

# THE SPIRE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST

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## Admissions Policy

adopted by

### St Matthias C of E Primary School



DATE 2025- 2026

This policy is reviewed at least annually by The Trust/Local Governing Body

Reviewed : October 2023

Next Review Date: October 2024

in collaboration with



## Our School Vision

### *ASPIRE, BELIEVE, ACHIEVE*

'Our school family, values us all as unique individuals and children of God.

We **aspire** to be the best version of ourselves; **believing** that through the gifts God has given us, we can make a positive contribution, flourish and **achieve** together to make a difference in our ever-changing world.'

## Introduction

The School Admission Number for the academic year beginning September 2025 is 30, totalling 210 pupils across Key Stages 1 and 2. We also have a 26 place Nursery for mainstream children.

In general terms, the governors aim to preserve the ethos of the school as one which serves the neighbourhood and which seeks to promote Christian values. The Admission Policy has been formulated with this in mind.

Parents who wish to register their child should contact the Headteacher or the school Secretary. Children are eligible to start school in the Reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. The school welcomes enquiries and is pleased to show parents and children around the premises. There is an application form, which must be completed and returned to school.

All applications for an academic year are considered at the same time; the beginning of March, by the Local Authority. The Local Authority, on behalf of school Governors, advises parents of the outcome of their application. All preferences are treated equally.

Currently, the school has a policy of inviting all children accepted to the Reception Class for visits, prior to starting school, including children that are already attending our Nursery.

Membership of the Nursery will **not** guarantee a place in the main school, as the following admission criteria will apply to all children seeking a place in the Reception year.

## Admission Criteria

In the event of over-subscription applicants will be admitted to the school according to the following criteria, which are set out in order of priority: -

1. Relevant *'Looked After'* children and previously *'Looked After'* children.
2. Children who have a brother or sister in school, at the time of admission, with priority given to nearness of home to school by direct line measurement. The measurement will be taken using the GeoCode Points for each property and the GeoCode point for the centre of the school. The Governing Body will utilise the Local Authority software package called Arcview GIS to determine distance. Ordnance Survey supply the co-ordinates that are used to plot an address within this system. (In the event of equi-distance applicants, any places will be allocated by random selection. Someone totally independent of the Governing Body will supervise this process.) The sibling link, as well as brother or sister, includes step children, half siblings - that is children who share one birth parent, fostered and legally adopted children. Siblings must be living at the same home address.
3. Children of practicing members of an Anglican or other Christian Church for whom this is the nearest Church Aided School.

Parents wishing to apply for a place for their child under this category should submit a letter from the minister of their church with their application form. The Governors are happy to receive applications from members of the Church of England and also from other Christian denominations, which are affiliated to the Council of Churches

for Britain and Ireland. "Practicing membership" is interpreted as attending church at least monthly for at least one year prior to application.

4. Children whose parents are practicing members of a community of any other established faith. A Leader or representative of the religious community should provide written confirmation.
5. Children whose parents are employed by The Spire Trust at St Matthias at the time of admission, regardless of role.
6. Pupils whose principal address is within the school's catchment area. In cases of over subscription, places will be allocated first to children living nearest to the school by the shortest straight line distance. The measurement will be taken using the GeoCode Points for each property and the GeoCode point for the centre of the school. (In the event of equi-distance applicants, any places will be allocated by random selection. Someone totally independent of the Governing Body will supervise this process.)
7. Pupils whose principal address is out of the school's catchment area. In cases of over subscription, places will be allocated first to children living nearest to the school by the shortest straight line distance. The measurement will be taken from the front door of the pupil's home to the nearest school entrance, which is the access point to the school site, along a road or made up footpath. (In the event of equi-distance applicants, any places will be allocated by random selection. Someone totally independent of Childrens' Services will supervise this process.)

A "looked after child" has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any child who is (a) in the care of the local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (eg children with foster parents) at the time of making the application to the school. A "previously looked after child" is a child who immediately moved on from that status after becoming subject to an adoption, child arrangement order or special guardianship order and includes those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state case as a result of being adopted.

**Note 1** Pupils, for whom the school is identified as most suitable to fulfil educational requirements, following consultation, as set out in a statutory Education and Health Care Plan will be allocated a place.

No account will be taken of gender, disability, racial or ethnic origins or religious beliefs other than set out in criteria 1.

**Note 2** The home address of a pupil is considered to be the permanent residence of a child. The address must be the child's only or main residence for the majority of the school week. Documentary evidence may be required. Where care is split equally between mother and father, parents may be asked to provide supporting documentary evidence to prove the care is split.

Please note that the length of time that a child's application form has been with the school is not a criterion for admission.

### **Application Procedure**

The school's application form, available from the school office, should be completed and submitted to the school secretary before January 15<sup>th</sup> in any year to be considered for a place in the following academic year.

An online application form will also need to be completed.

## **Mid Year Admissions**

All mid-year applications will be co-ordinated by Worcestershire School Admissions. Parents / Carers wishing to apply for a place for their child part way through the school year are advised to approach to the school, where they can obtain a school admission form and the Local Authority transfer form. Both forms can be given back to the school office, when completed. The school will keep their admission form and will send the transfer form to Worcestershire Children First where it will be processed by the local authority. Alternatively parents may wish to send the local authority form directly to the address on the form.

## **Over-subscription**

In a very small number of cases it may not be possible to decide between the applicants of those pupils who are qualifiers for a place, when applying the published admission criteria. For example, this may occur when children in the same year group live at the same address, or where there are twins, or if the distance between the home and school is exactly the same, for example, blocks of flats. If there is no other way of separating the application according to the admissions criteria and to admit both or all of the children would cause the legal limit to be exceeded, then any available place will be allocated by random selection\* except in the case of siblings of multiple births where the first born child will have priority over any available school space.

- For example - in the event of equi-distance applicants, lots will be drawn for any available place. This lottery will be supervised by a person independent of the Governing Body.

## **School Entry**

Children are legally entitled to a school place in the September following their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday. Parents can request that their child attends part time until their child reaches compulsory school age. However, children must, by law, attend school full time from the beginning of the term after their fifth birthday. A parent may defer a child's entry to the school, but not beyond the academic year for which the application is accepted. Parents may discuss this with the Headteacher.

The closing date for applications each year is 15<sup>th</sup> January. The notification date of offer of places will be on 16<sup>th</sup> April.

## **Admission of children outside of their normal age group**

Parents can request that their child be admitted outside of the normal year group. St. Matthias CE Primary School supports the provision of an inclusive personalised curriculum in the belief that all skilled teachers can provide this for all pupils and students. We believe that pupils should be taught within their chronological year group and that only in exceptional circumstances should consideration be given to accelerating or delaying the transfer of a pupil or student. Each request will be considered based on the individual circumstances of the case.

## **Waiting Lists**

(Subject to changes in Regulations) Waiting lists for admission to our Reception Class will remain open until the end of the Autumn Term in which the child starts school and will then be discarded. Parents may apply for their child's name to be reinstated. The waiting list will be prioritised in line with the oversubscription criteria and not dealt with on a first come, first served basis.

## **Late Applications**

Late applications for the Reception Class received up to and including the last day of February may be treated as being on-time, only in the following circumstances:

- Where a family have moved address after the closing date for on-time applications.

- Where it is agreed by the governors that individual circumstances apply and the delay was reasonable, given the circumstances of the case.

### **Repeat Applications**

Unless there are significant and material changes in the circumstances of a parent's application for their child or the school, the governors will not consider a repeat application in the same academic year.

### **Appeals**

Parents who wish to appeal against a decision to refuse their child a place in the school may apply in writing to Chair of Governors. Appeals will be heard by an Independent Appeals Panel whose decision is binding on all parts.

St. Matthias CE Primary School has adopted the Worcestershire Fair Access Protocol. As part of this Key Stage 2 classes can be required to exceed the published admission number by up to 2 places in each year to admit pupils recognised by the Local Authority as being 'hard to place' within the 'Fair Access Protocol.'

**This Admissions policy gives due consideration to the new legal requirements as stipulated by the DfE, and ensures that there are equal opportunities for pupils of all races, cultural diversities, religious denominations or those with special educational needs, whether emotional or physical.**