COUNTESS GYTHA
PRIMARY SCHOOL &
PRESCHOOL

Admissions Arrangements for 2026/2027 Academic Year

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These admission arrangements apply to all applications for admissions to Countess Gytha Primary School for reception entry in September 2026 and any in year applications from 1st September 2026.

Introduction

The Admissions Authority for Countess Gytha Primary School is the Governing Body.

An admissions committee comprising of Governors, including at either a Chair or Vice Chair of Governors are responsible for taking all admission decisions for children starting in reception and for joining the school during the academic year.

Somerset Local Authority is responsible for co-ordinating all applications for children starting school. These admissions arrangements should be read in conjunction with Somerset's published co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for September 2026.

The Published Admission Number

The Governing Body has set an Admission Number of 21 for the year of entry. This is in line with Published Admission Number (PAN) guidance from the Somerset Local Authority.

Applying for a school place

In order to be considered for a place at Countess Gytha Primary School, an application form must be completed. Starting school applications can be made on-line at www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions or paper forms can be obtained from Somerset Local Authority. In-year application forms are available from the School. School place application forms must be received by the following closing dates and times:

Applications for reception year in 2026

The closing date for reception year applications in September 2026 is 15 January 2026. Outcomes will be sent by the Local Authority on behalf of the Governing Body by e-mail or second-class post on the published outcome date, 16 April 2026.

Any Supplementary Information Forms must be submitted alongside the application form.

Any applications received after the closing date will be recorded as late and cannot then be administered until all on time applications have been considered by which time places may no longer be available within the Published Admission Number.

In Year Applications

Applications for a place during the academic year must be made directly to the school office, by completing the in-year application form. Applications will not be processed more than six weeks or half a term in advance of being required. Proof of address is required to be submitted with the application. This will be either the formal 'exchange of contracts' letter from the solicitor for a house buy, a recent utility bill or the signing of a minimum of a six-month tenancy agreement. **The Governing Body reserve the right to seek further documentary evidence to support a claim of residence.**

The admissions committee will consider applications. Where possible, applicants will receive a written response within 10 school days following receipt of the application. Where a school place is offered, it will be held open for 10 school days and applicants will need to confirm acceptance within this time.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where there are more applications received than places available within the Published Admission Number or Admission Limit the following criteria will be applied to determine how the places will be allocated.

The school will be required to admit any child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN)/Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) if it names the school, then;

1. Looked After Children – Children who are in the care of a Local Authority or have previously been and are now formally adopted or subject to an adoption, residence/child arrangement order or special guardianship order (see important notes). Please note, children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of formally being adopted are also deemed as Looked After Children.

2. a) Children of permanent fully qualified teachers employed at the school for at least two years prior to the application closing date.

   b) Children of permanent fully qualified teachers recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

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

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

5. Children living in the catchment area.

6. Children not satisfying a higher criterion.

Important Notes

This means a ‘looked after’ child or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence/child arrangement order or special guardianship order. A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989). Adoption is defined under the terms of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

Tie Breaker

In the event of oversubscription within any of the criteria listed above, preference will be given to applicants who live closest to the school, as measured in a straight line by a Geographical information System (GIS) method from the address point of the school site to the address point for the pupil's home. Where two distances are equal and it is therefore not possible to differentiate between them, priority will be determined by independent drawing of lots.

Multiple birth applications (for example twins)

In the case of multiple birth applications, where it would only normally be possible to admit one child within Admission Number, a place(s) will be allocated above Admission Number at the point of allocation. This will ensure that multiple birth siblings can be allocated places at the same school (sibling definition still applies).

Waiting Lists

Where an application has been refused in any year group, the applicant may ask the school to place their child on a waiting list. This will be kept strictly in order of oversubscription criteria by the Governing Body, and the child will remain on the waiting list until the end of the term the refusal was made in (or 31 December 2026 for first admission applications). If a parent wishes for their child to remain on the waiting list beyond this time, they must request this in writing. It is the parent’s responsibility to make this request to the school. Where places become available within the Admission Number they will be allocated to the highest ranked eligible child on the maintained list. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school of any changes to circumstances, which may affect the admissions criterion listed above.

Children who are the subject of a direction by the Secretary of State for Education to admit or who are allocated to the school in accordance with the In-Year Fair Access Protocols, will take precedence over those children on a waiting list.

Withdrawal of places

The Governing Body will consider withdrawing the offer of a place if;

- The place has been offered on the basis of an application which is subsequently found to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading.
- The parent/carer has not responded to the offer within 10 school days and a further opportunity has been given for the parent to respond within another 5 school days having explained that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not.

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Deferred Entry

The Department for Education (DfE) requires all Admission Authorities to offer parents the opportunity to defer their child's entry to school. This means rather than the usual September entry, you can choose for your child to start later in the year, usually in January at the beginning of the Spring Term. You can defer until later in the year if you wish but not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the application was made. **Children reach compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their 5th birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day).** The prescribed days are 31 August, 31 December and 31 March.

Summer Born Children

Parents of summer born children may request that they are admitted into reception rather than year one when they become of compulsory school age. Applications will be considered as set out below (see Retained or Accelerated Entry).

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group. When such a request is made, the admissions committee will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the views of the head teacher and any supporting evidence provided by the parent.

The process for requesting such an admission is as follows:

- The parent/carer is required to make an application for their child's normal age group but can submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time.

- The parent/carer is required to submit a request for admission out of the normal age group and attach supporting evidence as necessary. The Governing Body have the right to request further evidence that may be required.

- The Governing Body will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

- The Governing Body will write to the parent with the outcome and set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

- In the case of applications for summer born children to be admitted out of their normal age group the parent will receive the outcome before the primary national offer day.

- For all requests for admission outside of normal age group: If the request is agreed, the application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. If their request is refused, the parent must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or to refuse it.

- One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parents, therefore, should consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all their preference schools, rather than just their first preference schools.

Children from outside the UK

The Local Authority will process applications for children living in the European Economic Area (EEA) or UK citizens living abroad. If proof of the Somerset address and a date of arrival is provided by the closing date the application can be considered on this address. If proof of the Somerset address is not available by the closing date the application will be considered on the current address.

Further information for those coming from overseas can be found at:
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-admissions-applications-from-overseas-children

Appeals

Applicants whose school place application is turned down have the legal right to appeal against the decision to refuse admission. Details concerning how to appeal are explained in the decision letters sent out when a place is refused.

Children of UK Service Personnel

The Admissions Authority endeavour to ensure that their admission arrangements support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children. In year applications are usually considered for admission up to a maximum of half a term in advance of the place being taken up. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area and other Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area where a place can be made available up to a year in advance of being required providing the appropriate documentation is provided as proof of posting (an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting.)

This does not mean that such children will be allocated before other children who apply at the same time but that the admission authority will accept the alternatives listed above as proof of address.

Usually, an in-year place may be allocated prior to actual residency, only on receipt of exchange of contracts or a formal signed rental agreement. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area and other Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area. This means that, providing the application is accompanied by an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting, the admissions authority will process the application on that address. If proof of a home address is not available at this stage the admissions authority will accept a unit postal address or quartering area address. An offer of service family accommodation from the housing department is not sufficient to be accepted as proof of address, the signed tenancy agreement would be required.

If the parent/carer is moving to the area as a result of leaving the armed forces then no special consideration will be given to the application under the grounds of the application being made by a service family.

Definitions:

Home Address

The home address is very important, as school places are allocated on the basis of the home address of each child. A child's home address is considered to be where the child spends the majority of their time with parents or carers.

Documentary evidence of home ownership or suitable rental agreement may be required, together with proof of permanent residence at the property concerned. Places cannot be allocated on the basis of an intended future address, unless the house move can be confirmed through the formal 'exchange of contracts' or the signing of a minimum of a six month tenancy agreement. An address change due to a move to live with family or friends will not be considered until the move has taken place and suitable proof of residency has been obtained. Proof that a move from the previous address has taken place may also be required e.g. proof of the house sale, a tenancy agreement showing the end date of the tenancy or a notice to quit from the landlord. The Governing Body reserve the right to seek further documentary evidence to support a claim of residence.

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

The Admissions Authority must be notified of any change of address during the admissions procedure.

Sibling

For the purpose of admissions, a sibling is defined as a child living at the same address permanent home address as a half or full brother or sister or an adoptive brother or sister. Also, children of the same household where the permanent home address is the same for both children.

Parent/Carer

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

Parental Responsibility

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

Objections to Admission Arrangements

Objections to the 2026/2027 admission arrangements policies can be made to the schools adjudicator. This must take place in the period between the admission authority determining their admission arrangements for 2026/2027 which must take place by 28 February 2025 and the

deadline for making objections which is 15 May 2025. Objections may still be considered after this date, but this is at the discretion of the adjudicator.

For further information on how to make an objection please visit the Office of the Schools Adjudicator website https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-admissions-arrangements or phone the office on 01325 735303.