Admissions process for applications under criteria 4 of the Admissions Criteria 'Health and Special Access reasons'.

Criteria 4 on the Admissions Criteria is:

Health and Special Access reasons – medical, health and special access reasons will be applied in accordance with the school's legal obligations, in particular those under the Equality Act 2010. Priority will be given to those children whose mental or physical impairment means they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend The Malling School. Such claims will need to be supported by written evidence from a suitably qualified medical or other practitioner who can demonstrate a special connection between these needs and The Malling School.

Admissions Criterion 4

Health and Special Access Reasons: Medical, health and special access reasons will be applied in accordance with the school's legal obligations, particularly those under the Equality Act 2010. Priority will be given to children whose mental or physical impairment means they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend The Malling School.

Applications made under Criterion 4 are considered only in exceptional circumstances. The threshold for priority is high. Supporting evidence must demonstrate not only that the child has significant medical, health, social or welfare needs, but also that attendance at The Malling School is essential because of those needs. Evidence that a place at The Malling School would be beneficial, desirable or preferred will not normally be sufficient to meet the criterion.

Such claims must be supported by written evidence from a suitably qualified medical or other professional who can demonstrate a specific and special connection between the child's needs and The Malling School.

Application Process

Step 1

Parents/carers should apply for a secondary school place through the Kent County Council admissions process.

Step 2

Where parents/carers believe their child should be considered under Criterion 4, they should contact The Malling School Admissions Team directly.

Step 3

The Admissions Team will provide a Criterion 4 application form.

Health and Special Access Criteria Admission Application – Fill out form

Step 4

The completed application form must be submitted alongside supporting professional evidence explaining:

- The nature of the child's needs.
- The impact of those needs on education and wellbeing.
- Why attendance at The Malling School is essential.
- What specific provision, intervention, facility, curriculum offer, pastoral support or accessibility feature at The Malling School meets those needs.
- Why another local or alternative school would be unable to meet those needs to the same extent.

Applications that demonstrate that The Malling School would simply be a preferred or beneficial placement are unlikely to meet the threshold for Criterion 4 consideration.

Acceptable Medical Evidence

Examples include:

- Consultant letter
- CAMHS report
- Educational Psychologist report
- Occupational Therapy assessment
- NHS specialist reports
- GP letter (where it provides independent professional evidence and demonstrates a clear connection between the child's needs and attendance at The Malling School)

Professional evidence should provide an independent assessment of the child's needs. Evidence which simply confirms a diagnosis, repeats information provided by parents/carers, or expresses a preference for the school without demonstrating necessity may be given limited weight.

Acceptable Social Evidence

Examples include:

- Social Worker report
- Family Support Worker report
- Early Help Assessment
- Housing Officer letter
- Police documentation
- Safeguarding documentation
- Other reports from statutory agencies involved with the family

Social circumstances must be exceptional, significant and supported by independent professional evidence.

Parental statements alone will not normally be sufficient evidence to support an application under Criterion 4.

Examples of circumstances that may be considered include:

- Statutory social care involvement
- Child protection or safeguarding concerns
- Exceptional family circumstances affecting access to education
- Significant welfare concerns supported by professional agencies

Evidence Requirements

All professional evidence should clearly explain:

1. The child's identified needs.
2. The impact of those needs on daily life, education and wellbeing.
3. Why attendance at The Malling School is essential rather than simply desirable.
4. The specific connection between the child's needs and provision available at The Malling School.
5. Why other schools could not reasonably meet those needs.

Where possible, supporting evidence should be recent. Normally, evidence should be less than **12 months old** at the point of application unless it relates to a permanent or long-term condition.

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

Applications from children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) may be considered through the statutory EHCP consultation and naming process where applicable.

The Criterion 4 process does not replace or override statutory SEN procedures.

Internal Review Process

The Admissions Team will:

✅ Confirm that all required documentation has been received.

✅ Check that evidence is current, relevant and from an appropriate professional.

✅ Ensure the application relates to exceptional medical, health, social or welfare circumstances rather than parental preference alone.

✅ Verify that the supporting evidence demonstrates a specific connection between the child's needs and The Malling School.

Admissions Panel

Applications will be reviewed by a panel comprising:

- Headteacher
- Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) and Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Operations Manager
- Admissions Officer
- SENCo

Any panel member with a personal or professional conflict of interest relating to an applicant will withdraw from consideration of that application.

Assessment Framework

Applications will be assessed against the following considerations:

Question	Consideration
Is there an exceptional need?	Evidence demonstrates a significant medical, health, social, welfare or access need.
Is the need current?	Evidence is recent, relevant and reflects the child's current circumstances.
Is attendance at The Malling School essential?	Evidence demonstrates a specific need for provision available at The Malling School.
Could another local school reasonably meet the need?	If another school could reasonably meet the need, priority may not be awarded.
Is the evidence independently supported?	Professional reports provide objective evidence supporting the application.
Is there a clear special connection to The Malling School?	Evidence demonstrates why provision available at The Malling School is necessary to meet the child's needs.

The following factors are unlikely, on their own, to meet the threshold for Criterion 4:

- Preference for The Malling School.
- Attendance of friends.
- Family familiarity with the school.
- General concerns regarding transition to secondary school.
- Preference for a particular curriculum area or extracurricular activity.
- Parental views unsupported by independent professional evidence.

Decision Making

The panel will determine whether an applicant qualifies for consideration under Criterion 4 of the school's oversubscription criteria.

The panel will maintain a written record of:

- The evidence considered.
- The factors taken into account.
- The rationale for the decision reached.

Where Criterion 4 is agreed, the application will be ranked accordingly within the admissions process.

Outcome Notification

The school is unable to confirm the outcome of a Criterion 4 application before the completion of the coordinated admissions process.

Parents/carers will be notified of the outcome through the normal admissions arrangements on National Offer Day.

Please note: Submission of a Criterion 4 application does not guarantee that priority will be awarded or that a place at The Malling School will be offered. Decisions are based on the evidence provided and the requirements of the published admissions arrangements.