Proposed Admissions criteria for community and voluntary controlled schools in East Sussex (changes from the previous criteria are shown in **bold**)

1. Looked after children and children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or subject to residence orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following being looked after.

2. **Children who will have a brother or sister at the school (or linked infant or junior school) at the time of admission and who live at the same address, within the pre-defined community area**

   Children are ‘siblings’ if they are full, half, adoptive foster or step brother or sister living in the same household. This criterion includes siblings attending school sixth forms. The definition of ‘community area’ can be found in priority 4 below.

3. Children wishing to transfer between a linked infant and junior school (as per schools listed in the admission booklet).

4. Other children living within a pre-defined community area

Each home address within the county falls within a community area although living within the community area does not guarantee a place. The admission booklet ‘applying for a school place 2016-2017’ shows details of the community areas for each school. Peacehaven Community School has a separate ‘priority community area’ whose residents are prioritised ahead of children in the wider community area.

5. **Children who will have a brother or sister at the school (or linked infant or junior school) at the time of admission who live at the same address, outside the pre-defined community area.**

The definition of sibling is as shown above in priority 2.

6. Other children living outside the pre-defined community area.

**Tiebreaker**

- In the event of oversubscription within any category, place allocation will be decided by prioritising applications on the basis of home to school distance **measured in a straight line (as the crow flies)**. For split site schools, we will measure to the site where the child will attend for the majority of lessons.

- In the event that applicants cannot be prioritised using the tie-breaker above because the distance measurements are the same, the Authority will use random allocation to decide which children will be offered the remaining places. This will be done electronically using the Authority’s admissions software.

*Children who have a brother or sister who joined the school prior to 1 September 2017 (1 September 2012 for Frant CE Primary School) and who is still on roll will be admitted under the previous criteria which gave priority to brothers and sisters regardless of whether they live in the pre-defined community area or not.*

Twins and children from multiple births (all community and voluntary controlled schools).
Where the admission of both twins or all siblings from a multiple birth would cause the school to rise above its Planned Admission Number, both twins or all of the siblings will be admitted. Where the admission of the additional child or children from multiple births to an infant class would result in the PAN rising above 30 (or multiples of 30), the additional child/children would be exceptions to the Infant Class Size legislation throughout the infant phase or until the number in the year group reduced to the PAN.

Summary of proposed changes

Sibling rule change:

In recent years there has been pressure on places in rural schools in a number of parts of the county. This has at least partly been as a result of families in urban areas choosing to send their children to rural schools rather than making use of schools in the town where they live. This fills the rural schools in the initial allocation process, leaving it difficult for them to accommodate children moving into the community area at a later date.

However, we do recognise that rural schools in particular serve a local community and that the needs of the local community should be prioritised ahead of those living outside the community area.

To alleviate this problem we propose to prioritise children living in the community area ahead of children with a sibling link who live outside the area. This would not prevent out of area siblings from being offered a place, but they would only be offered a place if all children living in the area had been offered a place already. This model is already in use at Frant CE Primary School, where it has had some impact on the number of places available to local children. This could act as a disincentive for parents to send their child to schools outside their area, freeing up places for local children moving into the area.

The introduction of this measure would not necessarily prevent families from outside the area from applying for rural schools, or obtaining places at them, but it would enable those schools to serve their local community as a priority in years when they are oversubscribed.

Change to the way we calculate home to school distance in a tie break situation:

Previously the tie break (used to separate children within each admission priority) was home to school distance measured by the shortest walking route. However, this was open to dispute by parents and was not easy for parents to assess in advance. For this reason we propose to use a straight line distance measurement. Maps could then be provided in the future, showing circles round schools to help parents assess whether or not their application is likely to succeed.

This distance measurement change only affects the tie break for admissions purposes. Community areas will continue to be used (and in the case of Peacehaven Community School, the priority community area). The measurement of distance for home to school transport purposes will continue to be via the shortest safe walking route.
The way we consider late applications from people who have moved into the area:

Another way to secure more places for children moving into a community area is to allow late applications to be processed as on time where there is proof of a change of address. This would enable them to be considered as resident in the area, prioritising them ahead of other children who live further away than their new home address.

We propose to allow these applications up until 1 February (secondary) and 15 March (primary) so as to allow as much time as possible for movers-in while at the same time being confident of being able to achieve the legal obligation to offer places on national offer day.