



**Admission Appeal Defence Statement for entry into academic year 25/26
Holcombe Grammar School**

Please be advised that each parent who lodges an appeal will have a personalised defence statement forwarded to them as part of their case papers.

Admission Appeal for students joining Year 7 in 2025/2026
Name: Date of Birth:
Published Admission Number:
Number of Applications received:
How many places were offered on national offer day and what is the position today:

Places Offered – (Please catalog oversubscription criteria)	Numbers
SEN/LAC	
Sibling link	
Trust Link	
Staff link	
Health and special access	
Distance	
Total number of pupils offered a place	180
Rank position of last child offered a place	

<p>Under which criteria was this child considered for admission</p> <p>If your son has been successful at the Medway Test but has not gained a place, he would have been considered for admission under the oversubscription criteria of ‘distance’ which was calculated using the graphical information software used by School Admissions and Transport.</p>
<p>Distance of last child allocated a place was metres from the school. Your distance from the school has been noted at</p>

The key issue in considering an appeal for a place at this school is whether a student is of grammar school ability and, therefore, has the capacity to access the pace and challenge of the grammar school curriculum.

This curriculum is designed for the top 25% of the ability range. Students below this level, who were unsuccessful at the Medway Test would struggle to engage with the curriculum and its delivery. Therefore, students who have not been deemed selective should not be considered for a place at Holcombe Grammar School.

One of the key issues in considering an appeal for a place where a student was successful at either the Medway test is whether there is the capacity to increase the number of students allocated to the School.

Currently (2024/2025) in each year group the numbers are as follows.

Year 7 – 150/150 (note this will rise to 180 from Sept 2025)

Year 8 – 150/150

Year 9 – 150/150

Year 10 – 150/145

Year 11 – 150/150

The Governors are satisfied that places have been allocated correctly and in accordance with the school's over-subscription criteria.

The school cannot admit more than 150 (180 for year 7 2025/2026 intake) students into a year group for the following reasons:

- The school considers that going beyond this figure would be detrimental to the education of others and would compromise the efficient use of resources. A figure of 180 would give 6 classes of 30 (with the exception of DT where for safety reasons we have classes of no more than 20 students) so any more than this would make accommodating students in classes highly challenging; 6 classes of 30 would not compromise the safety and education of existing students. Without additional buildings the school cannot accommodate further increases in its PAN.
- The school had a phased building plan to increase capacity, but the COVID crisis removed funding for expansion to grammar schools, delaying the commencement of any building work which could allow for building renovations and expansion to accommodate larger numbers of students. No significant new building work is planned take place in the next 12 months.
- The school has recently converted an existing classroom and study areas within the library into two Science laboratories for September 2023. This is so that the school can accommodate its PAN of 200 in Year 12 and the high demand for 'A' level sciences, based on applications received standing at 700 for September 2025 entry.
- The school had plans, due to be funded by the Government's grammar school expansion fund to renovate and expand the number of specialist rooms, including Art, DT and Music, but without funding confirmed, this second phase of building work has not occurred.

- To accommodate all 150 students in a year group (180 in year 7 from Sept 2025) within specialist areas, the school is dependent on demanding timetabling to ensure that students are split across several subjects at the same time, as it is not in a position to accommodate high numbers of students at the same time.
- The school is made up of a range of older buildings and additions of different designs over a long period of time. The buildings design has led to a number of smaller than average rooms, leaving tight spaces for 30 students and a teacher desk/area. These classrooms have to be designated to 6th form teaching, due to the typically smaller teaching groups at A Level.
- Newly built/converted classrooms have had to be constructed/renovated within the original footprint/building restrictions. This has resulted in a number of rooms including maths, humanities, some computer rooms, etc. failing to meet the space requirements of new build classrooms. Space is very limited and the majority of these classrooms have been converted to fit 15 double desks for students and 1 teacher area/desk only. Therefore, we do not have sufficient space or furniture necessary to host over 30 in a class.
- IT classrooms have a maximum of 30 computers/desks in each and the age of the building means that we cannot accommodate additional power/data points.

In summary, whilst the school is sympathetic to the family's request for a place, it believes that the original decision not to offer a place was the correct one. This is in order that there is no prejudice to the efficient use of resources and the education of the other children who have been allocated places.

Completed by:



Date: