Buckingham Park
Church of England Primary School
Excellence, through God who strengthens us

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School Policy Document

Admissions Policy 2026/2027

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Date Adopted by Full Governing board:	
Last reviewed on:	
Next review due by:	24/11/2024

1. Aims and expectations

1.1. At Buckingham Park Church of England Primary School it is important that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well. We are a caring community, built on a clear Christian foundation and rooted in Christian values. We aim to provide the highest quality all round education, for each and every child, in partnership with parents, within the context of a Christian community. In short, 'Excellence, through God who strengthens us'.

1.2. Buckingham Park Church of England Primary School is committed to creating a school community where exemplary behaviour is at the heart of productive learning. Everyone, staff, children and parents alike, are expected to maintain the highest standards of personal conduct, to accept responsibility for their behaviour, and encourage others to do the same.

1.3. All school policies are therefore designed to support the way in which all members of the school can live and work together in a supportive way. It aims to promote an environment where everyone feels happy, safe and secure.

1.4. The school has a set of values that are based on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. These are a means of promoting good relationships, so that people can work together with the common purpose of helping everyone to learn. These values are displayed below:

We are kind, helpful and polite
We do our best
We are honest
We share
We are peacemakers
We forgive others
We take care of everything, and everyone

1.5. The school expects every member of the school community to behave in a considerate way towards others and by following these set of values

1.6. We treat all children fairly and apply this behaviour policy in a consistent way.

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2. General Information

2.1. Buckingham Park Church of England School has a distinctive Christian ethos which is at the centre of school life. We provide an inclusive, supportive and caring environment, shaped by Christian values in which children can learn and flourish. We welcome applications from all members of the community and we expect parents to respect the Christian ethos of our school and its importance to our community.

2.2. The governors have made every effort to ensure that these arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code 2021 and all relevant legislation, including that on infant class sizes and equal opportunities.

2.3. As a voluntary aided school, the Governing Body is responsible for deciding on admissions, but works closely with Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) which co-ordinates admissions to all academies and maintained schools in Buckinghamshire. Details of BCC's co-ordination scheme, in which the school participates, are in the Buckinghamshire admissions booklet, available on-line from BCC in the Autumn term 2024. The booklet explains the timetable for applications, how parents can express a preference for a school and give reasons for that preference, and how they will be informed of the result of their application. It also gives details of how applications received after the deadline, changes of preference, and waiting lists will be handled.

2.4. This policy applies to admission to Reception and Years 1 to 6. The Nursery has its own admission policy which is available from the School. A place in the Nursery, or an offer of a place in the Nursery, does not guarantee admission to the School.

2.5. We welcome all children, without reference to ability or aptitude, and irrespective of whether they are of the Christian faith, another faith or no faith.

3. Applying for a school place at Rising 5

3.1. At our school, pupils are normally admitted at the beginning of the school year (1 September – 31 August) in which they reach their fifth birthday.

3.2. Parents (see section 4) whose children were born between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022 may apply for them to be admitted to the Reception Year in September 2026. There are 60 places (the published admission number) available. Our policy is not to offer admission to the Reception Year in September 2026 to children who were born on or after 1 September 2022.

3.3. Parents of a child whose fifth birthday falls between 1 September 2021 and 31 March 2022 may request that their child is not admitted until later in the school year 2026-27 (no later than the term [using three term year] after the child's fifth birthday, when s/he reaches compulsory school age). The school will hold any deferred place for the child, although, in the majority of cases, we find that children benefit from starting at the beginning of the school year, rather than part way through it.

3.4. For children whose fifth birthday falls between 1 April 2022 and 31 August 2022 (summer-born children), and whose parents do not wish them to start school in school year 2026-27, but to be admitted to the Reception Year in September 2027, should proceed as follows. They should apply at the usual time for a place in September 2026 together with a written request that the child is admitted outside his or her normal age group to the Reception year in September 2027. Please note that parents would need to provide supporting reasons for seeking a place outside the normal age

group and should discuss the position with the head teacher as early as possible. The school will consider the request carefully and, if it is agreed, this should be clear before the national offer day (April 2026), and their application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before any place is offered. They should then reapply in the normal way (no later than the LA determined date in 2027) for a Reception place in September 2027. If their request is refused, the parents must decide whether to wait for any other offer of a place in September 2026 (NB it will still be subject to the over-subscription criteria below) or to withdraw their application and apply in the second half of the of the summer term 2026 for a Year 1 place in September 2027. Parents should be aware that the Year 1 group may have no vacancies and it could be full with children transferring from the 2025/26 Reception Year group. NB agreement by the school in 2026 to defer does not guarantee a place in September 2027 – the normal over-subscription criteria apply.

3.5. Until the child reaches compulsory school age, parents also have the right to request that s/he attends part-time. In such cases, detailed arrangements should be discussed with the head teacher.

3.6. Parents wishing to apply for the Reception Year in September 2026 must complete the common application form provided by their home local authority (the home LA) which may not be Buckinghamshire. The home LA is the LA in whose area the parents live at the time of the application. The form must be returned to that LA no later than the deadline published in the Buckinghamshire admission booklet (currently mid-January). Applications received after the published date will normally only be considered after all those received on or before the cut-off date Offers and refusals of places will be posted by the home LA on the date indicated in that LA's co-ordinated scheme.

4. How we allocate places (the Admission Rules)

4.1. Children with a Statement of Special Educational Need or with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan naming Buckingham Park CE School will always be offered places.

4.2. If there are fewer applications than places available, all children will be offered places. If there is greater demand for admission than there are places available, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out below:

Rule 1
Looked-after children and children who were previously looked after, including those children who appear to have been in state care outside England, but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted. (See Section 4)

Rule 2
Children with exceptional medical or social needs that make it essential that they attend Buckingham Park CE Primary School rather than any other school. These needs must be fully supported by written evidence from a medical doctor, social worker, education welfare officer or other appropriate person involved with the family.

Rule 3
Children with a normal home address (see section 5) in the catchment area of the school (a map is attached to this policy), and with a sibling (see section 4) on the roll of the school at the time of the application and who is expected still to be in attendance at the time of entry to the school.

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Rule 4
Children with a normal home address (see section 5) in the catchment area of the school.

Rule 5
Children with a normal home address (see section 5) outside the catchment area of the school and with a sibling (see section 4) on the roll of the school at the time of application and who is expected still to be in attendance at the time of entry to the school.

Rule 6
Children of staff currently working at Buckingham Park Church of England Primary school where:

- The staff member has been employed at the time of application for admission for two or more years
- And/or the member of staff has been recruited within the last two years to fill a vacancy for the school where there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

Rule 7
Other children.

4.3. Proximity of the child's home, as measured by the straight line distance between the home and the school (see section 4) with those living nearer being accorded the higher priority, will serve to differentiate between children in Admission Rules 1-6 should the need arise. In the event that two distance measurements are identical, the school will use random allocation to decide which child should be offered the place. The process will be conducted by a person independent of the school.

4.4. Where the last place is offered to one of a twin/triplets/multiple birth group then the other siblings will also be admitted, even if this takes the number of children above the published admission number or the number of places available in the year group.

5. Definitions

4.1 'Parent' is defined in law (The Education Act 1996) as either:

a. any person who has 'parental responsibility' (defined in the Children Act 1989) for the child or young person; or
b. any person who has care of the child or young person.

If you are in any doubt, please contact the school for advice.

4.2 By a "looked-after child" we mean one in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services function. Previously looked after children are children who have been adopted, subject to child arrangement orders or special guardianship orders. Adopted children are those for whom an adoption order is made under the Adoption Act 1976 (Section 12) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Section 46). A 'child arrangements order' is one settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live (Children Act 1989, Section 8, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014, Section 14). A 'special guardianship order' is one appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian/s (Children Act 1989, Section 14A). Applications under this criterion must be accompanied by evidence to show that the child is looked after or was previously looked after (e.g. a

copy of the adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order). Evidence that a child from outside England was previously in state care will be required to come within this criterion. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside 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.

4.3 By 'sibling' we mean a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent's/carer's partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling. It is helpful if parents make it clear on the application form where the sibling has a different family name. Where there is more than one sibling at the school, only the youngest should be listed on the application form.

4.4 The 'straight line distance' will be measured as a straight line between the from the geocoded point of the home address to the geocoded point of the nearest open school gate that pupils can use to access the school, as calculated by Buckinghamshire's Admission Team for determining admission to community schools.

4.5 When applying under Rule 2 (exceptional medical or social needs), you must include supporting evidence from an independent professional person who is aware of the situation and supports your reasons for preferring Buckingham Park CE Primary School. This supporting evidence must clearly demonstrate why the school is the most suitable and must illustrate the difficulties that would be caused if your child had to attend another school. The person supplying the evidence should be a doctor, heath visitor, social worker, etc. who is aware of your child's or your own case. The school reserves the right to ask for further evidence or clarification where necessary and may seek the advice of appropriate educational professionals where necessary.

6. Normal home address

5.1 By normal home address, we mean the child's home address. This must be where the parent or legal carer of the child lives with the child unless it is proved that the child is resident elsewhere with someone else who has legal care and control of the child. The address should be a residential property that is owned, leased or rented by the child's parent/s or person with legal care and control of the child.

5.2 To avoid doubt, where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week or month, the address where the child lives will be determined having regard to a joint declaration from the parents stating the exact pattern of residence. If the residence is not split equally, then the relevant address used will be that at which we are satisfied that the child spends the majority of the school week. Where there is an equal split or there is any doubt about residence, we will make the judgment about which address to use for the purpose of determining whether or not to offer a place. We will take into account the following:

- any legal documentation confirming residence
- the pattern of the residence
- the period of time over which the current arrangement has been in place
- confirmation from any previous school of the contact details and home address supplied to it by the parents
- which parent is in receipt of child benefit
- where the child is registered with his/her GP
- any other evidence the parents may supply to verify the position.

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5.3 We may ask for evidence of the normal home address in the form of a recent bill. This could be, for example, the most recent Council Tax bill, utility bill no more than three months old, a current TV licence, buildings and contents insurance, mortgage statement or rent book which shows the address concerned. Parents who are unable to provide this evidence should contact the school to discuss what evidence might be acceptable. If it becomes clear or if there is any doubt that the parents and child are not living at the address given on the application form, the school may seek further evidence. The school works closely with the LA to ensure that places are not obtained at the school on the basis of false addresses, and, in cases of doubt, will take steps to verify the information provided. If a place at the school is offered, and it later becomes clear that the offer was made on fraudulent or misleading information (e.g. a false claim to living in the catchment area), and the school has denied a place to a child with a stronger claim, the school will withdraw the offer of a place. The offer can also be withdrawn even after the child has started at the school.

5.4 We regard a child's home address to be where he or she sleeps for the majority of the school week (Monday to Friday). We may ask to see official documentation, such as a child benefit book or medical card if there are reasons why a child does not live at his or her parent's address. For example, if he or she is resident with a grandparent, this needs to be made clear on the application form. If such arrangements are not declared or a relative's address is used on the application, we may consider that a false declaration has been made, and withdraw the offer of a place. Childcare arrangements are not sufficient reason for listing another address.

5.5 If parents move house after the application has been made, but before any offer of a place has been made, the School must be informed.

5.6 If parents are moving, we will ask for evidence of the move, when considering any application for a place.

5.7 We would not accept an address where the one given is that of a second home with the main home being elsewhere. If there are two or more homes, we will check which is the main home, and may refuse to base an allocation of a place on an address which might be considered only temporary. Nor would we accept an address where the child was resident other than with a parent or carer unless this was part of a fostering or formal care arrangement. We would not normally accept an address where only part of a family had moved, unless connected with a divorce or permanent separation arrangement, in which case we would require proof.

7. All other admissions

6.1 Buckinghamshire County Council's Admissions Team co-ordinate all admissions to the school. If you are seeking a place for your child outside the normal entry point (September entry into Reception), you should complete an Application Form and return it to the Admissions Team at Buckinghamshire County Council. Admission to the school during the school year depends on whether or not there are places available.

6.2 The School will liaise with the Buckinghamshire County Admissions Team before an offer of a place is made, should one be available. Please note that the only way that a place can be offered once the number of available places is reached for any year group, except under exceptional circumstances or under the Buckinghamshire Fair Access Protocol (see below), is by appealing to an independent panel. Parents are welcome to make an appointment to visit the school, to seek advice from the Headteacher, and to collect an application from the school office.

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6.3 In-year admissions or admissions at the beginning of school years other than Reception will only be considered up to half a term in advance of the desired date for entry. For example for entry in January, the application will not be considered until after the October half term break.

6.4 If parents are moving house, the school will ask for evidence of the move, when considering any application for a place. Documentary evidence in the form of a solicitor's letter to confirm exchange of contracts, a rental agreement for at least a period of six months will be required (Armed Forces personnel are exempt). If you are returning from elsewhere, to live in a home that you own, we will require evidence to show that you have returned. We will also ask for evidence that any previous house owned has been sold or is being sold. We would not accept an address where the one given is that of a second home with the main home being elsewhere. If there are two or more homes, we will check which is the main home, and may refuse to base an allocation of a place on an address which might be considered only temporary. Nor would we accept an address where the child was resident other than with a parent or carer unless this was part of a fostering or formal care arrangement. We would not normally accept an address where only part of a family had moved, unless connected with a divorce or permanent separation arrangement, in which case we would require proof.

7. Admission outside normal age group

7.1 Requests from parents for places outside a normal age group will be considered carefully e.g. for those who have missed education due to ill health. Each case will be considered on its own merits and circumstances. However, such admissions will not normally be agreed without a consensus that to do so would be in the pupil's interests. It is recommended that parents discuss their wishes with the head teacher in advance of applying for a place. The governors may ask relevant professionals for their opinion on the case. It should be noted that if a place in the requested age group is refused, but one in the normal age group is offered then there is no right of appeal.

8. Continuing Interest Lists

8.1 Buckinghamshire County Council's Admission Team maintains continuing interest lists for those children who are not offered a place, and the parents ask for the child's name to be added to the list. If a place becomes available, the list will be ordered using the list of criteria for over-subscription (the admission rules), and does not depend on the date on which an application is received. No account is taken of length of time on a continuing interest list. The Admissions Team periodically seeks confirmation that parents wish a child's name to be kept on the continuing interest list.

9. Fair Access

9.1 The school participates in Buckinghamshire County Council's Fair Access Protocol. This covers, for example, children who have moved into our area after the normal admission round, or who need to move school as a result of severe bullying or social issues. Children qualifying under the Fair Access Protocol take priority for admission over any child on the waiting list.

10. Appeals

10.1 There are established arrangements for appeals against non-admission. Details are available from the school, including the date by which an appeal should be submitted. It should be noted that, in the event of an unsuccessful appeal against non-admission to the school, the school does not consider any further application in the same school year (1 September – 31 August), unless there has been a

material change in circumstances, for example a change of address which results in a move from outside the catchment area to inside it.

11. Objections to and referrals about determined school admission arrangements

11.1 Members of the public can make an objection to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) if they think that the admissions arrangements of a maintained school or an academy do not comply with the 'School Admissions Code' (the Code) or other legislation relating to school admissions.

11.2 All admissions authorities must determine their admission arrangements by 28 February every year, even if they have not changed from previous years and a consultation has not been required. Complainants have until 15 May to contact the adjudicator if you have an objection.

11.3 If people wish to make an objection they must complete the 'school admission arrangements objection form'

11.4 Further guidance is available on the Office of the Schools Adjudicator web site

12. Further information

12.1 For further information, please contact the school:

Buckingham Park Church of England Primary School, Jubilee Square, Aylesbury. HP19 9DZ

Tel: 01296 415687
Email: office@buckinghampark.org
Website: www.buckinghampark.org

12.2 Additional information about admission to schools in Buckinghamshire can be obtained from:

The Admissions Team, Achievement and Learning, County Hall, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. HP20 1UZ

To contact the team, please visit the Buckinghamshire County Council website and complete the admission team contact form:

Website: www.buckscc.gov.uk

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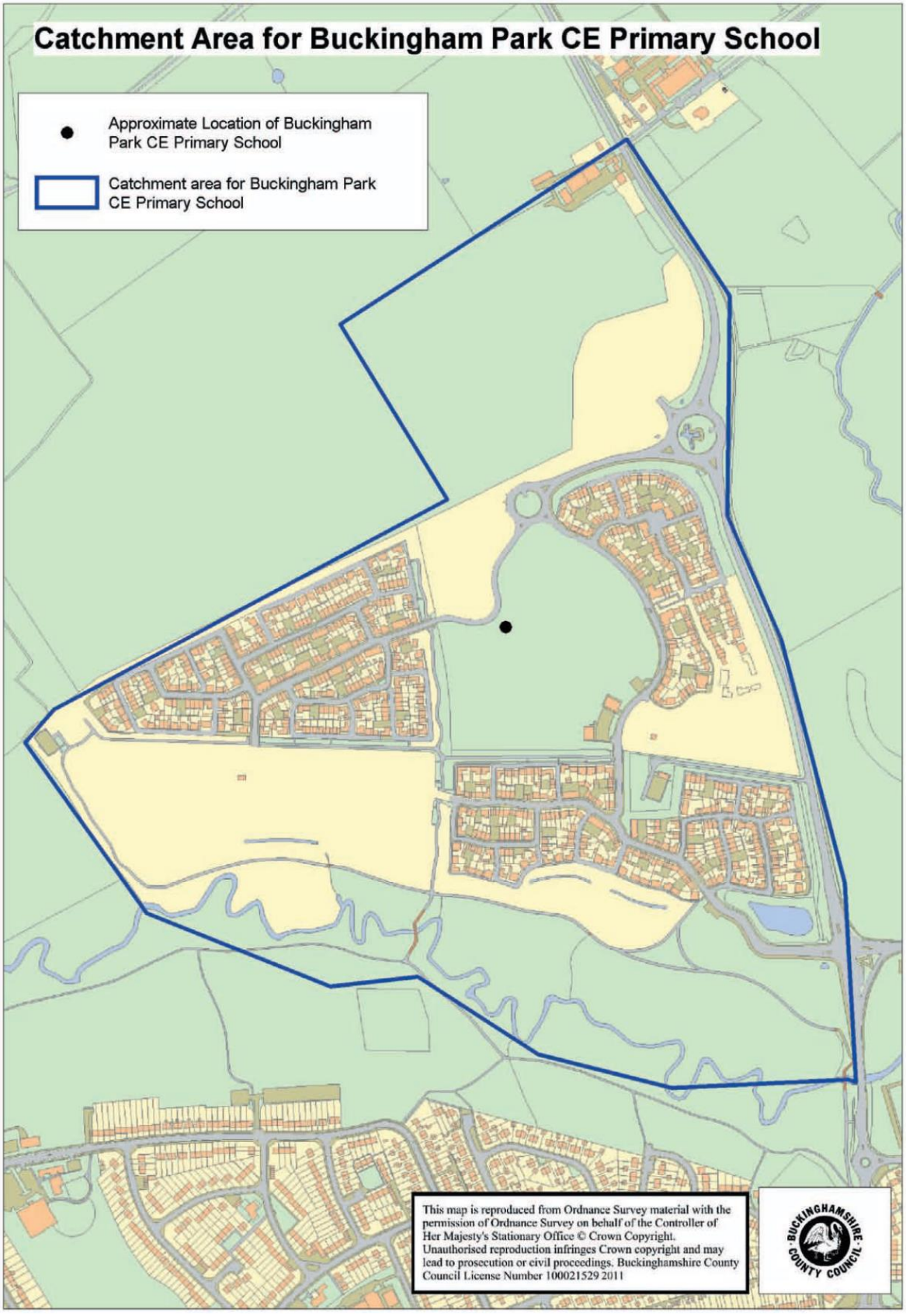
Catchment Area Map