

## ST MARY'S CE (A) FIRST SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS POLICY 2026-27

### Philosophy

The Governing Body of St Mary's CE (A) First School aim to create an inclusive environment within the school that reflects the diversity of the local community. The school does not have any specific units or facilities for pupils with physical disabilities. The school has two separate buildings, both on a level site and all accommodation is on one floor. There is an access ramp to both buildings and all classrooms may be entered without steps. As far as possible, the school will ensure that pupils with disabilities have access to the same opportunities as other pupils. The Christian ethos of love and respect is an inclusive one, and this is reflected in our policy for admission to St Mary's.

### Objectives

- There will be a one-point entry into Reception and this will take place in September of the year in which the child attains the age of five.
- The Governing Body is responsible for the admission of up to 45 children to the Reception cohort of St Mary's CE(A) First school. This limit has been agreed with the Local Authority.
- There will be a maximum number of 30 children in Foundation and Key Stage One classes, to meet the statutory requirements.
- Children who are Looked After or have an Education Health & Care Plan will have a place.
- There will be a small number of places available to children whose parents worship at the Parish Church.
- There will be places available for children whose parents worship at other Christian centres.
- Children whose parents belong to other faiths and cultures will be welcomed.

### Guidelines

Deferred Entry to Reception Class - Governors will consider requests from parents to retain a place in the school where the parents wish to defer their child's entry to Reception Class. Where it is possible to offer a place, deferral will be supported if the request is made at the time of application. Parents may request that their child be admitted to Reception Class on a part-time basis, or that their child be admitted to school later in the same academic year until the child reaches compulsory school age (i.e. beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday). The effect is that the place will be held for the child in Reception and is not available to be offered to any other child within the same academic year in which it has been offered.

Before deciding whether to defer their child's entry to school, parents should visit the school to clarify how the school will cater for the youngest children in Reception and how the needs of these children are met as they move up through the school.

Admission Outside of the Normal Age Group - Parents may seek to apply for their child's admission to school outside of their normal age group, for example if the child is exceptionally gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of summer born children may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted outside of their normal age group to Reception rather than Year 1.

These parents will need to make an application alongside children applying at the normal age which should explain why it is in the child's best interest to be admitted outside of their normal age which may include information such as professional evidence as to why this is the case and why an exception should be made in the case of the child. A decision as to whether this is an appropriate course of action

will be made by the Governing Body who will take into account the circumstances of the case and views of the headteacher. Parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular year group.

Waiting Lists - A waiting list will be operated in admission criteria order and will remain open until the end of the Autumn Term each year and will then be discarded. Parents may apply to remain on the waiting list if they so wish.

Late Applications - Applications forms received after the closing date will be considered alongside those applicants who applied on time where there are exceptional reasons which prevented the applicant from applying by the closing date, e.g. a family changes its address and was unable to apply within the deadline or needs to make a new school preference.

Repeat Applications - The Governors will not consider repeat applications in the same academic year unless there have been significant and material changes in the circumstances of the applicant.

Educational Health Care Plans - If the school is named on an Educational Health Care Plan, the child will be admitted, and this will reduce the number of places available.

If the number of applications for admission to St Mary's exceeds the school's planned admission number of 45 then the following order of priority will be used by the governing body to allocate the available places.

1. Looked after children and previously looked after children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order). Applications for previously looked after children must be supported with appropriate evidence i.e. copy of adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order.
2. Children with an Education Health & Care Plan.
3. Children who, with their immediate families are regular worshippers at St Marys Church of England Church, Uttoxeter or The Heath Church, Holly Road.
4. Children with siblings who are attending St Marys CE (A) First School at the time of admission.
5. Children who reside in the catchment area at the time of admission.
6. Children of staff.
7. Children who, with their immediate families, are regular worshippers at another Christian Church.
8. Children who have been baptised at St Marys Church of England Church, Uttoxeter.
9. Children who have been baptised at another Christian Church.
10. Children living closest to the school measured by a straight line distance from home address to the main entrance using the Local Authority Geographical Information System.

#### Notes

1. A regular worshipper is deemed as one who attends worship a minimum of once a month for at least 12 months prior to the closing date for applications (Jan-Jan). a clergy letter is required as evidence of regular worship and must be sent with the completed supplementary form.
2. Children in care means children who are looked after by a local authority in accordance with section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 and who is (a) in care of a Local Authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see definition in Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school. This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders). Child arrangements orders are defined in Section 8 of the Children's Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child Arrangements Orders replace residence orders and any

residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangement order. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a special guardianship order as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

3. Immediate family is classed as the parent/guardian/grandparent.

4. Siblings refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, foster brother or sister, step brother or sister or the child of the parent/carer's partner who live at the same address.

5. Children of staff where the member of staff has:

a) been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application to school is made and/or

b) been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

6. The Local Authority uses a Geographical Information System (GIS) to calculate home to school distance in miles. The measurement is calculated using Ordnance Survey (OS) data from an applicant's home address to the main front gate of the school. The coordinates of an applicant's home address is determined and provided by the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and OS Address Point data.

7. If at any stage there is a tie for a place, the decision will be based on distance from school-this will be measured by a straight line distance from the home address to the main entrance using the Local Authority measuring system. The address we use for admission to school is that of the main carer who receives the Child Benefit.

\*If we offer the last place available at school to one of twins (or triplets , or so ) our policy is to admit the twin or triplets etc.

8. The Governing Body defines 'Christian Church' as being any church in membership of, or sharing the statement of belief of 'Churches Together in England'

All applications must be received by dates set by the Local Authority. The Governing Body will take decisions relating to admissions, at the beginning of the school year. Parents will be informed by the Local Authority.

Any parent has the right of appeal against a decision not to admit. Appeals should be made in writing to the Chair of Governors. The appeal will be heard by an independent appeals panel.

#### Applications other than the normal intake year

Parents must apply directly to all schools for which they wish to be considered for a place, including any maintained foundation, voluntary aided, trust, academy or any schools outside the County of Staffordshire.

Any Staffordshire school that receives an application directly must ensure that the Local Authority is notified of the application and subsequent outcome; the Local Authority will need to consult with Governors.

Where an in-year application is made for a school for which the Governing Body are the admission authority, the application must be forwarded together with supporting information provided by the parent, to the Governing Body. The Governing Body of a voluntary aided school may require parents who make an application to provide supplementary information in order to apply their own admissions policy. Parents are under no obligation to forward supplementary information, unless it is required to enable the Governing Body to apply their oversubscription criteria.

Voluntary Aided Schools are responsible for deciding whether to operate a waiting list and how their waiting list will operate.

#### Monitoring

Admissions will be monitored by the Full Governing Body and the Headteacher.

**Policy reviewed May 2025**

**Next review: May 2027**