

St Mark's CofE Primary School

Growing and Learning Together in God's Love

Admissions Policy

2021 - 2022



St Mark's CofE Primary School

Admissions Policy from September 2021

Admissions Policy 2021

Admissions to Year R

This policy will be used during 2020/21 for allocating places in the main admission round for entry to Year R in September 2021. It will also apply to in-year admissions during 2021/22. Outside the normal admissions round, the Local Authority's Fair Access protocol will be applied alongside the policy to secure the admission of vulnerable pupils from specific groups.

The Governing Body of St Mark's Church of England (Aided) Primary School is the admission authority for **The School**. The admission arrangements are determined by the Governing Body, after statutory consultation.

The Published Admission Number (PAN) for St Mark's Church of England (Aided) School (**The School**) is 90. The PAN is the number of places for children available in the year groups above including one place in the Resourced Provision unit.

A guiding principle of admissions to this school is that a church school should serve its local community, defined in the trust deed of 1996 as the ecclesiastical parish of Immanuel Hatch Warren and Beggarwood. Please see map in Appendix 1. The policy aims to be clear, fair and objective and to comply with all relevant legislation.

Outside the normal admissions round, the Local Authority's Fair Access protocol will be applied alongside the policy to secure the admission of vulnerable pupils from specific groups.

If **The School** is oversubscribed, places will be offered in the following priority order. Places for applications received after the deadline will be allocated using the same criteria.

Admission Criteria

1. Looked after children or children who were previously looked after. (see Definition A)
2. **(For applications in the normal admission round only)** Children or families with an exceptional medical, physical or psychological condition or social need which makes it essential that the child attends the preferred school rather than any other. Evidence must be provided at the time of application, from a medical specialist or social worker. If evidence is not submitted by the application deadline, the medical or social needs cannot be considered (see Definition B)
3. Children who at the time of application have a sibling (see Definition C) on the roll of **The School**
4. Children of staff who have (i) been employed at **The School** for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to **The School** is made or (ii) have been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is demonstrable skill shortage (see Definition D)
5. A child living in the catchment area of **The School**: (see Definition E)
6. A child living out of the catchment area of **The School**:
 - (i) A child or a child with a parent who is an active member of a Christian church and who requests admission on denominational grounds and who provides relevant evidence (see Definition F)
 - (ii) Other children.

The following faith-based criterion may be included within point 6: A child or a child with a parent who is an active member of a Christian church as defined by the following statement;

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"A worshipping fellowship who confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Bible and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; who are members or participant observers of the World Council of Churches or the World Evangelical Alliance."

and who requests admission on denominational grounds and provides relevant evidence. (see Definition F).

Definitions

A Looked after children or children who were previously looked after

This criterion provides a priority for children who are (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application. Previously looked after children are those who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption order, child arrangements order, or special guardianship order. An adoption order is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 or section 12 of the Adoption Act 1976. Child arrangement orders are defined in section 8 of the Children 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 arrangements 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).

B Serious medical, physical or psychological condition

Where a place is requested for a child or family who have a serious social or medical condition, you must supply supporting independent evidence at the time of application confirming the reason(s) why attendance at St Mark's CofE Primary School is essential rather than any other school. You must also describe the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. The evidence should be provided by a suitably qualified medical professional. The evidence will be considered carefully in confidence by the admissions committee of the Governing Body, who will endeavour to reach a fair and equitable decision.

C Siblings

'Sibling' refers to a brother or sister, half-brother or half-sister, adoptive brother or adoptive sister, step brother or step sister, foster brother or foster sister and includes children living as siblings as one family unit at the same address. It will also be applied to situations where a full, half or adopted brother or sister are living at separate addresses. Category 3 includes children who at the time of application have a sibling for whom the offer of a place at the preferred School has been accepted, even if the sibling is not yet attending.

D Children of Staff

'Staff' includes all those on the payroll of the school. 'Children of Staff' refers to situations where the staff member is the natural parent, the legal guardian or resident step parent.

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E The Catchment Area

The catchment area for St Mark's Church of England (Aided) Primary School is defined by the Local Authority

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/findaschool/schooldetails?dfesno=3665>

The child's permanent residence is where they live, normally including weekends and during school holidays as well as during the week, and should be used for the application. The permanent address of children who spend part of their week with one parent and part with the other, at different addresses, will be the address at which they spend most of their time.

Moving home

For house moves after the application deadline an exchange of contracts or a signed tenancy agreement (usually for a 12 months duration) will be accepted as proof of address, but parents may subsequently be asked to demonstrate that the child is resident at the new address and any place offered may be withdrawn if this evidence cannot be provided.

As a result of a house move notified to the County Admissions Team by 15th February 2021 parents may, at the same time, change the schools named in their original on-time application. Additionally, where a house move has been notified to the County Admissions Team by the above date, the application will be considered in relation to the new address unless the applicant specifically requests that the child's address on the relevant closing date is used instead.

A new address resulting from a house move notified after **15th February 2021** will be used to communicate the outcome of the application but cannot be used to determine the outcome of an on-time application made from the previous address.

Overseas residents, with a planned relocation to Hampshire will be asked to provide exchange of contracts, signed tenancy agreement (usually of 12 month duration) or other evidence to substantiate ownership of the property. If this cannot be provided, the applicant's current (overseas) address will be used in the application.

For UK service families with official proof of posting to Hampshire and of a relocation date, a Unit postal address, quartering area address or future home address will be accepted as the address for the application, in accordance with the School Admissions Code.

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F Active member of a Christian Church

'Active member of a Christian church' is defined as attending worship at a church under the definition given in this policy at least twice a month for the previous two years before the deadline for admissions. Parents applying under criterion 6 are required to complete a Supplementary Information Form (SIF), which asks for declaration and verification of your child's or your active membership. The SIF, which is available from the County website <https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/admissions> or **The School** website www.stmarksprimary.net must be completed and returned to **The School** by **midnight on 15 January 2021**. (As it is a paper form that needs to be signed, the SIF is not available for completion online.) In order to ensure that you have the required church attendance you may need to complete two or more forms. This is normally more applicable to those who have moved into the area but attended church at their previous address.

If a disability or other 'special needs' circumstance prevents regular attendance (as defined above) at a specific place of worship but the person concerned is recognised by the church leaders as a 'regular worshipper' then this can be taken into consideration in your declaration and the verification of your "Active membership of a Christian Church". A recent Adjudication stated that in order to ensure that the parents who are applying under this criterion are correctly consulted, the churches named must display the Admissions Policy and notify those attending that it is available.

In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church or, relevant place of worship, has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these admissions arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church, or relevant place of worship, or alternative premises have been available for public worship

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Additional Information

Tie-breaker

If **The School** is oversubscribed from within any of the above criteria or sub criteria, straight line distance will be used to prioritise applications; applicants living nearer **The School** have priority. The Local Authority's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) will be used to determine distances from the defined point of the home address to a defined point of **The School**.

Distances to multiple dwellings will give priority to the ground floor over the first floor and so on. On individual floors, distances will be measured to the stairs leading to the communal entrance. If distances are equal (for example within a block of flats), lots will be drawn by a person independent of The Governing Body to determine the allocation of a place.

Who can apply?

Only a parent can apply for a place at a school. A parent is any person who has parental responsibility for or is the legal guardian of the child, as set out in the Children Act 1989.

How to apply

The Local Authority operates a Co-ordinated Admissions scheme which processes all main round (ordinary) admission applications. They also publish a Composite Prospectus which details all admission arrangements for schools within the Local Authority. Please see <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/admissions.html> for the prospectus and details of the scheme.

You must complete a Local Authority Application Form available from website <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/admissions/ad-applyonline.html>. Should you wish to use a paper application, please contact the school office who will be pleased to issue you with one.

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Offering places

The Local Governing Body will consider first all those applications received by the published deadline of **midnight on 15 January 2021**. Notifications to parents offering a place will be sent by the Local Authority on **16 April 2021**.

Applications made after **midnight on 15 January 2021** will be considered after all on-time applications have been fully processed unless exceptional circumstances merit consideration alongside on-time applications.

For the normal admission round, all on-time preferences will be considered simultaneously and ranked in accordance with the admission criteria. If more than one school can offer a place, the parent's highest stated available preference will be allocated.

Pupils with an Education Health Care Plan

The Governing Body will admit any pupil whose Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) names **The School**. Where possible these children will be admitted within the PAN.

Multiple births

Where a twin or child from a multiple birth is admitted to the school under this policy, then any further twin or child of the same multiple birth will be admitted, if the parents so wish, even though this may raise the number in the year group above **The School's** PAN.

In-year applications (ordinary)

The allocation of any places which may become available during the year will be made on the basis of the current Admissions Criteria. There are no deadline dates for in year applications. Applications must be made using the Local Authority Admission Form available on line at <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/admissions/ad-applyonline.html> or via a paper form which can be collected from the school office. Any parent with parental responsibility can apply for a place for their child at any time to any school. The Local Governing Body will decide whether a place can be offered at **The School**.

In-Year Fair Access placements by the local authority

The local authority must ensure that all pupils are placed in schools as quickly as possible. It may therefore sometimes be necessary for a pupil to be placed by the local authority, or a local placement panel acting on behalf of the authority, in a particular school even if there is a waiting list for admission. Such placements will be made in accordance with the provisions of the local authority's In-Year Fair Access Protocol. The Protocol is based on legislation and government guidance.

School Closures

In the event of a school closure, pupils from the closing school may be given priority for any school nominated as the receiving school. Specific arrangements will be determined by the Local Authority in accordance with the School Admissions Code and will be published at the time for the specific school affected.

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Waiting lists

When all available places have been allocated a waiting list will be operated by **The School**.

All children not being offered a place will automatically be placed on the waiting list for **The School**.

Any places that become available will be allocated according to the criteria of the admission policy with no account being taken of the length of time on the waiting list or any priority order expressed as part of the main admission round. Fair Access admissions and school closure arrangements will take priority over the waiting list.

The waiting list will be reviewed and revised:

- each time a child is added to, or removed from, the waiting list;
- when a child's changed circumstances affect their priority; and
- periodically when parents, with a child on the waiting list, will be contacted and asked if they wish to remain on the list for the following school year.

At the time of receiving an offer of a school place parents will be advised of the process for adding their child's name to a school's waiting list. Parents may keep their child's name on the waiting list of as many schools or academies as they wish and for as long as they wish.

Starting school and deferred entry to Year R

The admission authorities will provide for the admission of all children to **The School** in the September following their fourth birthday. The authority **must** make it clear in their arrangements that, where they have offered a child a place at a school:

- a) that child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday;
- b) the child's parents can defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made; and
- c) where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

Exceptionally, parents of children with birthdays between 1st April and 31st August (inclusive) may wish to consider to defer admission until the following September. In these circumstances, an application under the following year's admissions policy and procedures will be required and the admission will normally be considered for Year R. See below for the Admission of children outside their normal age group.

It is recommended that parents considering such a request as defined above, contact **The School** as early as possible to ensure that an informed decision is made.

Notes on compulsory school age and summer born children

A child is not required to start school until they have reached compulsory school age following their fifth birthday. For summer born children this is almost a full school year after the point at which they could first be admitted. Compulsory school age is set out in section 8 of the Education Act 1996 and The Education (Start of Compulsory School Age) Order 1998. A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following his fifth birthday (or on his fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

All children born from the beginning of April to the end of August reach compulsory school age in the September following their fifth birthday. It is likely that most requests for children to be admitted out of their normal year group will come from parents of children born in the later summer months or those born prematurely.

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Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents who have deferred entry into Year R or of a gifted and talented child or a child who has experienced problems or missed part of a year, for example due to ill health, can request a place outside the normal age group. In addition, the parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than Year 1. Governing Body will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of each case. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like.

Admission Appeals

If you are unsuccessful in being offered a place for your child at **The School** you will be informed by The Local Authority in writing, be given reasons for the refusal and informed of your right to an independent appeal against the decision.

Warning

Places are withdrawn every year because parents give false information on application forms, e.g. a false 'home address'. This includes cases where parents take out a short-term let or buy a property solely to use its address on the application form without any intention of taking up permanent residence there. In fairness to all parents, all allegations of fraudulent practice brought to the Governing Body's attention will be investigated. The Governing Body reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place if fraudulent or intentionally misleading information has been used on an application.

Legislation

This policy takes account of all Equalities legislation, together with all relevant regulations and the School Admissions Code (published by the DfE in 2014).

Further Information

If you require further information about applying for a place at St Mark's Church of England (Aided) Primary School please contact **The School**.

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Appendix 1 - Map of the ecclesiastical parish / catchment area of The School.

