



# St Mary's CE Primary School

Dollis Park, Finchley, LONDON N3 1BT

## *Policy for School Admissions from 2021/22*

### **1. Introduction**

St Mary's Church of England Primary School has a distinctive Christian ethos which is at the heart of this School and provides an inclusive, caring and supportive environment where children learn and flourish in a setting shaped by Christian values. The Admissions Policies of St Mary's seek a balance between those who come from a Christian background and those who come from other faith backgrounds or world views. We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds and faith traditions. We do, however, expect that everyone who comes to St Mary's will be fully supportive of the school's Christian foundation and ethos. This is in line with our aim to be a school with a distinctively Christian ethos that serves the community. Governors hope that all children will attend the acts of collective worship and will take part in the religious education curriculum offered by the school. This does not in any way remove the right that parents have to request that their children be withdrawn from these activities.

The Governing Body is responsible for the admission of pupils to St. Mary's Church of England Primary School and admits 60 pupils to Reception each Academic Year. This admission number has been agreed between the Governing Body and the Local Authority.

The school does not have any specific units or facilities for pupils with particular special needs and there are no specific facilities for pupils with physical disabilities. However, as far as possible, the school will ensure that pupils with disabilities have access to the same opportunities as other pupils. It should be noted that any child with a local authority statement of educational special need or with an education, health and care (EHC) plan that names St Mary's CE Primary School as their school will be admitted to the school as a priority.

This policy outlines the school's admissions arrangements and takes account of the Department for Education's codes on admission and appeals published in December 2014.

### **2. How are places allocated?**

The first criterion is: 'Looked after' children and children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because, immediately after being looked after, they

became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order (see Note 1). These children will be considered first, regardless of faith.

Following this the remaining places will be adjusted for Looked After Children.

## **2.1 Criteria for Foundation Places**

The Governing Body has designated 35 places to be offered to pupils whose parent/carer is a faithful and regular worshipper in an Anglican or other Christian Church (see below). 'Faithful and regular worshipper' shall mean that the parent(s) or those with parental responsibility have attended at least twice a month at a service of worship at the relevant church for at least 18 months immediately prior to an application. Written evidence of an applicant's commitment to their place of worship will be required on the School's Supplementary Information Form (with Clergy Reference Form) which should be returned to the School; this evidence should be endorsed by the minister or priest.

### **2.1.1 Order of priority**

Where there are more children than places in any criterion the following order of priority will be used (highest to lowest):

- a) Children whose parent(s) or those with parental responsibility are faithful and regular worshippers at St.Mary-at-Finchley or St.Paul's Finchley.
- b) Children whose parent(s) or those with parental responsibility are faithful and regular worshippers at another Anglican Church.
- c) Children whose parent(s) or those with parental responsibility are faithful and regular worshippers at a church which: is a full or associate member of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, or of the Evangelical Alliance, is a member of the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches, or belongs to Affinity.

### **2.1.2 Oversubscription criteria**

If there are more than 35 applicants for Foundation places (those applicants whose parent/carer is a faithful and regular worshipper in an Anglican or other Christian Church), places will be allocated according to the following oversubscription criteria which are stated in order of priority (highest to lowest):

1. Children of staff members who have been employed at the School for two or more years at the time at which the application to the School is made or staff members who are recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
2. Children with known specific medical or social needs or where one or both parents have specific medical or social needs. Written supporting evidence should be supplied, at the time of application, from a relevant professional, such as a doctor,

social worker or educational psychologist. The supporting evidence should state the reason why this particular school is the most suitable and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to go to another school.

3. Children who will have a sibling in the Primary school at the time of admission (sibling is defined in these arrangements as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural (blood) brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters).

4. The nearness of the child's home (see Note 2) to the school, measured in a straight line from home to the school's main entrance. Priority for admission will be given to children who live nearest to the school as measured by the London Borough of Barnet Admissions Department (measured from the main entrance of the child's home to the main entrance of the school). Should there be two or more children within the same distance from the school and there are insufficient places to admit all applicants, a decision will be made by using random allocation by the drawing of lots which shall be independently verified.

If there are fewer than 35 qualified applicants for Foundation Places, any unfilled places will become additional Open Places. Unsuccessful applicants for Foundation Places will be considered for Open Places in accordance with the criteria below.

## **2.2 Criteria for Open Places**

The Governing Body has designated 25 places each year as Open Places, to be offered to pupils who do not qualify for a Foundation Place, but whose parents have chosen the school for the type of education it provides. Parents applying for an Open Place do so knowing that the school aims to provide an education based on Christian principles and, therefore, the Governing Body hopes that all pupils will take part in the Christian worship of the school and will attend religious education lessons. This does not in any way remove the right that parents have to request that their children be withdrawn from these activities. Applicants for Open places **should not** complete the Supplementary Information Form.

### **2.2.1 Oversubscription criteria**

If there are more than 25 applicants, places will be allocated according to the following oversubscription criteria. These are stated in order of priority (highest to lowest):

1. Children of staff who have been employed at the School for two or more years at the time at which the application to the School is made or of staff members who are recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

2. Children with known special medical or social needs or where one or both parents have specific medical or social needs. Written supporting evidence should be supplied, at the time of application, from a relevant professional, such as a doctor, social worker or educational psychologist. The supporting evidence should state the

reason why this particular school is the most suitable and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to go to another school.

3. Children who will have a sibling in the Primary school at the time of admission (sibling is defined in these arrangements as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural (blood) brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters).

4. The nearness of the child's home (See Note 2) to the school, measured in a straight line from home to the school's main entrance. Priority for admission will be given to children who live nearest to the school as measured by the London Borough of Barnet Admissions Department (measured from the main entrance of the child's home to the main entrance of the school). Should there be two or more children within the same distance from the school and there are insufficient places to admit all applicants, a decision will be made by using random allocation by the drawing of lots which shall be independently verified.

If there are fewer than 25 qualified applicants for Open Places, any unfilled places will become additional Foundation Places.

### **3.a. Admission into Reception**

3.1 Where a place has been offered it is for full-time attendance from the September following the child's fourth birthday. Parents may defer the date their child is admitted until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age (the term after the fifth birthday) and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made.

3.2 Where parents want their child to attend part-time until they reach compulsory school age the school will permit this. However this cannot be beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age, apart from where special arrangements are required in exceptional circumstances, and this will be at the discretion of the school in conjunction with the parents. If you would like your child to attend Reception part-time until they reach compulsory school age you should contact the school to make arrangements.

### **3.b. Admission out of chronological age group**

3.3 For children born between 1 April and 31 August parents may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted to Reception rather than Year 1 at that time. This is referred to as "admission out of the normal age group". Applications should be made when their child would be expected to start school, with the request to defer entry being clearly marked. The school will then consider such requests on a case-by-case basis. Should a deferred place be agreed, parents should apply again the following year providing the evidence of the previous year's deferral decision. However it is essential that parents note that there is no guarantee of a place in the following year; this is subject to the usual over subscription criteria.

3.4 Parents intending to seek later admission to an age group below their child's actual age should submit their request with their application by the closing date for applications for the year when children of the actual same age are due to start school.

3.5 Parents should provide reasons and since decisions will be made based on available information, they may wish to provide professionally supported evidence to explain why their child should be considered to start school a year later than other children of their age. Each request and supporting evidence will be carefully considered and the educational, social and developmental reasons will be taken into account to arrive at a decision. Applying by the age appropriate deadlines will mean that in the event a request is refused, the child will still be considered for a place in their correct age group.

3.6 If the request is approved, parents will be advised to re-apply in the following year and provide a copy of the decision as part of their application. The decision to agree to delay the entry of a child by a year will not guarantee that a place will be available, as this depends on the number of applications for entry in the later year and it is not possible to reserve a place. Parents will be provided with a response to their request before the primary national offer day.

#### **4. Co-ordinated admission arrangements and Late Applications**

4.1 The School is part of the locally agreed co-ordinated admission arrangements and the timescales for applications to be received and processed are those agreed with the local authority. Parents must complete their home local authority's Common Application Form and return the form to their home local authority; for a valid application for a place at this School, parents must name this School as one of the preferences on the Common Application Form. Parents applying for a Foundation place should also complete the school's Supplementary Information Form and return this to the School by the specified closing date. Failure to return the form will mean that the governors will not be able to consider the application under all the criteria set out in the form, in which case the application will be considered under the next most appropriate criteria based on the information on the Common Application Form. More information about the coordinated admission arrangements is available in Barnet's published information or on Barnet's website.

4.2 The Governors will consider late applications in accordance with the procedure in Barnet's co-ordinated scheme as published in Barnet's published information or on its website.

#### **5. Waiting lists**

A waiting list will be maintained until 31 December in respect of each school year of admission, and children on that list will be ranked in accordance with the admission

criteria set out in this Policy. If a child is added to that list at any time, the ranking will be recalculated. Priority will not be given to children based on the date their application was received or their name was added to the list.

## **6. Appeals**

Parents who are not offered a place for their child have the right to appeal to an independent appeal panel. Parents wishing to appeal should obtain an appeal form from the school. The form should be sent to reach the Clerk to the Appeal Panel, care of the school, within 20 days of the date of the letter confirming the Governors' decision not to offer a place. If appeals are unsuccessful, the Governing Body will not consider further applications from those parents within the same academic year unless there have been significant and material changes in their circumstances.

## **7. Notes**

### **7.1 Note 1**

A 'looked after' child is one in the care of the local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services function. An adoption order is one made under the Adoption Act 1976 (section 13) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (section 46). A 'child arrangements' order is one settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live (Children Act 1989, section 8, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014, section 14). A 'special guardianship' order is one appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian/s (Children Act 1989, section 14A). Applications under this criterion should be accompanied by evidence to show that the child is looked after or was previously looked after (eg, a copy of the adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order).

### **7.2 Note 2**

Where a child regularly lives at more than one address, the main address for admissions purposes will be the address of the person with parental responsibility and who receives child benefit and child tax credit.

Approved by the Full Governing Body on: 7th November 2019

Next review date: November 2020

### **Addendum**

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.