



St James' CE Voluntary Aided Primary School Admissions Policy 2020-2021

In St James' CE VA Primary School, we provide a safe and inclusive community that recognises the needs of every child. Driven by an explicit Christian ethos, we provide an exceptional education which enables the children in our care to achieve their full academic, emotional, spiritual and physical potential. Our ethos directs us to the best possible outcomes in teaching and learning, while providing a safe, fully inclusive context that does not negatively discriminate between any child on the basis of gender, belief, or particular educational need. Any prospective parents are encouraged to visit the school, and should contact the school office to make an appointment.

The St James' CE VA Primary School Governing Body is responsible for the annual admission of 30 reception pupils from September 2020, this is the published admission number for the school.

The Governors are obligated to admit any pupil when a Statement of Special Educational Needs, or Education, Health and Care plan names the school as the appropriate context for that child.

When there are more applications than there are places available, the Governors will, in order of priority, select pupils according to the following criteria:

- (a) Children who are in public care (looked after children) or those who were previously looked after but have ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. (see definition (1))
- (b) Children who appear to the admission committee of St James' CE VA Primary school to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
- (c) Children who will have brothers and/or sisters attending the school at the time of admission. (See definition (3))
- (c) children with known special medical needs which only St James' CE VA Primary School can meet. Written supporting evidence should be provided at the time of application, from a relevant medical professional, such as a doctor. (see definition (4))
- (d) Children of staff (see definition (5))

(e) Children whose home address (see definition (5)) lies within the ecclesiastical parish of St James's Church, Biddenham (see clipped map of the parish below or follow link and search for schools in Biddenham for further details: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com>)



(f) any other children.

Tie breaker

If over-subscription arises in any of the categories, then the deciding factor in that category will be proximity of home to school measured by the shortest designated route. The definition of the shortest designated route is the same as that used by the LA.

Twins and multiple births

Where a twin or multiple birth sibling has been offered the last available place then the other twin or sibling(s) will be offered a place as exceptions to the infant class size rule.

Right to Appeal

Parents who have been refused a place for their child have a right to appeal to an independent panel. Parents wishing to appeal should obtain an appeal form from the Local Authority. The form should be sent to reach the Clerk to the Appeal Panel within 20 school days of the date of the letter confirming the governors' decision not to offer a place. Please note that a repeat application within the same academic year will not be considered (by the Governors) unless there has been a significant change in circumstances.

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. The school site is not level and the main school buildings are not all on a single level. Three classrooms are accessed using either steps or a ramp. As far as possible, the school will ensure that pupils with disabilities have access to the same opportunities as other pupils.

The Local Authority (LA) operates an agreed co-ordinated admissions scheme in line with government legislation. The LA will manage the process on behalf of the school according to the scheme published each year. The Governing Body, as the Admission Authority, will allocate the available places in line with this policy. The Governors co-operate with the LA's Fair Access Protocol for children who are hard to place and these children will be admitted even if the school is full.

The closing date for admission application forms to be received by the home LA is as advertised by that authority. Information on completing the 'on line' application and notification dates of admission decisions are published in the Local Authority Admissions booklet, which is also available from their website.

All applications **must** be made on the **home** Local Authority Common Application Form (CAF).

The school provides for the admission of all successful applicants who have reached their fourth birthday by the beginning of September 2020. However, please note the following:

Where a parent of a '**summer-born**' child (**1 April – 31 August**) wishes their child to start school in the autumn term following their fifth birthday, the Governors will consider the request.

If parents do not take up the offered place before the start of the summer term of the school year of entry, then they would have to re-apply for a place in Year 1. However, if parents wish such a child to be educated "out-of year group" i.e. in the Reception Year rather than Y1 they may request this and should discuss it with the school as soon as possible. Such applications will be considered by the governors on a case by case basis. Each case will be judged on its individual merits but to admit out of year group would require exceptional and extenuating circumstances and professional evidence explaining why the child's needs cannot be met in the chronological year group. All such parents should apply for their child's normal age group at the usual time and may submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time. The governors will respond to this request prior to the offer of a place being made. If the request is agreed to, the application can be withdrawn for that year before the place is offered. If the request is refused, parents may decide whether or not to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or refuse it and make an in-year application for admission into Y1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday. Where a parent's request has been agreed, they must make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year. Parents do not have the right of appeal against a decision not to place the child in a year group outside their normal age group.

Waiting Lists

The school and Local Authority will maintain a waiting list for places until the beginning of the school year 2021; if the school is over-subscribed waiting lists will close on 31st August 2021. Applicants not offered a place can be placed on this waiting list, and parents will be asked to inform the school if they wish their child's name to go on it. Parents should be aware that their child's name can go up or down the waiting list according to the priority of new additions to the list.

In-Year and Other Admissions

In the case of older children who apply to join the school, admission will be on the basis of places being available in the relevant class. If more applications for places are received than places available then the above criteria will apply. Requests for admission into other year groups should be made on the In-Year application form and in accordance with the Local Authority's co-ordinated scheme for In-Year admissions. The form is available from the school or Local Authority and can also be downloaded from the Local Authority website (Bedford Borough residents only). Parents not living in Bedford Borough should contact the Local Authority in which they live for an application form.

In-year admissions

Applications can be received at any time for places in any year group outside the normal admissions round. Application forms can be obtained from the LA website or school office and should be sent to the school (LA if the authority is still co-ordinating in-year admissions for the school).

Definitions

(1) Children who are in public care (looked after children) or those who were previously looked after but have ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. A "looked after" child is a child who is (a) in the care of the local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). **Previously "looked after" children:** A previously "looked after" child is one who immediately after being "looked after" became subject to an adoption, arrangement or special guardianship order. An "adoption order" is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. Residence orders have been replaced by Child Arrangement orders under section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014

(2) Children who appear to the admission committee of St James' CE VA Primary school to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. (reference: 'The admission into school of children previously in state care outside of England.' © Crown copyright 2018)

(3) Children who have siblings in the school at the time of admission. A sibling refers to 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, and in every case the child should be living at the same address. The sibling must be in the school at the time of application and be likely to remain in the school at the proposed date of admission.

(4) Children with known special medical needs which only St James' Primary School can meet. 'Very exceptional' medical grounds refers to cases where there are exceptional medical reasons which make it essential that a child should attend a particular school and where the preferred school is the only school locally that could meet the child's needs. A medical report from the child's doctor or consultant must be submitted with the application form, setting out valid medical reasons why it is essential for the child to be admitted to the school in question and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. The Governors reserve the right to seek further information in order to determine whether it is essential for a child to be

admitted to the preferred school on medical grounds. Admission on medical grounds cannot be considered where the medical condition relates to that of a parent, brother or sister or other relative/childminder.

(5) Members of Staff

Members of staff are defined as:

- i) employed permanently and directly by the Governing Body and have been for at least two years at the time the application is made, or
- ii) staff employed for 15 hours or more a week by contractors appointed by the Governing Body and work solely on the school site for at least two years and are so employed at the time of the child's admission, or
- iii) any member of staff recruited to fill a vacancy for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage or where there has been significant difficulty in filling the post through the usual recruitment methods.

(6) Home Address

A pupil's home address will be regarded as the address of the parents or carers with parental responsibility with whom the child normally lives. This will not usually include grandparents, aunts or uncles. Where a child spends time with parents/carers at more than one address, the address used to allocate a school place will be the one at which the pupil is ordinarily resident and where the child spends the majority of the school week (Mondays to Fridays) including nights. If there is any query on the home address this will be checked against original official documentation e.g. a council tax bill, a recent utility bill (gas, electricity or water), a rental agreement, child benefit annual statement or family tax credit information.