Consultation on Proposed Changes to the Oversubscription Criteria Ightham Primary School

Consultation Period: 23rd November 2026 to 4th January 2027

Admissions Authority: The Pioneer Academy

Introduction

The Pioneer Academy, as the admission authority for Ightham Primary School, is consulting on proposed changes to the school's oversubscription criteria.

Oversubscription criteria are used when the school receives more applications than there are places available. They determine the order in which places are allocated.

The School Admissions Code requires admission authorities to consult on proposed changes to admissions arrangements before they are determined.

The Trust is seeking the views of parents, carers, staff, local schools and the wider community before making a final decision.

The Proposed Change

The Trust proposes to amend the oversubscription criteria for admissions to Ightham Primary School from September 2028.

Current Oversubscription Criteria

1. Children in Local Authority Care and Children who have been adopted from care
2. Current Family Association - a brother or sister in the same school at the time of entry
3. Health, Social and Special Access Reasons - Medical / Health and special Access
4. Nearness of children's homes to school
5. Tie breaker - In the event of any of the above criteria being oversubscribed, priority will be given based on distance with those closest being given higher priority.

Proposed Oversubscription Criteria

1. Children in public care (Looked After Children) and previously looked after children, including children who were previously in state care outside England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

2. Compelling medical or other exceptional reasons for attending the school.

3. Children who have a brother or sister attending the school at the time of admission.

4. Children of staff employed at the school where: the member of staff has been employed by the trust for two or more years at the time the application is made; or the member of staff has been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

5. Children eligible for the Early Years Pupil Premium, Pupil Premium or Service Premium.

6. All other children.

Children whose Education, Health and Care Plan names the school will be admitted before the application of the oversubscription criteria.

Reasons for the Proposed Changes

- Removes the separate Health, Social and Special Access criterion currently used within the admissions process.

- Introduces a new priority for children of staff employed by the trust or recruited to a hard-to-fill post. This is a permitted criterion within the School Admissions Code and is designed to support the recruitment and retention of high-quality staff. The Trust recognises that attracting and retaining excellent teachers and support staff is essential to providing the best possible education for pupils. Offering this priority may assist the school in recruiting to positions, retaining experienced staff and ensuring greater continuity for children through a stable and effective workforce.

- Introduces a new priority for disadvantaged and service children through eligibility for Early Years Pupil Premium, Pupil Premium or Service Premium.

- Simplifies how places are allocated by using distance from the school only as a tie-break where applications within a criterion exceed available places.

There is no proposed change to the Published Admission Number (PAN). The school will continue to offer 30 Reception places each year.

Impact Assessment

The Trust has considered the potential impact of the proposed changes.

Current Pupils

The proposed changes would not affect children already attending the school.

Future Applicants

The proposals may affect how places are allocated where there are more applications than places available from September 2028.

Local Families

Maintain a fair admissions process.
Support local educational pathways.
Provide greater clarity for families applying for places.

Equality Considerations

The Trust has considered its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

Children with SEND.
Looked-after and previously looked-after children.
Disadvantaged pupils.
Families from different communities.
Other protected groups.

How to Respond

Responses should be submitted by 4th January 2027.

Email: consultation@thepioneeracademy.co.uk

Post: Ightham Primary School, Oldbury Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent TN159DD

What Happens Next?

All responses will be reviewed.
Trustees will consider any issues raised.
The admissions arrangements will be determined by the Trust Board.
The final admissions arrangements will be published on the school's website.