



## **Admissions Policy – 2025/2026**

St Mary's Church of England (A) Primary School keeps children safe by ensuring and promoting the safeguarding and welfare of all children in its care: all policies support the most current "Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance" and "Safeguarding Policy", are fully consistent with the "Every Child Matters" agenda, and fully support the principles of equal opportunities for all.

### **Nursery Provision**

Children are admitted to **St Mary's Primary School Nursery Provision** in the term following their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

Children can be admitted to our nursery provision at the beginning of the spring or summer term after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

### **Admissions of Reception Age Children**

Pupils are admitted on a full-time basis in the September preceding their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. There is one admission annually for children starting in the Reception age group in September. Pupils may be admitted to the school in the September intake if their fifth birthday falls between 1<sup>st</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> August. It is expected that the Reception intake will not exceed 12 pupils during a school year.

### **Admissions Limits**

The maximum number on roll is expected to be a maximum of 84 pupils. The number of pupils admitted in any one-year group is expected not to exceed 12. (Published Admission Number, PAN).

### **Application Process**

All applications are encouraged online where possible. If you do not have access to the internet, please contact the school and they will be happy to assist you. For further admissions information and an application form, please use the following link:

<http://education.staffordshire.gov.uk/PupilSupport/Admissions/AdmissionForms>

If any extra documentation is required to support the application, it must be submitted at the time of application.

### **Catchment Area**

The catchment area of the school is the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Mary's Church, Muckleston, which includes Knighton, Bearstone, Loggerheads and Muckleston. We welcome applicants from out of catchment and have pupils on roll from Woore, Norton-In-Hales, Ashley, Goldstone and Hales. Some children also come from nearby Market Drayton.

### **Admissions Criteria**

The following criteria for selection will be employed when applications for admission exceed the admission limit. In accordance with legislation, children who have a statutory statement of special educational need and disability, or Education, Health and Care Plan that names St. Mary's, must be admitted. This will reduce the number of places available:

- Children in care and children who ceased to be in care because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order), including those children 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
- Children of Service Personnel will also be given higher priority
- Children resident in the catchment area of the School (i.e. the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Mary's, Mucklestone)
- Children with siblings at the school. (Pupils who at the time of the application have older sibling/s in attendance at the school, who will still be attending at the proposed admission date). A sibling is defined as 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 where the child for whom the school place is sought, is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling. Children with special social or welfare needs. (Children distinguished from the great majority of other applicants either on medical grounds or by exceptional circumstances).
- Children whose parents are in regular attendance of the Anglican Church. (i.e. attendance at least six times in last twelve months with a letter of support from Religious Leader)
- Children whose parents are in regular attendance of another Christian Church. (i.e. attendance at least six times in last twelve months with a letter of support from Religious Leader)
- Children of non-Christian religion who wish for a school with a religious emphasis.
- Any other children.

In the event of a tiebreak, applications will be arranged in order of priority according to how near their home addresses are to the school. Distance will be measured as the nearest practical walking route from the home address to the main school gate. The Local Authority uses a Geographical Information System (GIS) to calculate distance.

All applications are considered against the above criteria, with no priority awarded to early applications. Late applications will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

It is the applicant's responsibility to provide any supportive information required in order for the application to be assessed against the criteria above. The school will not seek to obtain this information on behalf of the applicant.

### **Admissions Panel**

**Composition:** The Admissions Panel will consist of the Chair of Governors, three other Governors of whom it is expected the Parish Incumbent will be one, and the Headteacher of the school.

**Responsibilities:** The Admissions Panel will consider applications for admission to the school. When the number of applicants exceeds the number of available places, the panel will select pupils according to the published criteria.

The Admissions Panel will meet to consider applications prior to and on the same evening as the scheduled Governors' Meeting. The panel's decision will be presented to the Governors for clarification.

### **Immediate Admission**

When a pupil moves into the catchment area and is transferring from another school, it may be necessary to effect immediate admission. In this event, authority to admit is delegated to

the Headteacher, providing there is a place available. The Chair-person of the Admissions Panel will be notified at the earliest opportunity.

### **Appeals Procedure**

In the event of admission being refused, parents will be notified in writing of their right to appeal. The Headteacher will offer and, if required, give advice to the parents on the appeals procedure.

If the parents decide to proceed with an appeal, a formal approach to the Governors should be made in writing to the Chair of Governors, who will set in motion arrangements for an Independent Appeal Panel to meet.

### **Deferred Entry to Reception Class**

Parents may request that their child be admitted to Reception Class on a part-time basis, or that their child be admitted to school later in the same academic year, until the child reaches compulsory school age (i.e. beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday). The effect is that the place will be held for the child in Reception and is not available to be offered to any other child within the same academic year in which it has been offered.

Before deciding whether to defer their child's entry to school, parents should visit their preferred school(s) to clarify how they cater for the youngest children in Reception and how the needs of these children are met as they move up through the school.

### **Admission Outside of the Normal Age Group**

Parents may seek to apply for their child's admission to school outside of their normal age group, for example if the child is exceptionally gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of summer born children may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted outside of their normal age group to Reception rather than Year 1.

These parents will need to make an application alongside children applying at the normal age, which should explain why it is in the child's best interest, to be admitted outside of their normal age which may include information such as professional evidence as to why this is the case and why an exception should be made in the case of the child. A decision as to whether this is an appropriate course of action will be made by the Local Authority, who will take into account the circumstances of the case and views of the headteacher. Parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular year group.

### **Waiting lists for Admissions and Normal Point of Entry**

Unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria stated above and not based on the date their application was received. There will be a period of two weeks after the national offer date whereby available places will not be reallocated. If places become available after this date they will be offered according to the child at the top of the waiting list.

For cases where the infant class size regulations apply, the waiting list will operate until the cohort concerned leaves year 2 and parents will be written to each year to ask whether or not they wish their child's details to remain on the list.

For all other cases, waiting lists will be kept until **31 December 2025**

Inclusion on a school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available at the preferred school.

A child's position on a waiting list is not fixed and is subject to change during the year i.e. they can go up or down the list since each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the oversubscription criteria.

Children who are subject of a direction by a local authority to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with the fair access protocol will take precedence over those on the waiting list.

### **Home address**

The home address is considered to be the child's along with their parent/carer's main and genuine principal place of residence at the time of the allocation of places i.e. where they are normally and regularly living. If a child is resident with friends or relatives (for reasons other than legal guardianship) the friends or relatives address will not be considered for allocation purposes.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with both parents for part of the school week, parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes.

If a child's home address changes during the admissions process it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the local authority immediately. Where there is a proposed house move taking place during the admissions process the local authority will only accept the revised address for purposes of allocation where parents/carers can provide documentary evidence of the move by **8 March 2025**. It will be necessary for sufficient evidence of a permanent move to be provided by the applicant by this date before it will be taken into account for allocation purposes at the national offer date.

If a place is offered on the basis of an address that is subsequently found to be different from the child's normal and permanent home address at the time of allocation of places then that place is likely to be withdrawn.

Any Staffordshire child not obtaining a place at any of their parent's preferred schools will be allocated an alternative school place and advised about the independent appeals process.