



# St Mary's CE High School

*'Everyone is equal; everyone deserves the best'*

## **Admissions Policy 2023/2024**

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## ADMISSION POLICY 2023/2024

*This policy complies with the Department for Education School Admissions Code, December 2014, revised July 2021.*

St Mary's CE High School has Academy status, and it is the School Governors who decide who will be admitted to the School. It is a co-educational, multi-cultural school with a strong ethos of inclusion and a Christian character.

### Applications

The Governors plan to admit 240 students to Year 7 each September. The Governors warmly welcome applications from families of Christian or other faiths, or of no faith. The faith criteria will only be applied when more than 240 applications are made for admission for one year group.

Priority areas as defined by the Local Authority (LA) for Community Schools do not apply to this Church school. As St Mary's is the only Church of England secondary school in this part of Hertfordshire, we welcome applications from a very wide area. Distance from the School is not a criterion for admission unless the School is over sub-scribed, in which case distance is used as a tiebreaker.

### **ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE MADE ON THE COMMON APPLICATION FORM FROM THE LOCAL AUTHORITY IN WHICH THE CHILD RESIDES**

St Mary's also require the completion of the Supplementary Information Form (SIF) which once completed should be sent directly to the School c/o the Admissions Officer

In the event of more applications being received than there are places, available, it will be necessary to operate a scheme of allocation. This will be done using the criteria set out in this Policy.

The Local Authority (Hertfordshire County Council) operates an agreed coordinated admissions scheme. The LA will coordinate the process on behalf of the School according to the scheme published each year. The Governing Body, as the admission authority for St Mary's, will allocate the available places in line with this policy. However, offers will be made by the Local Authority in which the child lives.

Should there be over-subscription within any one admission category, then the priority ranking in that category will be the distance from the School to the home<sup>#</sup>. A 'straight line' distance measurement is used in all home<sup>#</sup> to school distance measurements. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

*#refer to note C*

The school co-operates with the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol for children who are hard to place and these children will be given priority over others on the continued interest list and the school will go over PAN (Published Admission Number) if required.

The School's in-year admission arrangements will work within the remit of Hertfordshire's agreed scheme of in-year coordination. The Governing Body remains responsible for the allocation of all places in accordance with the School's published admission rules but all applications for, and allocations to, the School must be made via a child's home authority.

### Admissions of Children Outside of Their Normal Age Group

Families may seek a place for their child outside of his/her normal age group under various circumstances such as ill health, if the child is Highly Able or when the child has experienced problems. St Mary's CE High School will make a decision on this on a case-by-case basis.

### Appeals

All applicants refused a place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code.

Parents wishing to appeal who applied through Hertfordshire's online system should log in to their online application and click on the link "register an appeal". Out of county residents and paper applicants should call the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request their registration details and log into [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals) and click on the link "log into the appeals system".

### Primary Transition Applications

The closing date for admissions application forms to be received by the Local Authority (LA) in which the child lives is as advertised by that Authority (31st October). Information on completing the on-line application and dates for notification of admission decisions are published in the LA admissions literature, which is also available from the LA website.

The School operates a continuing interest list and a request to be added to that list needs to be made in writing to the Head Teacher at the school address and confirmed monthly. This continuing interest list will be reviewed by the governors at the end of each academic year.

The School, as its own admission authority maintains a clear, fair and objective waiting list until at least 31 December of each school year of admission. Each added child will require this list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria.

### The Over-subscription Criteria

Before any other children are admitted, a child with an Education, Health and Care Plans that names the School will be admitted.

In the event of more applications being received than there are places available, places will be allocated by the Governing Body in the order indicated.

1. **Looked After Children (LAC)** and all previously looked after children, including those who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside England (IAPLAC) and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted or with a special guardianship or child arrangements order. The School uses HCCs published definitions for this criteria, as outlined in Note A at the end of this document.
2. **Children of permanent staff employed by the School.** Priority will be given to children of staff employed by St Mary's in either or both of the following circumstances: where the member of staff has been employed by the School for two years or more at the time at which the application to school is made, and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage.  
*Note: for the purposes of this policy a 'child' is defined as a biological or legally adopted child of the staff member making the application.*
3. **Children who have a sibling (brother or sister) in Years 7 to 12 at the School at the time of application.** The Governors use the same definition of sibling as the Local Authority\*.

*\*a sibling is defined as: the sister, brother, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent/carer or partner or a child looked after or previously looked after and in every case living permanently# in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of this application.*

*# a sibling will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.*

*Note: The School will increase the admission number where to not do this would mean twins or multiple births could not be admitted together.*

#### **4. Regular worship recognised Christian Church**

Parents/Carers or children who regularly worship at a Christian Church and whose attendance is verified by their minister. Regular worship means attending at least once a month and for at least the past two years at the closing date for applications. A Christian Church is a recognised Anglican Church or another Christian denomination which is a member of the Churches Together in Britain & Ireland, the Evangelical Alliance or Affinity. If a Church is considered not to be recognised, an official of the St Albans Diocese will be consulted and their decision will be final.

#### **5. Regular worship of a mainstream non-Christian faith**

Children or parents/carers who regularly take part in non-Christian faith worship and whose participation is confirmed by their appropriate faith leader. Regular worship means taking part in faith-sponsored worship at least once a month and for at least the last two years at the closing date for applications.

#### **6. Church Primary School**

Children who attend a Church of England or Roman Catholic Primary School. The child must be on the roll of the Church Primary School at the closing date for receipt of applications.

#### **7. Children living within the boundary of the parish of one of the following:**

- St Mary the Virgin, Cheshunt
- St Clements, Turnford
- St James, Goffs Oak
- Christ Church, Waltham Cross

*The boundary identifying map can be found using [www.achurchnearyou.com/parishfinder.php](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/parishfinder.php) and entering your postcode.*

#### **8. Parents who are actively choosing a church education for their child regardless of home location.**

#### **9. Other applicants.**

In the event of a tie breaker, where two children live<sup>#</sup> equidistant from the School random allocation will be used which will be overseen by an independent person to ensure fairness.

*#refer to note C*

If you need help to complete the application form, please contact the Admissions Officer on 01992 629124.

Advice is also available for general help concerning admissions from the Local Authority. Contact can be made using the telephone numbers given on their website.

#### **In-Year Admissions**

Parents can make an online In year application via the Hertfordshire County Council website [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions) or contact the Customer Service centre on 0300 123 4043 for a paper application form. Parents should return the application direct to the County council.

In-Year applications should be made via the Hertfordshire County Council Admissions Team, who will advise the school of the application. The School will then contact the applicant directly to discuss the application. If an application is unsuccessful this will be notified to the applicant and the Local Authority, along with information on how to appeal online at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals).

### In-Year Admissions Continuing Interest List

After places have been offered, Hertfordshire County Council will maintain a continuing interest (waiting) list. A child's position on a CI list will be determined by the admission criteria outlined above and a child's place on the list can change as other children join or leave it. The County Council will contact parents/carers if a vacancy becomes available and it can be offered to a child. Continuing Interest lists will be maintained for every year group until the summer term (date to be specified and confirmed to parents at the time of allocation). To remain on the CI (waiting) list after this time, parents must confirm they are still interested in a place by completing an In year Application Form (To retain a CI application after this time parents must make an In year Application).

### In Year appeals

The County Council will write to you with the outcome of your application and if you have been unsuccessful will include registration details to enable you to log in and appeal online at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals)

**Note A : Hertfordshire County Council published definitions for “children looked after”**

Places are allocated to children in public care according to Chapter 7, Section 2 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

These children will be prioritised under rule 1.

A “child looked after” is a child who is:

- a) in the care of a local authority in England, or
- b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in England in the exercise of their social services functions (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school

“Internationally Adopted Previously Looked After Children” is a child who is:

regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of, or were accommodated by, a public authority, a religious organization, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society

Highest priority will also be given to children who were previously looked after, including those looked after outside of England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangement order or a special guardianship order. These are defined as being “previously looked after children”

- All children adopted from care (in England) who are of compulsory school age are eligible for admission under this rule;
- Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under this rule

Please note: children who were not ‘looked after’ immediately before being adopted, or made the subject of child arrangement order or special guardianship order will not be prioritised under this rule.

Please note: Admissions authorities for schools designated with a religious character may give priority to all looked after children and previously looked after children whether or not of the faith, but they must give priority to looked after children and previously looked after children of the faith BEFORE other children of the faith. Where any element of priority is given in relation to children not of the faith, they must give priority to looked after children and previously looked after children not of the faith above other children not of the faith.

All children adopted from care who are of compulsory school age are eligible for admission under rule 1.

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under Rule 1.

Children who were not “looked after” **immediately** before being adopted, or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order, **will not** be prioritised under rule 1.

<sup>1</sup> Child arrangements order

Under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders which settle the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

<sup>2</sup> Special guardianship order

Under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian or guardians.

<sup>3</sup> This definition has been amended in accordance with paragraph 1.7 (footnote 17) of the School Admissions Code that came into force on 19 December 2014.

**Note B: In-Year Admissions**

- all in-year applications decisions are made by the Headteacher in conjunction with the Governing Body.
- A refused application may be referred to the Fair Access Protocol

**Note C: Hertfordshire County Council published definitions for child’s permanent home address**

“At the time of application” means the closing date for applications

“Permanent” means that the child has lived at that address for at least a year

Where a family has not lived at an address for a year, they must be able to demonstrate that they own the property or have a tenancy agreement for a minimum of 12\* months and the child must be resident in the property at the time of application.

The application can only be processed using one address. If a child lives at more than one address (for example due to a separation) the address used will be the one where the child lives for the majority of the time. If a child lives at two addresses equally, parents/carers should make a single joint application naming one address.

If a child’s permanent residence is disputed, parents/carers should provide court documentation to evidence the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes. If two applications are received, with different addresses and/or different preferences, neither will be processed until the address issue is reconciled.

*It is for a child's home Local Authority to determine address. If two applications, with different addresses are received from the same Local Authority, it will be for that Local Authority to determine permanent address. If two applications are received from two different Local Authorities, the above process will be used*

*If two different applications are received for the same child from the same address, e.g., containing different preferences, parents/carers will be invited to submit a joint application or provide court documentation to evidence the preferences that should be used for the admission process. Until the preference issue is reconciled neither application will be processed.*

*For the transfer application rounds, if the initial differing applications (one or both) were received "on-time", an amended joint application will also be considered "on-time" if received before the "late deadline". If the amended joint application is received after the late date, it will be treated as "late". The late deadlines for the 2023/24 transfer application process are 2nd December 2022 for secondary and upper applications and 1st February for reception, junior and middle applications. If these dates change, amendments will be published on the admissions web pages at the start of the 2023/24 application process in September 2022.*

*\* If, because of the nature of the agreement, it is not possible to provide a 12-month tenancy agreement, alternative proof of address will be requested and verified as necessary with the Shared Anti-Fraud Service.*