



St. Mary's Church of England Academy, Stotfold

Admissions Policy Autumn 2022 – Autumn 2023 Reviewed by Full Governing Board

St Mary's Church of England Academy, Stotfold has an agreed admission number of 60 for entry to the Reception year.

Applications must be made via the Central Bedfordshire Council Form and not to St Mary's CE Academy directly. Central Bedfordshire Council will send out the offer letter. The application process, link's to the Local Authority and the closing date will all be detailed on the school website.

For further information concerning the catchment area, please contact either the school or Central Bedfordshire Council.

The Governing Board, as the admission authority, determines the school's admission policy and arrangements within and is responsible for taking decisions on applications for admission. The Governing Board works with the Local Authority in order to ensure admissions are co-ordinated across the local authority area.

Should the number of applications for admission at Foundation entry level exceed 60 the Governors will apply the following criteria (in the rank shown) to decide the order in which places will be allocated.

1. All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after' (see definitions);
2. Pupils living in the catchment area with siblings at the school (see definition of sibling);
3. Other pupils living in the catchment area;
4. 'Very exceptional' medical grounds (see definition);
5. Other siblings (see definition);
6. Children, one or more of whose parents / carers have, at the time of application, shown commitment to the Church of England or another Christian Church by attending a service at least once a month for the year prior to an application being made; *
7. Any other children.

** A Christian Church is defined as one which is a member, or is eligible for membership, of Churches Together in England or the Evangelical Alliance. Applicants in this category will need to ask their priest or minister to complete the relevant section of the local authority standard application form.*

Notes

1. If applying these criteria results in there being more children with an equal right to admission to the school than the number of available places, the tie break will be the distance the pupil lives from the school, measured in a straight line, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. The distance will be measured from the address point of the pupil's home to the central point of the main school site. The Governors will not give priority within each criterion to children who meet other criteria. In the event of (a) two or more children living at the same address point (e.g. children resident in a block of flats) or (b) two addresses measuring the same distance from the school, the ultimate tie-breaker will be random selection, using the School Admissions Team database to allocate the place.
2. A place will normally be offered at the catchment area school if parents apply for a place at that school during the normal admissions round. However, a place at the catchment area school cannot be guaranteed. If a pupil moves into the catchment area outside the normal admissions round (or after the allocation process has begun) it may be more difficult to offer a place at the catchment area school if this would mean exceeding the admission number at the school. In this case, a place will normally be

offered at the next nearest school or academy which caters for pupils of the same age and has places available.

3. Pupils who have an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) are required to be admitted to the school which is named on the Plan, even if the school is full. Pupils identified for admission through the Fair Access Protocol will also be admitted even if the school is full.

4. **Delayed admission for summer born children**

Parents have the right to request their summer born child's admission to Reception Year is in the September following their fifth birthday however parents/carers do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group, a decision will be made by the Academy in consultation with the Governors and Head Teacher.

Parents/carers need to make their request in writing directly to the Academy via the Head Teacher. The request should include the parents'/carer's reasons for the request, information regarding the child's academic, social and emotional development including any supporting evidence the parent deems relevant; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional and if applicable, details if the child was born prematurely including whether they would have been in a lower age group had they been born on their due date.

The Academy will then consider the request, making their decision on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child in accordance with the School Admissions Code. Once determined, the decision will be communicated by the Academy to the parent(s)/carer(s) in writing and will include the reasons for the decision.

If a request is granted, the parent will need to make an application as part of next year's normal admission round and this will be processed within the normal allocation process. A place is never guaranteed at the Academy and in the case of oversubscription, places are offered in accordance with the Academy's oversubscription criteria. In short it would be delaying the application rather than an offer of a place.

**A summer born child is one born between 1 April and 31 August.*

Definitions

'Looked after' children

A 'looked after' child is a child who is (a) in the care of the local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

Previously 'looked after' children

A previously 'looked after' child is one who immediately after being 'looked after' became subject to an adoption, child arrangement or special guardianship order. An 'adoption order' is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. A 'child arrangement order' is an order settling the provisions to be made regarding the person with whom the child is to live under section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. 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).

Sibling

A sibling refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister or the child of the parent / carer's partner, and in every case, the child should be living at the same address. The sibling must be in the school at the time of application and be likely to remain in the school at the proposed date of admission.

'Very Exceptional' Medical Grounds

'Very exceptional' medical grounds refers to cases where there are **exceptional** medical reasons which make it **essential** that a child should attend a particular school and where the preferred school is the **only** school locally that could meet the child's needs. A medical report from the child's doctor or consultant must be submitted with the application form, setting out valid medical reasons why it is essential for the child to be admitted to the school in question and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. The Governors reserve the right to seek further information in order to determine whether it is essential for a child to be admitted to the preferred school on medical grounds. Admission on medical grounds cannot be considered where the medical condition relates to that of a parent / carer, brother or sister or other relative/childminder.

Home Address

A pupil's home address will be regarded as the address of the parent / carer with parental responsibility with whom the child normally lives. This will not usually include grandparents, aunts or uncles. Where a child spends time with parents / carers at more than one address, the address used to allocate a school place will be the one at which the pupil is ordinarily resident and where the child spends the majority of the school week (Mondays to Fridays) including nights. If there is any query on the home address this will be checked against original official documentation e.g. council tax bill, a recent utility bill (gas, electricity or water), a rental agreement, child benefit annual statement or family tax credit information.

In-Year Admissions

Requests for in-year admissions you need to apply to the School Admissions team who will process your application.

The form is available from the school or Local Authority and can also be downloaded from the Local Authority website – <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/school/admissions/in-year/how.aspx>

Appeals / Waiting Lists

Parents of pupils not offered a place at the school will have the right of appeal to an independent Admissions Appeal Panel. Any pupil refused a place will be placed on a waiting list, which will be prioritised in accordance with the admissions criteria. Waiting list for the normal year of entry will be maintained until the end of the Autumn term. Parents are requested to inform the school if they wish their child's name to remain on the waiting list. Waiting lists for admission into other year groups will be maintained for the whole of that academic year. Parents do not have the right of appeal against a refusal to admit a child outside their normal age group.

Admissions above the published admission number

The published admission number for Foundation and Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2) are restricted by the infant class size limit of 30. In Key Stage Two (Years 3 and 4) St Mary's CE Academy can, in exceptional circumstances, admit above the standard 30 provided a consistent, efficient education for the children in the class is maintained.

The following exceptions which may result in the admission number for St Mary's CE Academy being exceeded have been adopted by the Governing Board.

For the normal admissions round:

- The admission of catchment area pupils, where the parent has expressed a preference (whether first, second or third), for the catchment school as part of the normal admissions round and in accordance with the published admissions arrangements. This is not, however, a guarantee of a place

For in-year admissions:

- The admission of pupils who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which names the school, when that pupil has either been assessed or moved into the area outside the normal admissions round
- The admission of pupils in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol
- The admission of pupils who have moved into the area, where there is no other suitable school within a reasonable travelling distance, or where the admission of an additional catchment area child would not prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources. Before admitting children under this exception, St Mary's Governing Board will consult with Central Bedfordshire Council who will advise whether the first of these conditions applies
- The admission of a looked after child outside of the normal admissions round
- The admission of a twin or children from multiple births. Where a twin or multiple birth child is offered the last available place the other twin/sibling(s) will be admitted as exceptions to the infant class size rule
- The admission of service children
- The admission of a child in very exceptional circumstances in which the Local Authority and the Headteacher are in agreement that not to agree to admit the child would be perverse