ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-27

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Approver:	People & Pay Committee of the Agape Trust Board and Local Governing Committee (Altwood Church of England School)
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Category of policy:	Trust Board

Altwood 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 without reference to ability or aptitude, and irrespective of whether they are of the Christian faith, another faith or no faith, but we expect parents to respect the Christian ethos of our school. Altwood Church of England School values highly its Christian ethos and close links with local churches and the Diocese of Oxford.

The Agape Multi Academy Trust is the admission authority for Altwood Church of England School. The Agape Multi Academy Trust Board has delegated some of its responsibilities and powers to the Altwood Local Governing Committee via the scheme of delegation.

These arrangements are based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- School Admissions Code 2021
- School Admission Appeals Code

We are required by our funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

These arrangements also comply with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Admission arrangements to Year 7 in September 2026

Parents (see Note 1) wishing to apply for a Year 7 place in September 2026 must complete the common application form provided by their home local authority (the home LA). 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 31 October 2025. Applications received after this 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 2 March 2026.

There are 150 places available in Year 7 for September 2026.

Over-subscription criteria

Children with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHC Plan) naming Altwood Church of England School will always be offered places.

If there is then greater demand for admission than there are places available, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out below:

1. Looked-after children and children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because, immediately after being looked after they were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the

Adoption and Children Act 2022 or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order. (See Note 2)

2. Children (or a parent) who have exceptional medical or social needs that make it essential that they attend Altwood Church of England School rather than any other. These needs must be fully supported by written evidence from the appropriate professional person involved with the family. (See Note 3)

3. The children of staff in either or both of the following circumstances:

   a. Where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made; and/or
   b. The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage

4. Children with a normal home address (see Note 4) in the catchment area and with a sibling (see Note 5) on roll at the school at the time of application or whose parent has accepted an offer of a place at the school and who is expected still to be in attendance at the time of entry to the school.

5. Children with a normal home address in the catchment area which is the whole of Maidenhead. Please click the link for a map of the catchment area –

   https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/community-information/information-and-advice/schools-and-education/school-admissions/school-designated-areas

6. Children with a normal home address outside the area and with a sibling on roll at the school at the time of application or whose parent has accepted an offer of a place at the school and who is expected still to be in attendance at the time of entry to the school.

7. Children with a parent who has attended a church which is a member of Churches Together in Britain & Ireland, at least once a month for at least 8 of the 12 months preceding the date of application. (Parents not able to qualify under criteria 1-5 above and wishing to apply under this criterion should complete the school's Supplementary Information Form and return it direct to the school by 31 October 2025 for entry to Year 7 in September 2026 or with the application form in the case of an in year application).

8. Children who attend one of our named feeder primary schools i.e.:

   All Saints Church of England School
   Bisham Church of England Primary School
   Cookham Dean Church of England Primary School
   Holyport Church of England Primary School
   Knowl Hill Church of England Primary School
   Larchfield Primary School

9. Other children

Proximity of the child's home, as measured by the straight line distance (see Note 6) between the home and the school with those living nearer being accorded the higher priority, will serve to differentiate between children in criteria 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 in the presence of a person independent of the school.

All Other Admissions

Admission to the school during the school year depends on whether or not there are places available. Year groups 8-11 at the school have 150 places. Applications must be made directly to the school on a form available from School Admissions. Outside the normal age group will be dealt with as indicated below.

If there is a vacancy, and there is no child on the relevant waiting list with a higher priority (according to the over-subscription criteria 1 to 8 above), a place will be offered.

In-year admissions or admissions at the beginning of school years other than Year 7 may be made at any time. The Local Governing Committee will only consider applications up to half a term (using the three-term year) 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.

If parents are moving house, the school will ask for evidence of the move, before considering any application for a place.

Documentary evidence in the form of a solicitor's letter to confirm exchange of contracts or 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.

Paper copies of information relating to in-year admissions will be provided to parents who do not have access to the internet.

Admission outside normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

Each case will be considered on its own merits and circumstances and a decision made based on what is in the pupil's best interests. It is recommended that parents discuss their wishes with the head teacher at the earliest opportunity. The governing board may ask relevant professionals for their opinion.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parents' views
- Information on the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- Headteachers' views

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this document, including the oversubscription criteria. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. 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.

Waiting Lists

The school maintains waiting lists for those children who are not offered a place until at least 31st December of each school year of admission, irrespective of whether parents request this. The list will be re-ranked in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria each time that a name is added to or removed from the list.

No account is taken of length of time on a waiting list. The school periodically seeks confirmation that parents wish a child to be kept on the waiting list.

Multiple births

In cases where there is one place available, and the next child on the list is a twin, triplet, etc., we would admit both twins (and all the children in the case of other multiple births) even if this meant exceeding the agreed admission number of 150 for Year 7 in 2026-27 or the number of places 150 in other year groups.

Fair Access

The school participates in Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead 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 may be offered a place even if there are no places available in the relevant year group and also take priority for admission over any child on the waiting list.

Appeals

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.

Parents who wish their children to attend the school are most welcome to visit. Arrangements can be made through the Registrar at the school.

Further information

Further information can be obtained from the Headteacher's PA at the School by calling 01628 622236 or email: altwood@altwoodschool.co.uk

Notes

Note 1

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

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

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

Note 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. Adoption orders come under the terms of the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, Section 46. A Child Arrangements Order is one regulating with whom a child is to live, spend time or otherwise have under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 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). This*

includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted. 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, residence or special guardianship order).

Note 3

When applying under criterion 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 Altwood Church of England 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.

Note 4

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.

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, for example, 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;*
- *where the child is registered with his/her GP;*
- *any other evidence the parents may supply to verify the position.*

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 Headteacher's PA on 01628 622236.

Note 5

Sibling is defined in these arrangements as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters and the child(ren) of the parent's/carer's partner where the child(ren) for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling.

Note 6

This is measured in a straight line from the GIS address point of the pupil's house as determined by Ordnance Survey to the designated school node of the school, using proprietary GIS software. Radial distance will be based on the Easting and Northing coordinates for the property and the school as defined in the Local Land and Property Gazetteer and based on the Ordnance Survey's national system. For applicants residing outside RBWM, the residential property coordinates used will be that which is provided by the home local authority. For new build properties these coordinates may not yet be finalised by the Local Land and Property Gazetteer and therefore the coordinates available as of the closing date for applications will be used. Distances are measured using direct distance calculations within a proprietary computer system. The measurement of each distance has been calculated using Pythagoras' Theorem. The same method of calculation is used for each direct distance measured and may be expressed up to three decimal places where necessary.

Supplementary Information Form

This form should be completed if you have stated a preference for Altwood Church of England School and wish your application to be considered in criterion 6, denominational grounds.

SURNAME …… FORENAME …….. DOB ……

CONFIRMATION OF CHURCH ATTENDANCE

I confirm that I …….. (your name), the

parent/carer of …… (your child's name)

have significant involvement with a church and attendance on a frequent basis. I understand that 'frequent' is understood here as being attendance at least once a month for at least 8 months of the year in the last twelve months. Should a move into the area mean an applicant is unable to fulfil the twelve months regular attendance – the school will aggregate attendance at the new church with that of the previous place of worship.

Signature of Parent/Carer …….

Please now pass this form to your local vicar, priest or minister and ask him or her to sign the following verification and then return the form to you.

To vicar/priest/minister:
Can you confirm that, to the best of your knowledge, the above statement that the applicant is making is true? **YES/NO**

Signature …….

Name in capitals ……..

Name of Church ……

Date ……..

Please return this form by the same closing date as your application form to -
Altwood Church of England School with a copy of your application form, marked for the attention of the Headteacher's PA.

Admissions Policy

Sixth Form Admissions Policy for Entry in Academic Year September 2026

Candidates for the Sixth Form may be in Year 11 at Altwood Church of England School or following courses at other schools. Students wishing to pursue Level 3 programme of study need a minimum of five GCSEs grade 4 or above and also need to meet the requirements of the courses offered.

The Sixth Form Prospectus and application form are available from the school and via the website: http://www.altwoodschool.co.uk/

Applications should be returned by 1 March 2026. Applications from external candidates are welcome.

Internal Candidates

Altwood Church of England School's students notify the school during Year 11 of their wish to stay on to follow courses in the Sixth Form through completion of the application form.

External Candidates

Applications for places from external candidates can be made by the parents/carers and/or the student. Places are considered on receipt of the completed application form.

If the student is refused admission, both parents/carers and the student have the right to appeal, either jointly or separately. If the appeal is lodged separately, both appeals will be heard together.

Allocation of Places (oversubscription criteria)

If there is a case of oversubscription for a place on a particular course, places will be offered first to students within the school and then to external applications.

The following criteria will be used to allocate to external applicants the available places on those courses that receive more applications than can be accommodated:

Children with an ECHP

naming Altwood Church of England School will always 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:

A) Looked-after children and children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because, immediately after being looked after they were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2022 or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order. (See Note 2

B) Children (or a parent) who have exceptional medical or social needs that make it essential that they attend Altwood Church of England School rather than any other. These needs must be fully supported by written evidence from the appropriate professional person involved with the family. (See Note 3)

C) Children with a normal home address (see Note 4) in the catchment area and with a sibling (see Note 5) on roll at the school at the time of application or whose parent has accepted an offer of a place at the school and who is expected still to be in attendance at the time of entry to the school.

D) Children with a normal home address in the catchment area which is the whole of Maidenhead. Please click the link for a map of the catchment area.

   https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/community-information/information-and-advice/schools-and-education/school-admissions/school-designated-areas

E) Other Children.

Proximity of the child's home, as measured by the straight line distance (see Note 6) between the home and the school with those living nearer being accorded the higher priority, will serve to differentiate between children in criteria A to F 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 in the presence of a person independent of the school.

Altwood
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Accepting or declining the offer of a place

Places are offered on the understanding that there is a commitment to meet the academic requirements of the course.

Parents are required to accept or decline the allocated place using the form sent with the allocation letter. The form must be returned to the school within two weeks from the date of the offer letter. Failure to respond may result in the place being withdrawn. Parents are requested to advise the school at any stage, if they are not accepting the place for any reason.