than 50% of their duties.

Catchment area

The catchment area can be viewed in more detail at devon.cc/schoolareamaps.
The boundary is marked by blue lines.
For admissions purposes, distances are measured in a straight-line from the green star marker for the school. Distances for school transport purposes are measured by the shortest available route.



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School Admissions Policies

All schools must have an admissions policy for each academic year. The policy tells parents how to get a place at the school and tells the school's leaders and staff what they have to do so that applications can be made and what to do when they have been made. Policies have to be fair, clear, and objective to comply with the requirements of the School Admissions Codes. The policy will explain:

- parents have to make a formal application, and
- how and when they can do that;
- how many places are available for the first intake – called the normal round - into this school
- the normal round intake into this school is at the start of **reception**,
- how decisions are made when there are more applications than places,
- what happens when an application is refused, and
- the school's commitment to a fair, consistent, and transparent process.

Our policy should be read along with Devon County Council's admission information and its policies to support access to education – including admissions, inclusion and transport. Parents of children who live in a different LA area should read the equivalent information and policies published there.

Once our policy is determined, it can't be amended except where it is permitted or required under the terms of the School Admissions Code. Any amendments we make will be detailed in the Key Information section above.

We will consult on our policy every year.

It is possible that we will propose changes to policy. Although we have not often made changes to parts of the policy such as the oversubscription criteria, the Published Admission Number, or the catchment area, parents should not assume that the policy will be unchanged from one year to the next.

How to apply for admission at the normal round

Parents apply for admission to the LA where their child lives. For children who live in the Devon County Council area,[1] applications are made at www.devon.gov.uk/admissionsonline. A hard copy of the common application form, called the D-CAF1, is available on request from the LA. Every LA provides its own application forms. Whichever LA receives it, details of an application naming this school will be forwarded to Devon to be managed under Devon's admission arrangements.

Our admission authority is responsible for ranking[2] all applications against our oversubscription criteria so that the LA can offer places under its co-ordinated admission scheme. Normal round offers are sent by the LA where the child lives on behalf of the school.

Applications for children who live in Devon are open from **15 November 2025** to **15 January 2026**. This is the National Closing Date. Applications can be made after the closing date, but they may be considered after all applications that were made on time. This may mean they are at a disadvantage and could be refused. Parents can make a case that they were unable to apply by the closing date and the application should be considered as timely if possible. This could be, for example, where a family moves into the area after the closing date. Other circumstances where it was not possible to apply by the closing date will be considered.

Places will be offered for admission at the beginning of the autumn term in **September 2026**. Parents can then choose to defer admission within the **2026-27** academic year, until their child reaches statutory school age.

How to apply for admission in-year

An in-year admission is any time after the start of reception, into any year group. We will take part in Devon's co-ordination for in-year admissions in **2026-27**.

This means that all parents apply to Devon, regardless of where the child lives. Applications are made at www.devon.gov.uk/admissionsonline. A hard copy of the common application form, called the D-CAF, is available on request from the LA.

Our admission authority remains responsible for ranking all applications against our oversubscription criteria so that the LA can offer places under its co-ordinated admission scheme. In-year offers are sent by Devon on behalf of the school.

[1] Parents of children who live in the Torbay or Plymouth City Council areas must apply to those LAs, not to Devon.
[2] Ranking may be undertaken by the LA on behalf of the school.

Applications can be submitted at any time after the year group has started[1] but won't be processed earlier than 8 school weeks before the place is required. Applications will be processed earlier than this for children of UK Service personnel and Crown Servants. They are considered in date order, with all those received at the school or by Devon's School Admissions Team by 6pm on any one day considered together.

Responsibility for decision-making

The admission authority for any school is responsible for all decisions.

Decision-making cannot be made solely by email or by a single individual.

The LA may assist with tasks such as ranking applications against the oversubscription criteria, and it will provide advice and support over matters including evidence of new addresses .

Our admission authority may meet virtually (for example by video or conference call). Admissions decisions may be made by a sub-committee or local governing board, consisting of at least 3 members. It will meet within 5 school days of receiving an in-year application and record its decisions and the reasons for them. This is to make sure that parents can be told what the decision is within 15 school days. If the decision is to refuse admission, the LA may then consider under its Fair Access Protocol.

The school will notify the LA of numbers on roll in the school within 2 school days when requested to do so. This enables the LA to advise parents.

The right of appeal when an application is refused

Parents have the right of appeal against a decision to refuse admission to an Admissions Appeal Panel that is independent of the admission authority and of the LA.[2] Information about the right of appeal and how to appeal will be provided with any refusal.

The decision of an Appeal Panel is binding on a school.

A timetable for appeals is included in the glossary below.

There is no right of appeal to a particular year group. For example, if a parent would like a child of Year 4 age to be admitted to Year 3 but is offered a place in Year 4, there is no right of appeal.

An appeal for a place in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2 may be subject to Key Stage One or Infant Class Size Legislation. This limits the number of children in a Reception, Year 1, or Year 2 class (or a class where most children are aged 5, 6 or 7 years) to 30 children for each teacher. These Key Stage One appeals are a more limited process which review the original decision to refuse admission rather than an appeal against the refusal in the light of new information that wasn't available when the original decision was taken to refuse admission.

The Appeal Panel will decide:

A) whether an additional child would breach the legal maximum of 30 children in a Key Stage One class with a single teacher
B) whether the admission arrangements for the school and LA were lawful
C) whether they had been applied correctly and
D) whether it was a reasonable decision to refuse the application in the circumstances that were known at the time the original decision to refuse was made.

There are limited permitted exceptions which would allow a school to exceed 30 children in a Key Stage One class.

[1] This means on or after 1 September of the intake year.

[2] Where a child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools there is no need for an admission authority to comply with parental preference for a period of two years from the last exclusion.

Admission when the school is full

We will refuse admission if we believe the year group or class is full and that admitting another child would prejudice efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

However, the LA may then approach the school to admit the child because he or she is considered to be vulnerable. This can apply under its Fair Access arrangements or for looked after children and previously looked after children.

Children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) may be admitted when we are otherwise full if the Plan names this school.

A child must be admitted to the school if successful at appeal.

Admission outside a child's normal age group

Parents can request that their child is taught outside their normal or chronological age group. If this occurs after admission, the school will discuss the options and reach a decision on the appropriate year group in the pupil's best interests. Parents can request that admission to the school is outside the normal year group. This could be because:

- a child is learning at greater depth and parent wants an older year group or
- a child has experienced problems such as ill health and parent wants a younger year group or
- of parental preference for a summer-born child to start school in Reception in a younger year group.

With any request for admission outside a child's normal age group, the admission authority has two decisions to make:

1. which year group would be in the child's best interest.
2. whether there is a place that can be offered in that year group.

Parents should contact the school as soon as possible to discuss any admission outside a child's normal age group.

For normal round admission to a younger year group, parents are encouraged to **apply** for admission to the normal year group and to **request** agreement that a place would be made available in the younger year group, vacancies permitting. This enables admission authorities to reach a decision on year group before the National Offer Day.

Parents are encouraged to explain why they are requesting admission out of the normal year group and to provide as much supporting evidence as they wish to. The admission authority will decide, based on the circumstances of the case, and in the best interests of the child concerned, considering:

- the headteacher's views
- the parent's views,
- any information about the child's academic, social, and emotional development submitted by the parent or otherwise known,
- information about the child's medical history and the views of a relevant medical professional submitted by the parent or otherwise known,
- whether the child has previously been educated out of their normal age group,
- guidance from the Department for Education on the admission of summer-born children to Reception,
- whether the child may have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

If the request to be taught out of the normal age group is agreed, the application can be withdrawn by the parent before a place is offered. The parent will then make a fresh application for the younger year group in the next admissions round. If the request is refused, the parent decides whether to continue with an application for the normal year group. It may be that another school agrees to admission to the younger year group there.

Parents should consider the implications of a child being taught out of the normal age group. A school to which the child transfers is not obliged to teach outside the normal age group though it must take into consideration that the child has been taught outside of the normal age group.

Delayed admission into Reception

Children can start in school from the start of the September term after the **fourth** birthday but don't have to start then. Parents can put off admission until the beginning of the term after the **fifth** birthday, when the child reaches CSA – compulsory school age. It is the parent's decision whether the child starts after their fourth or fifth birthday.

Children whose birthday is between 1 April and 31 August are called **summer born**. For them, CSA is at the beginning of the September term of the next academic year. Their parents can choose to delay admission until then. However, they can't choose whether that later start will be in Reception or in Year 1 – that is a decision for the admission

authority to take. This decision will be whether it is in the best interests of the child to be admitted into Reception or Year 1, accepting that it is the parent's decision to start at the start of the September term after the fifth birthday. In reaching this decision, the admission authority must take a view why it would be in the child's best interests to start in Year 1 if that means the child would not experience a year in a school Reception class.

We invite parents to visit so that we can discuss our Reception offer, how it is tailored to meet the needs of younger children and how their needs would be met as they move through the school. This is an opportunity to talk about parental preferences and any concerns about the child's readiness for school. Children follow the same Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum in Reception and in an Early Years setting. This play-based learning can be differentiated to meet the needs of the individual child.

Deferred admission into Reception

Places for normal round admission are offered for full-time admission at the beginning of the September term after a child's fourth birthday. That is before children reach CSA.

Deferred admission is where a child puts off admission into a Reception class until later in the same academic year, up to the start of the term after the **fifth** birthday. All parents have a right to defer the date their child is admitted, or to take the place up part-time, until the child reaches CSA.

Provided a parent informs a school that the place is to be deferred to the beginning of the spring or summer term, it will be held open until then. Places can be deferred to the start of the spring term or the summer term, depending on the child's birthdate. Please see the table below:

Child's fifth birthday	**Can defer admission or attend part-time until the start of term in**
1 September – 31 December 2026	January 2027
1 January – 31 March 2027	January 2027 OR April 2027
1 April – 31 August 2027	January 2027 OR April 2027 OR September 2027 by making a fresh application for a Year 1 place (from June 2027) or making a fresh normal round application for Reception in 2027-28

Options for admission to Reception

Children who are below CSA are entitled to a school place from the September term on or after the fourth birthday. At this point, parents have the following options:

- start full-time at the beginning of the September term.
- start part-time at the beginning of term up to and no later than the end of the term before the fifth birthday.
- defer admission within the Reception year to the beginning of term on or after the fifth birthday.
- delay admission to the start of the September term of the next academic year (summer born children only).

It is for the school to decide what the part-time offer is and it is for the parent to decide whether to accept that part-time offer, for attendance to be full-time or for the offer of a place to be declined. Details of our part-time offer are available from the school office or on the school website.

Parents are encouraged to discuss delayed, deferred, or part-time admission with the school and any other professionals working with them.

Emergency arrangements

If a local, regional, or national public health lockdown is imposed, school admission and appeals arrangements may operate to amended timescales or under emergency regulations. Wherever possible, admission applications will continue to be processed under the terms of the co-ordinated admissions schemes so that parents are not disadvantaged. Places will be held open until it is practical and safe for children to attend on site. Remote learning will be made available as for existing pupils although we recognise that in some circumstances, a parent may feel it is expedient to take up remote learning from the current school on a temporary basis.

Provision may be available for vulnerable and key worker children on site or at an alternative setting, according to circumstances at that time.

Appendix A - Glossary

Explanatory notes for Devon state-funded schools, both for primary and secondary-phase schools unless explicitly varied in a school policy. The oversubscription criteria for this school are detailed above. Further information can be found on the LA website and in Devon's *Step by Step* and the *In-Year Admissions* Guides.
The purpose of this section is to give the reader an understanding of the admission process from Reception to Sixth Forms.

Admission authority	This is the body with legal responsibility for the admissions policy and decisions in response to applications for admission. This includes proposing, consulting on, determining and publishing the policy. The admission authorities for different types of school are: **Academy**: the academy trust or multi-academy trust **Community school**: the LA **Foundation school**: the school's governing board **Free school:** the academy trust or multi-academy trust **Studio school**: the academy trust or multi-academy trust **University Technical College (UTC):** academy trust or multi-academy trust **Voluntary Aided school (VA)**: the school's governing board **Voluntary Controlled school (VC)**: the LA
Admission Number (AN)	The AN is the equivalent of the PAN after the intake year but should be seen as a guide rather than as a minimum. It is the number of places a school expects to be able to provide in the Year Group. It will often be the same as the PAN that was originally determined for that group of children when it first entered the school. It may be increased or decreased in response to changes in demand or in the school's accommodation or organisation. See also PAN.
Appeal	When an application is refused, this is because the school believes it would "prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources" (see the School Standards and Framework Act 1998). Any refusal will be in writing and inform the applicant of the: • reason for refusal • right to an appeal to be heard by an independent panel • right to a place on a waiting list for vacancies An appeals service is available for all Devon state-funded schools before the Devon Independent School Admissions Appeals Panel. Further information about the process is available from the Appeals Clerk. Appeal papers will either be sent with the refusal letter or can be requested from the LA.
Appeals Timetable	The deadline for submitting appeals allows appellants at least 20 school days to prepare and submit a written appeal. The appeal must then be heard within 40 school days for the normal round and within 30 days for in-year admissions. **Normal round intake:** Allocation date for Reception or junior school Year 3: **16 April 2026** Deadline for appeal forms to be submitted: **31 May 2026** Appeals will be heard within 40 school days, by: **24 July 2026** Where possible, appeals that are submitted after 31 May will be heard by 24 July. If that is not possible, they will be heard within 30 school days of the appeal form being submitted. Allocation date for Year 7 intake or studio school / UTC Year 10: **2 March 2026** Deadline for appeal forms to be submitted: **20 April 2026** Appeals will be heard within 40 school days, by: **23 June 2026** Where possible, appeals that are submitted after 20 April will be heard by 23 June. If that is not possible, they will be heard within 30 school days of the appeal form being submitted. The allocation and appeal dates for the Year 12 intake are set by each sixth form.
Application	For normal round admissions, applications are considered to have been made on the National Closing Date (**15 January** for all-through, infant, junior and primary schools, and

	31 October for all-through, secondary, studio schools and UTCs) or the date when the application was submitted or amended if later. In-year applications are considered to have been made on the date they are received or amended, including any supporting evidence that is required – for example, a new address or evidence of a Child's in Care status or a Supplementary Information Form will amend the date on which the application is considered to have been made. It is an applicant's responsibility to make sure that the admissions authority or LA is informed about changes to circumstances and eligibility for priority if, for instance, a sibling is taken onto the school roll, or the home address changes.
Catchment Area	Many schools operate an admissions catchment area. This is the geographical area that the school is primarily intended to serve. There is a higher admissions priority for children who live in it. Living outside a catchment or priority area does not prevent a child from being admitted to the school where there are vacancies. Children living in a residential property split by a catchment boundary line will be considered to be living within the catchment area. The boundary line will then be reviewed for future applicants. Eligibility for catchment priority where this is part of a school's arrangements is not a guarantee of admission. Oversubscription criteria for this school are detailed above.
Children adopted from state care outside England	These children have the same admissions priority as Children in Care. Evidence of having been in state care before adoption will be required. Guidance on what constitutes as state care in any country will be available from the Headteacher of the Devon Virtual School.
Children formerly in Care (Looked After)	These children were looked after until they were adopted (see the Adoption and Children Act 2002 section 46) or made the subject of a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order (Children Act section 14A). Child arrangements orders are defined in s.8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by s.12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. All admissions policies must give priority to Looked After and Previously Looked After Children and those adopted from state care outside of England. Eligibility for looked after or formerly looked after priority is not a guarantee of admission although there is a presumption in favour of admission. Oversubscription criteria for this school are detailed above.
Chronological Year Group	This is the group of children usually taught together according to their date of birth. Children born between 1 September and 31 August have the same chronological Year Group. This is sometimes called the normal age group.
Common Application Form	This is the name for the application form provided by the LA and must be used for any normal round admissions application. The form provided by the LA where the child lives must be used, regardless of where the school is. Children who live outside England when the application is made should apply to the LA where the school is located. Most applications in Devon are submitted online. There are also paper versions of Devon's common application forms: • D-CAF in-year admissions after the normal round, from Key Stage 1 to 4 at any Devon state-funded school. • D-CAF1 normal round applications to Key Stage 1. • D-CAF2 normal round applications to Key Stage 2. • D-CAF3 normal round applications to Key Stage 3. • D-CAF4 normal round applications to Key Stage 4. • D-CAF5 normal round or in-year applications to Key Stage 5. The D-CAF and D-CAFs1 to 4 allow up to three preferences. To be and returned to the LA. D-CAF5 allows a single preference. To be returned direct to the sixth form.

Compulsory School Age (CSA)	Children reach compulsory school age and must be in full-time education 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. Education can be in school or in Elective Home Education. Children are no longer of CSA when they reach the School Leaving Age (SLA); the last Friday in the June of the academic year during which a child has their 16th birthday.
Deferred admission	Parents can choose to defer their child's admission to a Reception class from the September after the fourth birthday to the start of the term after the fifth birthday. This will be the spring or summer term within the same academic year. Deferred admission children remain in their normal year group. The offer for a place will be held open for the child where a parent has informed the school; that place will not be offered to another child.
Delayed admission	Parents of summer-born children can request that their child's admission to Reception class is delayed from the September after the fourth birthday to the September after the fifth birthday which is the point at which they are required to be in suitable education. The decision rests with the admissions authority for a school and must be made in the best interests of the child. Where it is agreed, the parent must also make an application for admission in the appropriate normal round alongside all other applicants. As delayed admission children are then out of their normal year group, parents should contact schools in good time before transfers to make a similar request to be admitted to the next school out of the normal year group. This will be for in-year transfers or normal round admission to junior schools, secondary school or otherwise. The admission authorities for other schools must consider the child's school history but they are not bound by the decision to agree delayed admission previously taken. Delayed admission should not be confused with deferred admission which involves putting off admission to the Reception class within the same academic year. Deferred admission children remain in their normal year group. Guidance on delayed admission is available from the LA at www.devon.gov.uk/admissions.
Distance measurement	Measurements for school admissions purposes are straight-line from the establishment marker for a child's home (the residential building) to the star marker for the school on Devon's Geographical Information System, an electronic mapping system which can be viewed at www.devon.gov.uk/schoolareamaps. Other mapping systems are not used for these purposes.
Documentary evidence	The admission authority – or the LA on its behalf – may request evidence of a child's addressor that the person who made an application for admission was legally permitted to do so. Once a place has been offered to a child, a school may ask for evidence of identity – usually a short birth certificate. This may not be necessary where the child has been on roll at another school in England which can confirm that evidence has been seen at that school.
Education, Health and Care Plans	An Education, Health and Care Plan is a formal document issued by the LA describing a child's additional needs and how they will be provided for in a school. Any child whose EHCP names this school will be admitted. This will reduce the number of places available to other children accordingly. For in-year admissions, the child will be admitted whether the school has reached its PAN or other AN for the Year Group. Before a Plan is issued or amended the LA will consult with schools and ask whether it considers it could meet the child's needs, as set out in the Plan.
Education Transport	Parents should consider how their child will get to school for the whole of their time on roll. Parents are advised not to rely on lifts, car shares or public service vehicles always being

	available. Supported transport is provided by Devon County Council for Devon-resident children who: • attend the catchment school recognised by the LA for transport purposes; • attend the closest school available; • (Children in Care only) the closest available Good or Outstanding school, as rated by Ofsted. The home address must be further than a minimum walking distance according to the child's age: 2 miles for children at a primary, infant, or junior school and 3 miles for children at a secondary school. See Devon's Education Transport Policy for exceptions to catchment school eligibility. • (low-income households) one of the three closest secondary schools if between 2 and 6 miles from home; • (low-income households) the closest faith secondary school if between 2 and 15 miles from home. Children who do not live in Devon should apply to their LA for transport support. A school's admissions straight-line measurement policy does not apply to LA school transport decisions. It is possible that a school is the closest available for admissions purposes, using straight-line measurement, but not the closest school for the purposes of entitlement to free school transport from the LA. **Parents who rely on free transport are strongly advised to check whether there is an entitlement with the Education Transport Team before accepting the offer of a place at any school.**
Equally ranked preference scheme	When making an application, parents can express a preference for one, two or three schools. There may be more applications available in other LA areas. Preferences should be named in the order the parent would most like a place to be provided. It might be possible for each school to offer a place. If that happens, a place will only be offered at whichever of the schools that could offer a place the parent ranked highest. So, if places are available at School 1 and School 3, a place will be offered at School 1 only. Equally ranked preference schemes are a legal requirement which enable parents to apply for the school they prefer without risking admission to the closest school or a catchment school. Schools are not informed by the LA whether an application is a first, second or third preference.
Exceptional Need to attend this school	A school can prioritise admission for a child where there is an exceptional need to attend that school and not another school. Priority can only be agreed where it is the first preference school. Eligibility for this priority where it forms part of a school's arrangements is not a guarantee of admission. Oversubscription criteria for this school are detailed above.
Extended schooling	Further information on services beyond the normal school day is available from the school office or website.
Fair Access Protocol or In-Year Fair Access Protocol	All LAs are legally required to operate an In-Year Fair Access Protocol across their area and all state-funded schools must take part in an agreed Protocol. This ensures that children who are vulnerable and unable to access an appropriate school place under the standard In-Year admission arrangements for the area have an admissions safety net. This may mean that a child is admitted to a school even though it is full and other children have been refused admission. It is possible for a child to be refused admission but be allocated a place under the In-Year Fair Access Protocol, including when there are children on a waiting list.

Faith oversubscription criteria	Schools with a recognised religious character may give additional priority for admission where faith criteria are met by an applicant. Eligibility for faith priority where it forms part of a school's arrangements is not a guarantee of admission. Oversubscription criteria for this school are detailed above.
Fees and charges	There is no charge for applying for admission, for admission itself, or for the provision of education at a state-funded school. Schools will not request donations before or during the admissions process and any donations made to the school following admission are entirely voluntary. No activities such as school visits are compulsory. A policy on charging for activities is available on request from the school office.
General Data Protection Regulation	Information about an admissions application will be shared with relevant LAs and with another school when a place has been offered. Where one parent seeks information about an application or to locate a child, the priority will be to safeguard the child and immediate family. Unless it is established that the other parent may not lawfully receive information about the child, the following information will be shared: • the preferences expressed, • the date of the application, • name of the applicant and • the outcomes of those preferences. Details about the reasons for an application will not be shared with the other parent without the agreement of the applicant or other lawful reason to share the information.
Home Address	Places are offered based on where the child will attend school, not necessarily where they live when the application is made. If a school has vacancies, then it doesn't matter whether the home address is in a catchment area or relatively close to the school. The home address is where a child normally lives. Where a child lives with parents with shared parental responsibility, each for part of a week or for one week in turn, the home address is determined by a joint declaration from the parents which may set out the pattern of residence. The address used will be the address from which the child attends school on most mornings in a normal school week. If no declaration is received and there is no relevant Court Order, the home address will be the address at which the child is registered with a GP. If this is in dispute or the child is not registered with a GP, any other evidence provided by parents will be considered in reaching a decision on the home address for admissions purposes. This may be necessary where parents don't agree on the child's home address. Parents are urged to reach agreement or seek a Specific Issues Order from a court to decide which parent should or should not pursue an application. Where they do not, the admissions authority will determine the home address for admissions purposes. Where a school asks for evidence of the address from which a child will attend school, this would often be written confirmation of a house purchase or a formal tenancy agreement. Schools and the LA recognise that some families may be unable to provide this. Parents who can't provide this evidence should contact the school or the LA. There is no intention to disadvantage families where there is a genuine reason why evidence cannot be provided.
Home-School Agreement	Admission to school is not conditional on signing a home-school agreement where one is used by a school. Some schools ask parents to sign a Home-School Agreement after children have been offered a place as a positive way of promoting greater involvement in a child's education.
In-Year admission	This is where a child joins the school at any time after the normal round, the first opportunity for admission to the school.
Linked School	A school which works with another to develop curriculum links and to ease transition for pupils from infant school to junior school and from primary school to secondary school. Sometimes called a feeder school.

	Eligibility for linked or feeder school priority where it forms part of a school's arrangements is not a guarantee of admission. Oversubscription criteria for this school are detailed above.
Looked After Children	These children are Looked After by or provided with accommodation in the exercise of its functions (see the Children Act 1989 section 22(1)) by a LA.
Member of staff	Many schools give admissions priority to the children of members of staff. This will be any salaried person employed at the school when the application is made. All members of staff are an important part of the school community: teaching and non-teaching. Where the duties of a member of staff are undertaken at different schools in a federation or chain of schools, there will be admissions priority only at one school. This will be at the member of staff's base school, where he or she works for more than 50% of their duties. Where a parent is no longer a member of staff, priority on that basis will cease. Eligibility for children of staff priority where it forms part of a school's arrangements is not a guarantee of admission. Oversubscription criteria for this school are detailed above.
Multiple birth siblings	Random allocation will not be applied to multiple birth siblings (twins and triplets etc.) tied for the final place. Where one or more can be admitted within the PAN or AN, Devon schools will admit them all and exceed the PAN if necessary. In primary and infant schools, a child admitted as the 31st, 32nd or 33rd child in a class would be a permitted exception to Infant Class Size legislation.
Nodal points	A nodal point is a geographical location, used when a school is oversubscribed, to measure distance to an applicant's home. This can ensure the school serves pupils closest to it but also those living in other areas, for example areas that have more limited access to school places or where a straight-line measurement does not fairly represent proximity to the school. Nodal points are sometimes known as Admissions Points or Centroid Points. The term nodal point may also describe a specific location on school premises for distance measurement purposes.
Normal Round Admissions	This is where a child joins the school at the first opportunity for admission to the Year Group - even if the start is deferred until later in the school year at a primary or infant school.
Nurseries and pre-schools	Some primary and infant schools give admissions priority for children at a named school-run nursery. They will work with any local Early Years providers to make the transition into Reception as smooth as possible. All parents must apply for admission to Reception, regardless of where their Early Years provision has been. Priority may be limited to children who are eligible for Pupil Premium funding or more widely available: on the basis that more than half of the available Early years Entitlement is taken up at that nursery. There must be no admissions priority linked to paid-for sessions at nursery. Eligibility for nursery priority where it forms part of a school's arrangements is not a guarantee of admission. Oversubscription criteria for this school are detailed above.
Objections to admissions policy	Advice is available from the Office of the Schools Adjudicator on how to object to this policy. Objections must be made by **15 May 2025.**
Offers	When a place is offered by the LA on behalf of a school, it is assumed the offer will be accepted unless the parent advises otherwise. Schools will contact parents after the LA offer to make admission arrangements if a parent doesn't confirm the place is required within 10 school days of the offer, the school or the LA will try to contact the parent again. If there is no response within 5 school days of that attempted contact, the offer may be withdrawn. It is important that when places are offered or refused it is done fairly and consistently. Where the LA or a school has reason to believe that false or deliberately misleading information has been provided, the decision to offer will be reconsidered using correct

	information. The offer may then be withdrawn if it would not have been made with the correct information, even if this is after admission. Places are offered based on the address from which the child will attend school. Accurate information is particularly relevant for addresses. A school or the LA may ask for evidence of a child's home address as part of the decision-making process. If a parent believes that the child's address will change before admission, the school or LA must be informed. The parent may be required to provide evidence of a new address where this would give a higher priority for admission. Places will only be withdrawn if: • they were offered in error, • the parent has not responded to an offer within a reasonable time, or • the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application which secured the offer of a place when the response would otherwise have been a refusal. Offers for in-year admission are to be taken up as soon as possible. Places can be held open pending a house move, up to the date when a parent applied for admission. Where there no house move is involved, the child must be ready to start within 2 school weeks of the offer date.
Overseas children	All applications, including those submitted from outside the country, will be processed without regard for nationality or immigration status. Foreign nationals who wish to apply for a state-funded school place should check that they have a right of abode or that the conditions of their immigration status permit them to access a state-funded school. Advice for parents of foreign nationals and children overseas is available from the LA.
Oversubscription criteria	Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available in the Year Group, the admission authority will use its published oversubscription criteria to prioritise applications. Oversubscription criteria are not used where there are sufficient places available. Eligibility for priority under any oversubscription criterion used by a school is not a guarantee of admission. Oversubscription criteria for this school are detailed above.
PAN or Published Admission Number	This is the minimum number of places available at the school at the normal round intake. In limited circumstances, more will be admitted. The PAN is set by considering the physical capacity of the school, the level of demand expected from local children living in a school's catchment area and sensible, lawful school organisation. Applications will not be refused below the PAN at the normal round. If there is unexpectedly high demand and the school believes it could admit more children, the PAN will be increased. A school may admit children above-PAN where their circumstances suggest their need to be admitted outweighs prejudice to efficient education at the school.
Parent (or carer or guardian)	For school admission purposes, a parent is any person who has parental responsibility or care of the child. When we say parent, we also mean carer or guardian. Where admission arrangements refer to parents this can mean one parent or both. A school or the LA may ask for evidence of parental responsibility where a person is acting as a parent but does not hold formal parental responsibility. Sometimes there is a dispute between parents over which school a child should attend. Decisions in response to an admissions application will consider imminent court hearings that may have an impact on parental responsibility and living arrangements. Neither a school nor the LA will become involved in parental disputes.

Prejudice to efficient education	It is lawful to refuse admission where taking another child would cause a "prejudice to efficient education or the efficient use of resources". This is the point when we say the Year Group or the class is full. In most cases, prejudice would occur when the AN for the Year Group has been reached but it may also be when a class of mixed Year Groups is full. Where year groups are mixed in a single class, the PAN or AN for one year group may have been reached but, if there are vacancies in the class, a place may be offered. In reaching these decisions, the admission authority will consider the impact on class sizes in future years, assuming that all current pupils will still be on roll and that the next intakes will reach the determined PAN. This is called future prejudice (see Admissions Appeals Code 3.10).
Pupil Premium	Schools can give admissions priority where a child is eligible for Pupil Premium funding if included in the school's oversubscription criteria. Children are eligible for Pupil Premium funding: • who are eligible for free school meals, or have been eligible in the past 6 years (including eligible children of families with no recourse to public funds), • who have been adopted from care or have left care, • who are looked after by the LA, • who have a parent serving in HM Forces, • who have a parent who has retired on a pension from the Ministry of Defence. Eligibility for Pupil Premium priority where it forms part of a school's arrangements is not a guarantee of admission. Oversubscription criteria for this school are detailed above.
Service families	For children of UK service personnel and other Crown Servants we will consider a family posted to the area as meeting residence criteria even if a home address has not been identified and a unit address is used. Measurements for prioritisation purposes will be from the residential property or the centre of the front gate of the unit address if necessary. This requires written confirmation from the relevant government department: The Ministry of Defence, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office or Government Communications Headquarters. Schools will consider in-year admissions for families of UK service personnel posted to a new area and of Crown Servants returning to the country without reference to the 8 school weeks limit for other applications. Evidence will be required to confirm the posting. There is no additional admissions priority for children of service families.
Sibling	'Sibling' means a natural brother or sister, a half brother or sister, a legally adopted brother or sister or half-brother or sister, a stepbrother or sister or other child living in the same household as part of a single-family unit at the date of their application for a place. A sibling who has been offered a place within the normal admissions round will be considered as if he or she were on roll for the purposes of oversubscription priority where a child seeks admission in-year. A sibling who has been offered an in-year place will be considered as if he or she were on roll for the purposes of oversubscription priority where a child seeks admission at the normal round. Children must be on roll in year groups Reception to Year 11 or in a school's sixth form or post-16 setting to be eligible as siblings for admissions purposes. Sibling priority cannot be given for children who attend a school nursery. Eligibility for sibling priority (if this is part of the school's arrangements) is not a guarantee of admission. Oversubscription criteria for this school are detailed above.
Supplementary Information Form or SIF	This is a form in addition to the LA common application form. Some schools use SIFs to collect information necessary to apply one or more of their oversubscription criteria. SIFs need only be completed to provide information related to a specific oversubscription criterion, not by applicants who aren't seeking priority according to those criteria. An application form must also be completed in all cases.

Tie breaker	To distinguish between children in an oversubscription criterion, priority will be determined based on distance between home and school. This is measured in a straight line from the address point marker for a child's address to the centre of the main entrance to the school site using Devon LA's Geographical Information System (GIS). Where new-build properties are not yet displayed on the map, an estimate of the property location will be made using all available information. This will be updated when possible. Children who live closer to the school have a higher priority for admission. Where two or more children reside within a block of flats, they will be deemed to live at an equal distance from the school. If the tiebreaker above is not enough to distinguish between applicants in an oversubscription criterion, there will be a random ballot. This will be undertaken by a person independent of the school, such as an elected Member of The LA, by the operation of an electronic list randomiser. This will be used where it is necessary to distinguish between two or more addresses within 2 metres of each other. Random allocation will not be applied to multiple birth siblings (twins and triplets etc.) from the same family tied for the final place. Schools will admit them all.
Uniform	Children attending many schools are expected to wear a uniform. Where this is the case, information about where this can be purchased and support for families who may be unable to afford items of uniform will be available from the school office and website.
Waiting Lists	Schools will operate a waiting list for each year group until the end of the academic year. This will be maintained by the LA on behalf of the school and shared with the school. Waiting lists will only contain the names of children who have formally applied and been refused admission. Children's positions on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with a school's oversubscription criteria. The length of time on a waiting list does not affect a child's position. However, positions will be reordered whenever anyone is added to or leaves the waiting list. Therefore, a child's name can go up or down on the list. When asked to do so, parents must confirm if they wish their child to remain on the waiting list and must reapply at the end of the academic year. This is to ensure the list is kept up to date. When a place is offered to a child on the waiting list, the offer will not be held open to allow time for the family to visit or revisit the school. Offers must be accepted or declined by the end of the school day that follows the day the offer was made. This is to ensure that the vacancy can be filled promptly by any other children already on the waiting list.

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The Topsham School

Exceptional Social or Medical Need for Admission
Supplementary Information Form 2026-27

To be completed only where you are seeking priority on the grounds of exceptional need.

Normal Round admissions: complete the yellow sections and return by **15 January 2026** to be considered as timely or as soon as possible for new arrivals to the area or others unable to apply by 15 January.
You must also complete a LA Common Application Form[1]
(eg, for Devon County Council area residents, at www.devon.gov.uk/admissionsonline)

In-year admissions: complete the yellow sections and return this form as soon as possible.
You must also complete a Devon Common Application Form at www.devon.gov.uk/admissionsonline

Please read the school admissions policy, including glossary, before completing this form. This is published on the school website and at http://devon.cc/schoolpolicy.

We give higher priority for children where there is an exceptional need to attend this school and not another school. The exceptional need could be for the child or parent.

A child may have very challenging circumstances that require additional support but if that support could also be provided at another school, there would be no exceptional need to attend this school.

We may ask you for further information or seek our own advice to establish whether this is the only school that could meet your child's needs.

If we accept that your child would experience a significant detriment by not being able to attend this school, we will agree that there is an exceptional need to attend this school and your application will be prioritised. However, this does not guarantee that a place will be available.

Where we don't accept that the need is exceptional, your application will be prioritised according to our other oversubscription criteria.

Please note that we wouldn't expect the following circumstances to be exceptional:

- your child may be separated from a friendship group if they went to another school;
- a wish to avoid another child from the current or previous setting;
- child-care arrangements before or after school;
- transport arrangements to or from school;
- a medical condition such as asthma that doesn't require specialised treatment;
- an interest or ability in a particular subject or activity

[1] If you are completing a common application form from another LA without a tick box for exceptional need, you should put a note in the reasons for your preference to say you are requesting exceptional need priority and will provide the required supporting evidence using this Supplementary Information Form.

Full name of child	
Date of birth	

Tick the box below if you believe there is an exceptional social or medical need to attend this school.

☐	Children who have an **exceptional social or medical need** which means they should attend this school rather than any other or whose parents have such a need. Your application must be supported by evidence, for example from a medical specialist or social worker, of the need and why it means the child needs to attend this school.
Is supporting evidence attached?	**Yes / No**
What is the supporting evidence?	

You must also complete a LA Common Application Form

Your name		**Date**	
Please sign here			

This form should be scanned and emailed to admissions@devon.gov.uk or return it to:

Devon School Admissions Team, Room L60, County Hall, Exeter EX2 4QG
or to the school at: **Orchard Way, Topsham, Exeter, Devon EX3 0DN**

Privacy and Data Protection:
Your personal data may be used by the School and Devon County Council for the purposes of an application for admission to school. We undertake to ensure your personal data will only be used in accordance with our privacy notice which can be accessed at https://new.devon.gov.uk/privacy/privacy-notices/ It may be shared with others in relation to the school admission process. Please confirm that you give your consent to the School and LA using your personal data as outlined in our privacy notices, by signing below. You have the right to withdraw your consent at any time. Should you wish to withdraw consent, please contact the Admissions Team at admissions@devon.gov.uk or 0345 155 1019. If you wish to exercise any of your rights under the General Data Protection Regulation, please contact the Data Protection Officer for School or LA.