Admissions Policy

Whole School Policy, including Early Years Foundation Stage

Reviewed by PF	16 October 2026
Peer Review Completed	11 November 2026
Ratified by SLT	18 November 2026
Next Review Date	October 2028

The legal responsibility for ensuring that the Croft Preparatory School adheres to all relevant statutory regulations, as issued by the DfE, lies with the Proprietors. At their discretion, the Proprietors may delegate the monitoring of the efficacy with which the school discharges its statutory duties to The Headmaster and Governing Committee.

Notwithstanding the above delegation, the Proprietors retain ultimate responsibility for how the statutory functions are executed.

AIMS

The Croft Preparatory School is committed to a fair, transparent and inclusive admissions process that reflects our values. The aims of this policy are:

- to ensure a clear, fair process for admissions
- support equal opportunities and inclusion
- comply with statutory and regulatory requirements
- inform prospective parents of the admissions process and criteria

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

Admission is subject to the availability of places and the School's ability to meet the needs of the prospective pupil. The school must be confident that it will be able to educate and develop the pupil to the best of their potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the pupil's peers. We aim to ensure that there is every chance that the pupil will have a complete, happy and successful learning experience at The Croft Preparatory School, and leave confident, well-rounded and well-prepared for the next stage of their education.

Criteria for admission may include capacity to benefit; behaviour and attitude aligned with school values; and space in the relevant year group. Whilst we do not formally assess pupils via entrance tests, suitability is determined during the child's taster day and reports from their previous school.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

We welcome pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, provided that the necessary support can be met within our setting; we are not a designated specialist school for SEND pupils.

To support a fair and informed admissions process, parents should provide a copy of any formal documentation relating to SEND needs and their latest school report before a taster day. Accurate and timely documentation enables the school to assess whether it can meet the needs of the child and to plan any reasonable adjustments or additional support required.

There may be a charge for some types of support and this is explained in our Terms and Conditions.

Before an offer is made, The Headmaster, SENDCo and Admissions Lead will ensure that we can adequately meet the needs of the child and have capacity within our specialist teaching team. An offer will only be made if we believe the prospective pupil will be able to successfully transition through the school.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We welcome pupils with EAL. The School will take specialist advice as to the appropriate resources and facilities that may be needed for the integration of EAL pupils into The Croft. When additional learning needs, due to EAL, are identified upon admission, pupils' needs will be assessed, and arrangements for suitable support will be made on a case-by-case basis.

THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Introduction

The Croft Preparatory School is a co-educational independent accredited school for pupils from ages 2 to 11. Children may join Little Crofters Butterflies in the academic year of their 3rd birthday. We currently limit the number of pupils attending Little Crofters Butterflies at any one session to 23 (with a maximum of 15 two-year olds in any session), as long as staffing levels permit. Pupils then transfer to Little Crofters Pre-School (maximum of 50 pupils). For Reception to Year 6, class sizes are capped at 20 pupils per class with a balance, where possible, of boys and girls. On rare occasions, it may be necessary to temporarily increase a class/year beyond these numbers; parents would always be notified of this in advance.

We value transparency and partnership with families, and we encourage open dialogue about any concerns regarding the pupil's development or learning needs. We aim to treat all applicants fairly, regardless of any special educational needs or disability. Therefore, parents must let us know, before admission, any special needs or circumstances for their children, so that we can fully explore our ability to meet those needs and ensure a smooth transition for the child.

The admissions process follows five key stages:

1. Visiting the School

Deciding on the right school for your child is very important, and we believe that a personal visit to see the School is invaluable.

We hold Whole School Open Mornings where prospective parents are shown around the school by our current Year 6 pupils. The Headmaster, other senior staff and Admissions Lead are all

available to answer questions on completion of the tour. Details of Open Mornings are published on our website.

We are also happy to welcome prospective parents at other times by appointment only. Please contact the Headmaster's PA on 01789 293795 or email office@croftschool.co.uk to arrange a visit.

2. Registration

Applicants for admission can register at any time of the year and should contact the Admissions Lead to see if places are available. Before any child can be considered for entry to the school, the online registration form must be submitted along with the non-returnable registration fee. Proof of the prospective pupil's date of birth, such as a birth certificate or passport, must be provided before admission to the School can be confirmed.

Once the necessary paperwork and registration has been received, the Admissions Lead will contact the parents regarding the next stage.

3. Taster Day

Entry to Little Crofters Butterflies, Little Crofters Pre-School

Prospective pupils registered for entry to Little Crofters Butterflies and Little Crofters Pre-School are not assessed during a taster day and will be offered places subject to availability and the School's ability to meet their needs.

If no place is available, the prospective pupil will be placed on our waiting list.

Entry to Reception and Years 1-6

Taster Days are offered to all pupils registered for Years 1 – 6. Where a place is available, prospective pupils registered for Years 1 – 6 will be invited into school for a taster Day. They will spend a day in the classroom with their age group and be assessed by the Class Teacher.

Alongside the completed medical and dietary forms, parents should provide a copy of their child's latest school report. If deemed necessary, an assessment of literacy, numeracy, and sometimes other appropriate tests will be given by the SENDCo. Should a child already be identified as having SEND, relevant reports should be provided before the taster day. Any child who, on the taster day, appears to have SEND, may be referred for further assessments so we are able to judge our ability to meet the needs of the child.

For prospective pupils registered for Years 1 – 6, three or more terms prior to entry, will be placed on our waiting list for a place if places are limited.

4. Offer

Following a successful taster day, a formal offer will then follow. An Acceptance Deposit of £500.00 is payable when parents accept the offered place. The deposit will be repaid by means of a credit without interest to the final payment of fees, or other sums due to the School on leaving. Until credited, the deposit will remain part of the general funds of the School.

The decision to admit each pupil is taken by the Headmaster, after consultation with Class Teachers and the SENDCo. In the event of a place not being offered, details of the reason will be provided.

Please note that the offer of a start date is subject to IAPS agreement criteria whereby parents of new pupils are required to have discharged all financial obligations at their existing school.

There may be circumstances in which we are not able to offer a place for reasons relating to a prospective pupil's needs and/or our capacity for SEND provision. For example, if despite reasonable adjustments, we feel that a prospective pupil is not going to be able to access the education offered, or that their health and safety or those of other pupils or staff may be put at risk, we reserve the right to decline a place at the School.

5. Acceptance of a Place

To accept the place prospective parents should complete the Acceptance Form and return this along with the deposit to the School. Unless otherwise agreed, both parents must sign a hardcopy of the form. Once received, the Admissions Lead will make the necessary arrangements for the pupil to join The Croft School.

Little Crofters Butterflies, Little Crofters Pre-School and Reception pupils, will be invited in for one or more inductions sessions prior to entry. It is expected that all pupils entering Little Crofters Butterflies and Little Crofters Pre-School will transfer to Reception and continue their education at The Croft Preparatory School. This transfer is subject to the recommendation of the Early Years Manager and Headmaster.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION

When demand for places exceeds availability, priority is given to siblings of pupils currently attending the School and children of staff, subject to the normal admissions procedures. Applications are then considered in date order, on a 'first come, first served' basis. Where a place becomes available, we will initially contact a prospective parent by telephone to ascertain if they still require the place.

SIBLING POLICY

In keeping with the School's family ethos, most siblings join us at The Croft Preparatory School. However, admission is not automatic, and it is recommended that the sibling is registered as soon as possible in order to ensure a place is available. A discount of 10% per term, per child, is applicable when three or more siblings attend The Croft Preparatory School simultaneously.

SCHOLARSHIPS & BURSARIES

The Thornton Scholarship

The Thornton Scholarship is The Croft's academic scholarship for pupils demonstrating exceptional academic potential. It provides fee remission of up to 50% of tuition fees and is awarded following an assessment process.

The Thornton Scholarship Examination is held in the Lent Term and is open to children who will be entering Year 3 the following September.

Scholarships of up to 50% of tuition fees may be awarded, depending on the standard achieved. The scholarship is intended for pupils of exceptional academic ability and is set at a challenging level. While open to all applicants, we recommend entry only for children achieving a standardised score of 120 or above (or equivalent) in a recognised assessment.

In order to sit the scholarship examination, external candidates must be registered with the school by completing a Registration Form and paying the registration fee. We strongly recommend that external candidates attend a taster day prior to the examination, enabling them to become familiar with the school environment and routines. Following the taster day, external candidates will usually be offered a place at The Croft, which may include a scholarship award depending on their performance in the assessment process.

Scholarship awards remain in place throughout a pupil's time at The Croft, provided they maintain a satisfactory standard of effort and attainment. The percentage awarded will remain unchanged regardless of future fee increases. Scholarship holders are required to pay the full cost of school lunches.

Further information can be obtained from the Executive Assistant to the Headmaster.

Bursaries

The Croft Preparatory School offers a programme of means-tested bursaries to support families who may not otherwise be able to afford some or all of the school fees. Bursaries are available from Reception onwards and are subject to the availability of funds.

Bursary awards are based on a family's financial circumstances and are assessed through a confidential means-testing process. The level of support offered is determined on a sliding scale according to the applicant family's relevant net income and overall financial position.

Parents applying for a bursary will be required to provide detailed financial information, including income, expenditure and net assets. Assessments are based on the financial circumstances of both parents, regardless of current living arrangements. Full details of the assessment process and terms and conditions are provided within the bursary application form.

Any bursary awarded is reviewed annually and may be adjusted in line with changes to a family's circumstances.

Families wishing to apply for a bursary should contact the Admissions Lead.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Croft Preparatory School is designated a Christian School; however, we welcome applications from pupils of all faiths and belief systems, as well as those from a wide range of ethnic, cultural and

social backgrounds. We are committed to maintaining an inclusive and supportive community in which every individual is treated with dignity and respect.

The School operates a policy of non-discrimination and considers all applicants on their individual merits. Admission is not determined by a pupil's gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, or social or cultural background. We seek to provide equality of opportunity for all prospective and current pupils and to foster an environment in which diversity is valued and celebrated.

While admission to the School is not contingent upon religious belief or practice, all pupils are expected to participate in the wider life of the School, including attendance at School Assemblies, which are integral to our Christian ethos and contribute to the spiritual, moral and pastoral development of our community. Parents who wish to withdraw their child from acts of collective worship may do so and should submit a written request to the Headmaster in advance.

The School is committed to ensuring that pupils with disabilities are not placed at a substantial disadvantage during the admissions process or whilst attending the School. Reasonable adjustments will be made where appropriate to facilitate access to our educational provision and to support full participation in School life. These adjustments will be considered on an individual basis, taking into account the needs of the pupil and the School's ability to provide appropriate support.

APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

If a parent wishes to appeal an admissions decision, they should follow the School's Complaints Policy, available on request or via the School website.

SCHOOL'S TERMS & CONDITIONS

The School's Terms and Conditions are on the School's website and will be made available to parents as part of the admissions process.

FURTHER POLICY INFORMATION

The Admissions Lead is responsible for admissions and the operation of this Policy. The Policy will be reviewed every two years.

Documentation relating to applications will be treated with the utmost confidentiality, and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, which incorporates the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Admissions' documentation is retained by the school until the pupil finishes tertiary education. If the pupil does not join the school, paperwork will only be retained for 12 months, and then destroyed securely.

Parents/Carers should be aware that the School is required to share pupil information with third parties, including the Local Authority. Further information is provided in the School's Privacy Notice.