

Admission Policy for St. Mary's C.E. Primary School

September 2025/2026

Pride - We should take pride in ourselves, our work, our school, our community and our environment being thankful and joyful.

Galatians 6:4

The Church of England Primary Schools welcome children from all backgrounds, faiths and no faith. The Governors of the schools are committed to developing an inclusive environment that reflects the diversity of the local community. Admission to a Church of England Primary School is **not** dependent on being a member of a particular faith community.

As well as being an inclusive neighbourhood school, as a Church school we have a distinctive ethos and character that reflects the teachings of Jesus Christ and Christian values. All parents applying for a place at a Church of England Primary School are asked to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community. It is hoped that all children who attend a Church of England School will be able to participate (as appropriate) in the religious life of the school (including collective worship and religious education). This does not affect the right of parents who are not Christian to apply for a place. Indeed, through the commitment to inclusivity, families from other faiths and no faith are actively welcomed.

The Governing Body of each school is responsible for the admission of pupils to the school and will admit up to the admission limit that has been agreed between the Governing Body and the Local Authority. The Governing Body is required to abide by the maximum limits for infant classes (5,6 and 7 year olds) i.e., 30 pupils per class.

The school will admit 60 pupils each September to Reception

Oversubscription Criteria

In the event of more applications being received than places available, the following Oversubscription Criteria will be applied:

Nursery & Reception Admissions:

1. Children who are in the care of a local authority (looked after children) or provided with accommodation with them (Section 22 of the Children Act 1989) and children who were previously looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).
2. Children who have a sibling attending (this does not include a sibling in Nursery). See notes below.
3. The child of a member of staff employed by the school at the time of application and at the time of admission. See notes below.
4. Baptised Christian children. A certificate must be provided.
5. Children who are themselves, or whose families are, worshippers at a Church of England parish church. Written evidence of the applicants' commitment to their place of worship (in the form of a clergy reference) will be required, using the Supplementary Information Form.
6. Children who are themselves, or whose families are, worshippers of another Christian denomination (as recognised by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and/or the Evangelical Alliance). Written evidence of the applicants' commitment to their place of worship (in the form of a minister's reference) will be required, using the Supplementary Information Form.
7. Children who are themselves, or whose families are, members of another religious faith. Written evidence will be required from the faith leader, using the Supplementary Information Form.
8. Any remaining places will be determined by the shortest straight line distance from the home address point to the school's gate in Watergate Street using the Local Authority's computerised system.

Tie-breaker: In the event that two or more applicants have an equal right to a place under any of the above criteria, the Governing Body will apply the subsequent criteria, in order of priority, to these applicants:

In offering places within any one of the criteria would cause the school's admission number to be exceeded, then children living nearest will be offered first. Places will be determined by the shortest straight line distance from the home address point to the school's gate in Watergate Street using the Local Authority's computerised system. However, if two or more applicants share the same distance to a school and only one place is available, the applicant to whom the place will be offered will be determined by the Local Authority by random selection (unless this involves multiple births, in which case, this is explained at the end of this policy).

Notes: Parents/Carers applying for a place on faith grounds must complete the Supplementary Information Form (which can be obtained from the school) and return this form direct to the school, signed by the appropriate faith leader.

Siblings/: "Siblings" refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, or the child of the parents/carers partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling.

Children of staff "Children of staff" are defined as a member of staff who has been employed for two or more years at the time which the application to the school is made, and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

Distance: Distance will be measured by the shortest straight line from the home address point (including flats) to the school's main gate using the Local Authority's computerised system. with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.

Waiting Lists: Waiting Lists will be held where in any year the school receives more applications for places than there are places available. It will be open to any parent/carer to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application. Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out above. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

Appeals: Parents/Carers who are not offered a place for their child have the right to appeal to an independent appeal panel. In the first instance please write a letter to the Chair of Governors, which will then be forwarded to the Appeals Department at Stoke on Trent City Council. Should some appeals be unsuccessful, the governing body will not consider further applications from those parents/carers within the same academic year unless there have been significant and material changes in their circumstances.

In-Year Admissions

All applications for other than normal intake (September) should be made through an In-Year Transfer Form, which can be obtained from the school which you want to transfer to. This must be signed by the headteacher of the child's current school and returned to the new school you are requesting.

Additional Notes

Pupils with an Education Health Care Plan are considered separately and before everyone else and must be accepted by the school named on their EHCP plan. They will count towards the school's admission number.

Deferred places - Children usually start school in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents of children who are offered a place at school before they are of compulsory school age are allowed to defer their child's entry until later in the school year. Parents may apply for a deferred place at a school offering them a place in the reception year at 4+ and they will be treated in the same way as all other applicants.

On request, the place will be held but a parent cannot defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made.

Special arrangements will apply if there is space for only one of a set of twins or triplets or other multiple birth. In this circumstance the school will usually admit above the published admission number (PAN) unless it is impossible to accommodate siblings in such a way, when the parents will be asked make a decision on behalf of the family.

Approved and Authorised by:

Signed Headteacher Clare Morton

Signed Chair of Trustees Fr John Stather