



ADMISSIONS POLICY

2024-2025


OUR MISSION:

WE ARE COMMITTED TO THE CHRISTIAN ETHOS - THAT EVERY CHILD IS SPECIAL IN THE EYES OF GOD AND WE TEACH THAT ALL PEOPLE SHOULD LOVE, CARE FOR AND RESPECT ONE ANOTHER AND OUR PLANET.

It is our ambition that all our pupils use our 5 Christian values Love, Peace, Hope, Compassion and Forgiveness to achieve our vision and mission.

'A New Commandment I give you, 'Love one another as I have loved you.' John 13:34

It is from this Commandment and the teachings of Jesus that we teach our children five Christian values

Recommended by:	Principal
Recommendation Date:	January 2023
Ratified by:	LAGB
Signed:	
Position on the Board:	Chair of LAGB
Ratification Date	Chair's action. January 2023
Next Review:	February 2024
Policy Tier	School

This policy reflects the *School Admissions Code 2021*

This policy outlines clearly and simply the procedures and protocols which are currently in operation around admissions into St Stephen's CofE First School. As an Academy belonging to a multi academy trust, the Trust is our admissions authority, but we have taken the decision to carry on working closely with the Local Authority to ensure that all arrangements are both transparent and fair.

The school takes part in the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for In-Year Applications for Schools in Worcestershire and the Worcestershire Fair Access Protocol, incorporating the 'Hard to Place Protocol': <https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schools-education-and-learning/school-admissions-policies>

The planned admission limit for Reception in September 2024 is 30 and children are admitted to St Stephen's CofE first school in accordance with this Admissions Policy.

Admissions Process – Entry to the school at the normal time of transfer (Reception)

Applications for all school places must be made on the Common Application Form (CAF) provided by the parent[s]/carer[s] home Authority, with the opportunity to nominate schools, ranked in order of preference. Alternatively, if you are a Worcestershire resident, you can complete the CAF on-line at www.worcestershire.gov.uk. (if you are resident in another Local Authority you will need to visit their website). Once completed the CAF (including if you apply on-line) must be received by your home local authority (Worcestershire if you live in Worcestershire, Birmingham if you live in Birmingham etc) by the 15th January. The home Local Authority will notify parents of the outcome of their application for a place.

Applying for Places

Applications are welcomed from all who wish their children to attend St Stephen's CofE First School. Pupils and their parent[s]/carer[s] who are considering applying are warmly invited to visit the School. The school shows prospective Reception pupils and their parent[s]/carer[s] around the school upon request prior to intended admission. Please phone the school to book an appointment. The School will be pleased to provide information and answer questions by letter or telephone, or to meet parents to discuss possible applications.

If there are more applications than the Published Admissions Number of 30, local governors are delegated by the Trust to quality assure the process outlined below for allocation of pupil places to ensure that the Admissions Policy is applied fairly and consistently.

Age of Pupils

Pupils normally enter the School in Reception in the September after they reach the age of 4 and leave at the end of Year 4.

Date of Application

Information on how and when to apply will be provided direct to parents via their Child's first school from their home Local Authority. It is also available on-line at www.worcestershire.gov.uk for residents living in Worcestershire (other Home Local Authorities have their own arrangements.) The CAF

(including if you apply on-line) must be received by your home Local Authority by their published deadline.

Procedure

Your home Local Authority will send those nominating St Stephen's CofE First School in any position to the academy for assessment. The Common Application Form data will then be used to place applications in order of priority according to the scheme below.

Pupils for whom an Education Health and Care Plan has been agreed, naming the School on the EHCP

These pupils are automatically admitted to the School. Where places required by EHCP pupils are known before the Admissions Committee meets, the number of pupils with EHCPs naming this School will be deducted from the 30 places available to be offered.

Offers of Places

All applications are ranked in order of priority as described below. This list of pupils for whom places could be offered will then be provided to the Local Authority who, according to the Co-ordinated Scheme, will make offers. The offer of a place will be a single offer to you, of your highest ranked school, where a place is available. Those for whom no place can be offered are advised of their right to appeal within fourteen days of the date of posting of the letter.

Firm offers will be made by the home Local Authority on the 16th April. They will not be made by St Stephen's CofE.

The Trust reserves their right to withdraw an offer of a place before the student is admitted to the school where it is found that the offer of a place has been made on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application which effectively denied a place to a student with a stronger claim, or where a parent/carer has not responded to the offer within 14 days of the offer being made.

The parent[s]/carer[s] of pupils who are unsuccessful in gaining a place can ask for the pupil's name to be placed on a waiting list for a place at St Stephen's CofE First School, irrespective of whether they make an appeal against the decision not to offer them a place. In previous years a small number of places have become available between April and September due to families moving home etc. Any such places will be allocated to pupils on the waiting list. This process will operate in keeping with the principles outlined in this Policy i.e. when a place becomes available, it will be allocated according to the oversubscription criteria listed above. Each time a child is added to the waiting list it will be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria.

N.B. Parents are advised that they must return the transfer application form to their home Local Authority by the 15th January. This deadline will be adhered to **strictly** and applications received after this date will be at a disadvantage in the event of oversubscription.

We remind you that you will only receive a single offer of a school place under the Co-ordinated Admissions process. This offer will be of your highest ranked school, where a place is available.

Oversubscription Criteria for Admission to St Stephen's CofE First School

If St Stephen's CofE First School is oversubscribed, the purpose of the published over subscription criteria is to give everyone a fair opportunity to apply for a place at the school. The local governing board takes considerable time and the utmost care to ensure that the system is applied fairly.

At Age 4:

When there are more applications than places (which is normal) pupils will be admitted in the following order of priority:

1. Looked after children and all previously looked after children including those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
2. Young people who have a **sibling** currently attending St Stephen's CE First School. In order to qualify for a place on the grounds of a sibling attending the school, the sibling must be attending the school at the time of intended admission.
3. Other young people who **live in the St Stephen's CofE First School Catchment Area**. A copy of the Catchment map is available from the LA or can be seen in school.
4. Other young people.

Within each criterion priority will be given to those who live nearest to St Stephen's CofE First School. This distance will be measured from the front entrance of the home to the front entrance of the school in a straight line. In the case of oversubscription places will be allocated (for all the listed criteria) to pupils who live **nearest** to the school by the shortest straight line distance. The measurement will be taken using the GeoCode Points from the centre of the building of the home address (centroid) to the Geocode point for the centre of the School buildings (centroid). This will be done by using the Local Authority's 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, or multiple births, any place will be allocated by random selection (lottery). This process will be conducted by a suitable person independent of the school.

Definitions

- **'Looked after'** includes all those currently in the care of or accommodated by a Local Authority under the terms of the Children Act 1989 and children who were previously in the care of or accommodated by a Local Authority but immediately after being looked after, became subject to an adoption, child arrangements order or special guardianship order.
- **Parent[s]/carer[s]** – parent, guardian and others who have actual care of a pupil and whose address appears on the pupil benefit book or other legal agreement confirming the care of the pupil.
- **Sibling** – the sibling connection, as well as a brother and sister will include half- siblings, adopted children, step-siblings or a child of the parent/carers partner. They must also be living at the same home address. Children who are brought together as a family by a civil partnership and who are living at the same address, are also considered to be siblings.
- **Home** – must be the address where the pupil usually lives. Places cannot be offered on the basis of a possible future address. If you move to a different address but have not sold or given up the tenancy of your previous home, this will not count as a change of address. Also, if you allow your child to live with someone in a different area, the pupil's usual home will be taken as their home address for the measurement of distance. Pupils who have parent[s]/carer[s] with shared responsibility will have the address of the parent/carers which is to be used chosen by random

selection. If you are moving, you will need to provide one of the following before your new address can be considered when applying the Oversubscription Criteria for a place at St Stephen's

- a letter from a solicitor confirming that you have exchanged contracts to buy a property
- a tenancy agreement confirming that you will be renting a specific property
- a letter from a housing association confirming that you will be living at a specific address-
- for the child of service personnel with a confirmed posting or the child of crown servants returning from overseas, the intended future home address of the child even if the family are not yet physically living there OR the Unit / quartering address where the parent requests this is to be used

- **Catchment Area School** - is the school allocated by the LA to take children for the geographical area within which your address falls. It is likely to be the school nearest to your home address but this will not always be the case.

Appeals

The parent[s]/carer[s] of children who are unsuccessful in gaining a place at St Stephen's CofE First School will be able to appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel.

Parent[s]/carer[s] wishing to exercise this right should contact in writing the Clerk to the Governing Body of St Stephen's CofE First School within twenty days of receipt of notification.

The Independent Appeal Panel's procedures are in accordance with the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education Act 2002 and the Schools Appeals Code of Practice. Parent[s]/carer[s] may attend the hearing of their appeal and make their case to the panel.

In Year Applications for Admission

The parent[s]/carer[s] of children seeking admission to the school should apply for a place by completing an in year admission form, available from [In-Year Applications/ Worcestershire County Council](#). Once completed, the form should be sent straight to Worcestershire County Council School Admissions.

If a place is not available in the relevant year group, the application will be placed on the school's waiting list for admission into the relevant year group. These waiting lists will be maintained until the end of each term and those wishing to keep their child's name on the list for the next term or academic year should keep in direct contact with the school. Waiting lists are organised according to the criteria for oversubscription above.

When a place becomes available, it will be offered to the pupil at the top of the waiting list. However, the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 removes the duty to comply with parental preference where agreeing to the preference would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

If no place is immediately available, parent[s]/carer[s] are entitled to appeal following the procedure outlined above. Where places are awarded we reserve the right to refuse admission for a reasonable period of time to allow and encourage the parents / carers to work with their existing school. Additionally, we reserve the right to refuse admission for a reasonable period of time in order to collect information from the pupil's previous school to facilitate our planning and provision mapping to meet their individual needs with a personalised learning programme. Parents / carers should be aware that in order to ensure the correct provision for all pupils joining St Stephen's CofE First School, previous school (s) will be contacted to ensure a smooth transition.

Admission of children outside the normal age group

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group. The governors will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. They will also take into account the views of the Executive Principal and Head of School.

When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the governors will set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

Where the governors agree to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to a relevant age group (i.e. the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school) the local authority and governors will process the application as part of the main admissions round, unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible, and on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. They will not give the application lower priority on the basis that the child is being admitted out of their normal age group.

Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

The information contained in this policy is correct at the time of publication but minor amendments may be made without notice, for example to comply with new statutory requirements or due to circumstances beyond the control of the Trust for St Stephen's CofE First School, including information published by Worcestershire County Council.