



ST MARY'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS POLICY

2026/27



Approved by	Date	Review Schedule	Date of next review
Trust Board	18 December 2024	Annually	Autumn Term 2025

Our school is a Church of England academy school within the Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT). CDAT is the admissions authority for the school.

At St Mary's we pride ourselves on our strong Christian Ethos, and our vision, aims and values set the tone for our school. We recognise that children flourish in a safe environment where they feel loved, valued and secure. The behaviour and safety of our pupils is good and we strive to maintain this in order to allow all children to reach their full, God-given potential.

Parents should be aware before applying that in this school RE, collective worship and our whole ethos are based on the teachings of the Church of England.

Applications for admission to the school should be made on the common application form enclosed with the Local Authority's brochure and also on the School's supplementary form, if you are applying under criteria 1 or 3, by 15th January in the admission year.

Applications may also be made on-line by using both the common application form and the Supplementary Form. It is not normally possible to change the order of your preferences for schools after the closing date. Whether application is made on paper or electronically, both forms must be completed by those applying under criteria 3 or 5.

Letters/emails informing parents of whether or not their child has been allocated a place will be sent out by the Local Authority on 16 April in the admission year (or the nearest working day). Parents of children not admitted will be informed of the reason and offered an alternative place by the Authority.

The number of places available for admission to the Reception class in the year 2026 will be a maximum of 35. This arrangement follows consultation between the governing body, the Diocesan Board of Education, Local Authorities and other admissions authorities in the area. The admissions authority will not place any restrictions on admissions to the reception class unless the number of children for whom admission is sought exceeds this number. By law, no infant class may contain more than thirty children.

The admissions authority operates a system of equal preferences under which they consider all preferences equally and the Local Authority allocates places according to its policy. In the event that there are more applicants than places, the admissions authority will allocate places using the following criteria, which are listed in order of priority:

1. Looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England (including those who were in care overseas) and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order).
2. Children who have a sibling already attending the school and expected to continue at the school in the year of admission.
3. Children or their parents/guardians who are faithful and regular in the work and worship of Halton St Mary's Church or Christ Church, Castlefields or any Christian church in Runcorn that are members of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

4. Children resident within the Parish boundary (Halton Village, Castlefields, Halton Brook, The Brow) To look at a map of the Parish go to

www.achurchnearyou.com/search/?lat=53.33623420000001&lon=-2.696768700000007&place=ChIJg1z5TcDiekgRtrjOCOq9ALY&text=

Alternatively a Parish map is available from school.

5. Children with special medical or social circumstances affecting the child where these needs can only be met at this school.
6. Children resident outside the areas in criteria 4 and who live nearest the school as measured using the Local Authority's GIS address point system.

Please note that attending the Pre school located at St Mary's Primary School does not automatically guarantee admission to, nor enable automatic enrolment with the school. Children attending this provision must complete the Local Authority application form and will be allocated a place according to the above criteria.

If there are not enough places to admit all applicants meeting any one criterion, the admissions authority will apply the subsequent criteria, in order of priority, to all these applicants.

Additional children may be admitted under very limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an "excepted pupil" for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit. The excepted children are:

- a) Children with special educational needs who have an Education, Health and Care plan admitted outside the normal admission round;
- b) Looked after children and previously looked after children admitted outside the normal admission round;
- c) Children admitted, after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the admission authority or local authority in the original application process;
- d) Children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal;
- e) Children who move into the area outside the normal admission round for whom there is no other available school within a reasonable distance;
- f) Children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admission round;
- g) Twins and children from multiple births when one of the siblings is the 35th child admitted;
- h) Children with SEN who are normally taught in an SEN unit attached to the school, or registered at a special school, who attend some infant classes within the mainstream school.

Notes

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

A child 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

organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

- (b) Professional supporting evidence from e.g. a doctor, psychologist, social worker, is essential if admission is to be made under the criterion for special medical or social circumstances, and such evidence must set out the particular reasons why the school in question is the most suitable school and the difficulties which would be caused if the child had to attend another school.
- (c) By “faithful and regular” we mean attendance at a minimum of two services per month for at least six months prior to the closing date for applications. The school supplementary form signed by your incumbent or minister, or other church officer, will be required as proof of attendance. In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these [admissions] arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship.
- (d) A parent is any person who has parental responsibility or care of the child. Where admission arrangements refer to parent’s attendance at church it is sufficient for just one parent to attend.
- (e) Siblings include step, half, foster, adopted brothers and sisters living at the same address and full brother and sister living apart.
- (f) ‘Christian church means any church which is designated under the Ecumenical Relations Measure nationally by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York or locally by the diocesan bishop, or is a member of Churches Together in England, or the Evangelical Alliance, or a partner church of Affinity’
- (g) Where the above criteria are not adequate to distinguish between requests for admission which cannot all be accepted without exceeding the admission limit, priority will be decided on the basis of the nearness of the home to the school. Pupils living nearest to the school defined as a straight line measurement from the child’s permanent residence to the school, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. Distance will be measured by using the Local Authority’s GIS address point system.
- (h) Where there are children from multiple births wanting admission and there is only a single place left within the admission number, then the admissions authority may admit above the infant class size if it is possible to do so.
- (i) If your application is received late, after places haven allocated and the school is oversubscribed, the child will be placed on the waiting list, along with other unsuccessful applications. The child’s position on the waiting list will be then determined by the admission policy, not by the date received.
- (j) Parent/Carers who are not offered a place have a right of appeal under section 94 of the School Standard & Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be submitted in writing and parents/carers will have the right to present their case to the panel in person. If your child was refused a place in Reception because of government limits on infant class, the grounds on which your appeal could be successful are limited. You would have to show that the decision was one which in the

circumstances no reasonable admissions authority would have made, or that your child would have been offered a place if the admission arrangements had been properly implemented.

Please note that the right of appeal against the admission authority's decision does not prevent you from making an appeal in respect of any other school.

Children with Education and Healthcare Plans

Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the governing bodies of all maintained schools to admit a child with an Education, Health and Care plan that names their school.

Late Applications for Admission

Where there are extenuating circumstances for an application being received after the last date for applications, and it is before the authorised school representatives established their list of pupils to be admitted, then it will be considered alongside all the others.

Otherwise, applications which are received after the last date will be considered after all the others, and placed on the waiting list in order according to the criteria.

In Year Applications

Parents of children aged between 4 and 5 years, who wish their child to join St Mary's CE Primary mid year are required to apply for admission through the Local Authority by completing the common application form. A place will then be allocated via the Local Authority. Application forms for older children wishing to gain a place with in the school can be obtained from the school office. The decision to award a place is at the discretion of the admissions authority who will apply the above admissions criteria when there are multiple applications for limited places.

Waiting List

Where there are more applications than places, the admissions criteria will be used. Children who are not admitted will have their name placed on a waiting list. The names on this waiting list will be in the order resulting from the application of the admissions criteria. Since the date of application cannot be a criterion for the order of names on the waiting list, late applicants for the school will be placed in order according to the extent to which they meet the criteria. Thus it is possible for a child who moves into the area later to have a higher priority than one who has been on the waiting list for some time. If a place becomes available within the admission number, the child whose name is at the top of the list will be offered a place. This is not dependent on whether an appeal has been submitted. This waiting list will operate until December 31st of the year of admission.

Address of Pupil

The address used on the school's admission form must be the current one at the time of application. If the address changes subsequently, the parents should notify the school. Where the parents live at different addresses, the current-at-the-time-of-application, normal address of the child will be the one used. This will normally be the one where the child wakes up for the majority of Monday to Friday mornings. Parents may be asked to show evidence of the claim that is being made for the address, e.g. utility bills of various sorts showing the child's address as the one claimed. Where there is dispute about the correct address to use, the admission authority reserve the right to make enquiries of any relevant third parties, e.g. the child's GP. For children of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants returning to the area proof of the parent's posting is required.

Appeals

Where the admissions authority is unable to offer a place because the school is oversubscribed, parents have the right to appeal to an independent admission appeal panel, set up under the School Standards and Framework Act, 1998, as amended by the Education Act, 2002. **Parents should notify the Local Authority by the date indicated on the Local Authority website if they wish to make an appeal.** Parents will have the opportunity to submit their case to the panel in writing and also to attend in order to present their case. Parents will normally receive 14 days' notice of the place and time of the hearing.

If a child is refused a place in Reception or Key Stage 1 because of Government limits on Infant class sizes, the grounds on which an appeal could be successful are limited. It would have to be shown that the decision was one which in the circumstances no reasonable admissions authority would have made, or that the child would have been offered a place if the published admissions arrangements had been properly implemented.

Please note that this right of appeal against the admission authority's decision does not prevent an appeal in respect of any other school.

Fraudulent Applications

Where the admissions authority discovers that a child has been awarded a place as the result of an intentionally misleading application from a parent (for example a false claim to residence in the catchment area or of involvement in a place of worship) which effectively denies a place to a child with a stronger claim, then the admissions authority is required to withdraw the offer of the place. The application will be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.

Deferred Admission

Children are eligible for a reception place from the beginning of the school year in which they become 5 years old. However they do not become of compulsory school age until the start of the term after their fifth birthday. After a place has been allocated and accepted parents may defer the school place until later in the school year and if they do this the place will be held for the child. They cannot however defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the summer term.

Parents can also request that their child attends on a part time basis until the child reaches compulsory school age.

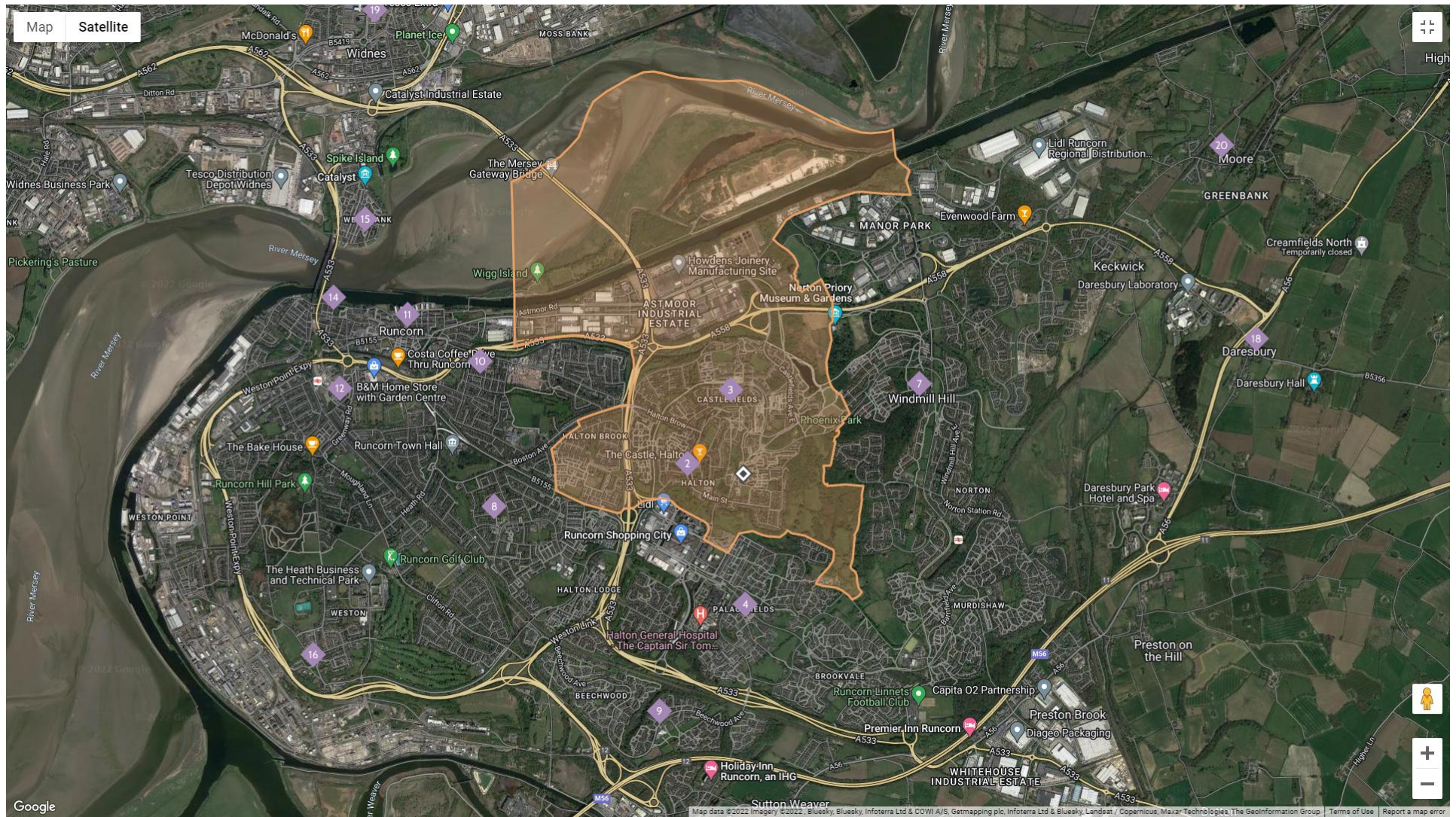
Children educated outside of their normal age group

Parents who wish to delay entry until the following year due to specific circumstances, such as ill health, specific circumstances which mean they are not ready to start school or summer born children (those between 1st April and 31st August), must speak to the school and Local Authority as soon as possible as this would involve either an in-year application for year 1 or a new application for reception in the following year. The decision made by the headteacher as to which year group the child will enter will be made taking into account information from the parents and headteacher and should be in the best interests of the child. Information that parents could include in their request may include details of medical conditions or reports from professionals to support their request.

Parents of summer born children should be aware that agreement by the school to allow a child to enter reception in the following year does not guarantee a place in the class. Parents must apply to the school in the normal co-ordinated round and the application will be considered in the normal manner following the oversubscription criteria. Parents may also choose to apply in-year for admittance to year 1 and the child's normal age group.

Similarly if the parents of a gifted and talented child wish to apply for a place outside of their child's normal age group they should speak to the school and the Local Authority. Any application will be considered by the headteacher to ensure any decision is in the best interests of the child and parents informed of the outcome.

Parish Boundary Map



ST MARY'S C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

SUPPLEMENTARY APPLICATION FORM

Name of child:

Surname	Christian names
Date of birth	Boy ☐ Girl ☐

Name of parent/guardian :

Address :

Post code:

Telephone:

Mobile:

E-mail Address (if any)

Any sibling in school?

Name _____

Place of worship one of parents/guardians regularly attends:

Name of place of worship	
Address	
Name of vicar/priest/faith leader/church officer	
Address	
Post Code	Telephone

Worship Attendance (Not applicable for Nursery)

Please tick if you have attended a minimum of two services per month for at least six months prior to the closing date for applications as in criteria 3 ☐

In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these [admissions] arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship

Church attendance will be calculated only for the period when churches were open for public worship.

'Christian church means any church which is designated under the Ecumenical Relations Measure nationally by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York or locally by

the diocesan bishop, or is a member of Churches Together in England, or the Evangelical Alliance, or a partner church of Affinity'

Please ask your incumbent or minister or other church officer to sign this form below as proof of this attendance.

Signature of church official : _____ Role: _____

Date : _____

Special medical or social circumstances

Tick here if you are applying under this criterion ☐

Give details of professional evidence submitted