



**ST MARY'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL,  
PRESTWICH, BURY.**

**ADMISSION POLICY FOR ADMISSION IN SEPTEMBER 2021  
Academic Year 2021 / 2022**

St Mary's Church of England Primary School is a Voluntary Aided School. The Board of Governors is the Admission Authority for the School. The School is required to act in accordance with the School Admissions Code. The admissions process is co-ordinated by Bury Metropolitan Borough Council (the Local Authority) and the School liaises with the Local Authority on admissions issues. The following arrangements for admissions, which include the criteria used to determine the allocation of places when the school is oversubscribed, have been agreed for consultation with parents, Manchester Diocesan Board of Education, neighbouring admission authorities, other interested parties and Bury Metropolitan Borough Council.

**Admission Arrangements for Admission to Reception in September 2021**

The School's published admission number (PAN) agreed for admission to the Reception Class is 30. If no more than 30 applications are received for admission to the Reception Class, all applicants will be offered places.

The School also provides Nursery education for children of three years of age. (Please see separate Nursery Admissions Policy for full details - below). A separate application must be made for any child wishing to transfer from the Nursery Class to the Reception Class in the Primary School.

The School will admit all children having a statement of special educational needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in whose statement the School is named.

**Oversubscription Criteria**

When the number of applications received is greater than the number of remaining places available (after the admission of any pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an EHCP naming the School), the decision on which children will be admitted will be based on the following oversubscription criteria, which will be applied in the order of priority set out below:

1. Looked after children and previously looked after children. (See Note (a));
2. Children who will have an older brother or sister attending the School at the time of their admission to the Reception class. (See Note (b));
3. Children whose parent/guardian is in regular attendance at public worship at St Mary's Church, Prestwich (See Note (c));
4. Children whose parent/guardian is in regular attendance at public worship at another Parish Church belonging to the Prestwich Mission Partnership (See Notes (c) and (d));

5. Children whose parent/guardian is in regular attendance at public worship at a Church which is a member of Churches Together in England (See Notes (c) and (e));
6. Any other children, with priority given to those living nearest the school (See Note (f)).

**Notes:**

- a) A “looked after child” is a child who is:
  - (i) in the care of a Local Authority; or
  - (ii) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions at the time of making an application to a School.

“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).
- b) ‘Brother’ or ‘sister’ includes full, step, half, foster and adopted brothers or sisters living at the same address and full brother or sister living apart.
- c) “Regular attendance” means:
  - (i) A minimum of 18 attendances at public worship. 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 arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship. In this case a pro rata figure will be applied. This will be based on the premise that 18 Sundays out of 52 is equal to 35%, therefore regular attendance will be 35% of the total number of weeks that church has been open for Acts of Public worship during the calendar year of 2020 (i.e. if church has been closed for 17 weeks and open for 35 weeks then regular attendance would equate to 12 attendances). This figure will be calculated after 31 December when the number of weeks that the church has been open for in the previous calendar year is known. The final figure will always be rounded **down** to the nearest whole number.
  - (ii) Attendance must be in the calendar year prior to admission (i.e. for admission to Reception Class in September 2021 the qualifying attendance period is 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020);
  - (iii) Only 1 attendance per week will count towards the qualifying attendances during the calendar year.
  - (iv) Evidence of regular attendance of the parent/guardian at public worship must be provided by a member of the clergy or other designated church officer on the School’s Supplementary Information Form. Please note that St Mary’s Church operates a system whereby parents/guardians sign an attendance register. This register will be used by the designated church officer to complete the Supplementary Information Form. Applicants seeking admission under criteria 3, 4 or 5 will need to complete and return the Supplementary Information Form available from the School.

**Please see important information update – September 2020 on page 9 of this policy.**

- d) The other Parish Churches belonging to the Prestwich Mission Partnership are St Gabriel's, St Margaret's and St. George's.
- e) A list of Churches in membership of Churches Together in England can be viewed at [www.cte.org.uk](http://www.cte.org.uk)
- f) For the purpose of prioritising applicants under criterion 6, and in any other category where there are more applicants for the remaining available places, the distance from the child's normal home address to the school will be used as the determining factor, nearer addresses having higher priority. The distance will be measured using the Local Authority's straight line distance system. Where a child has shared parenting arrangements involving different addresses, the 'normal' home address of the child will be taken to be the home in which the child sleeps for the majority of the school week. Parents may be asked to show proof of address. For children of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants returning to the area proof of the posting is all that is required.

### **Final Tie-Breaker**

If the distance from home to school does not distinguish between two or more applicants with equal priority for the remaining place, random allocation will be used as the final tie-breaker. This will be supervised by someone independent of the school.

### **Children from Multiple Births**

Where there are children of multiple births wishing to be admitted and the sibling (brother or sister) is offered the final place the governors may admit over the published admission number if it is possible to do so.

### **Infant Class Size**

Under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the School Admissions Code, infant classes (those where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6 or 7 during the school year) **must not** contain more than 30 pupils with a single school teacher. Additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an 'accepted 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 admitted outside the normal admissions round with statements of special educational needs or Education, Health and Care Plan specifying a school
- (b) Looked after children and previously looked after children admitted outside the normal admissions 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 admissions round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance
- (f) Children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round
- (g) Children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil
- (h) Children with special educational needs who are normally taught in a special educational needs unit attached to the school, or registered at a special school, who attend some infant classes within the mainstream school.

### **Applying for Places**

Applications for a Reception class place must be made on the Local Authority's Common Application Form. Details of all the applications made will be forwarded to the school by the Local Authority.

In addition to the Local Authority Form, parents/guardians seeking a place under the faith-related criteria (criteria 3, 4 and 5) above should also complete and return the School's Supplementary Information Form.

### **Late Applications for Admission**

Where the Local Authority accepts that there are extenuating circumstances for an application being received after the last date for applications, and it is before the governors have 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 oversubscription criteria.

### **Fraudulent Applications**

Where the Board of Governors discovers that a child has been awarded a place as a result of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application (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 under the School Admissions Code the Board of Governors is able to withdraw the offer of the place. The application will be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.

### **Waiting List**

Where the School received more applications than places, the oversubscription criteria will be used to determine the allocation of places. 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 is not one of the admissions criteria, it cannot be a criterion for the order of names on the waiting list, and late applicants for the school will be slotted into the 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 31 December at the end of the Autumn Term following admissions in September.

### **Appeals**

Where the governors are unable to offer a place because the school is over subscribed, parents will be informed of the reason why admission was refused and of their right to appeal to an independent admission appeal panel.

A copy of the Appeals Procedure is available in the school office.

### **Deferred Admissions**

Children will be admitted to the Reception Class at the beginning of the Autumn Term before their fifth birthday. Parents may request that their school place be deferred 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 school year for which the original application was accepted. Parents can also request that their child attends on a part time basis until the child reaches compulsory school age.

### **Admission Outside the Child's Normal Age Group**

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

Parents requesting admission out of the normal age group must put their request in writing, addressed to the Headteacher at the School, together with any supporting evidence that the parent wishes to be taken into account. The Board of Governors will make decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group 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; any information provided 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. The governing body will also take into account the views of the Headteacher. When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the Board of Governors will set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

Where the Board of Governors agrees 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 governing body must 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. The Board of Governors must 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.

### **Non-Routine/In-Year Admissions**

It sometimes happens that a child needs to change school other than at the "normal" time; such admissions are known as non-routine admissions. Parents wishing their child to attend this school may arrange to visit the school. They will be asked to complete an application form and will be offered a place by the governors if one is available. The Local Authority will be informed of the offer of a place once it has been accepted. If there is no place available in our School then the applicant will be informed in writing, together with the Local Authority, and information about how to appeal against the refusal will be provided.

Please note that you cannot re-appeal for a place at a school within the same school year unless there has been relevant, significant and material change in the family circumstances.

### **For information Only:**

The School is popular. For admissions in September 2020:

- There were 94 applications for the 30 places available in Reception (this included 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> preferences);
- There were 6 applicants who applied under Criterion (1) and 3 received places at St Mary's;
- All 13 applicants who applied under Criterion (2) received places;
- There were 15 applicants who applied under Criterion (3) and 14 received places;
- Applications under all other criteria were not offered places at the time of allocation due to the admission number of thirty being reached.

### **Nursery Admissions Policy**

The Nursery Class provides nursery education for children of three years of age. Children will be admitted to the Nursery Class at the beginning of the Autumn Term before their fourth birthday.

Up to 26 places are available in each morning session (9.00am to 12 noon) and up to 26 places are available in each afternoon session (12.30pm to 3.30pm). We accept applications for full time places (9am until 3.30pm). We prioritise applications for part time places, so allow as many families as possible to access our outstanding pre-school care.

Three year-old children have an entitlement to 15 hours of nursery education per week starting from the beginning of the term after their third birthday. Some parents may qualify for an additional 15 hours for childcare (that includes

nursery education) Parents are advised to refer to the Bury MBC website for further details. Parents can pay a top up for additional sessions.

Parents must indicate, on the Application Form, which sessions are sought. Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the oversubscription criteria will be used in order to determine which children are allocated a place.

Applications are made to the School, direct, using the St. Mary's Application Form for Nursery Admissions. Applications must be submitted by midday on 31<sup>st</sup> January of the year of proposed admission.

In the event of the Nursery Class being oversubscribed, priority will be given to:

1. Looked after children and previously looked after children. (See Note (a))
2. Children who will have an older brother or sister attending the school at the time of their admission to the Nursery Class. (See Note (b))
3. Children whose parent/guardian is in regular attendance at public worship at St Mary's Church, Prestwich (See Note (c))
4. Children whose parent/guardian is in regular attendance at public worship at another Parish Church belonging to the Prestwich Mission Partnership (See Notes (c) and (d))
5. Children whose parent/guardian is in regular attendance at public worship at a Church which is a member of Churches Together in England (See Notes (c) and (e))
6. Any other children, with priority given to those living nearest the school (See Note (f))

**Notes:**

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  - (i) In the care of a local authority: or
  - (ii) Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions at the time of making an application to a school."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).
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  - (v) A minimum of 18 attendances at public worship. 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 arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship. In this case a pro rata figure will be applied. This will be based on the premise that 18 Sundays out of 52 is equal to 35%, therefore regular attendance will be 35% of the total number of weeks that church has been open for Acts of Public worship during the calendar year of 2020 (i.e. if church has

been closed for 17 weeks and open for 35 weeks then regular attendance would equate to 12 attendances). This figure will be calculated after 31 December when the number of weeks that the church has been open for in the previous calendar year is known. The final figure will always be rounded **down** to the nearest whole number.

- (ii) Attendance must be in the calendar year prior to admission (i.e. for admission to Nursery Class in September 2021 the qualifying attendance period is 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020);
- (iii) Only 1 attendance per week will count towards the qualifying attendances during the calendar year.
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- (d) The other Parish Churches belonging to the Prestwich Mission Partnership are St Gabriel's, St Margaret's and St. George's.
- (e) A list of Churches in membership of Churches Together in England can be viewed at [www.cte.org.uk](http://www.cte.org.uk)
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### **Final Tie-Breaker**

If the distance from home to school does not distinguish between two or more applicants with equal priority for the remaining place, random allocation will be used as the final tie-breaker. This will be supervised by someone independent of the School.

### **Please Note:**

A Nursery Class place does not guarantee admission to the Reception Class in the Primary School. A separate application must be made for children



seeking admission to the Reception Class. The admission arrangements for admission to Reception Class are set out above.

*Ratified January 2017 following full consultation in December 2016/January 2017  
7-year review 2023/24*

*Office of the Schools Adjudicator – Decision 21<sup>st</sup> August 2020 for variation to this policy.*

### **IMPORTANT UPDATE – SEPTEMBER 2020**

Diocesan and national advice is that children applying to a Church of England School to enter in September 2021 should not have their attendance at church services recorded post 17 March 2020 until restrictions imposed by Covid-19 have passed **and** there is unrestricted and open access to all for public worship, that is, until it is **without any restriction on numbers attending**.

**The total number of attendances required for category 3 applications to St Mary’s for September 2021 will be based upon 35% of the total number of weeks that St Mary’s Church was fully open for public worship within the calendar year of 2020 (rounded down to the nearest whole number), as per the amended admissions policy published on the school website (September 2020).**

## **IS IT APPROPRIATE TO RECORD ATTENDANCE AT CHURCH WORSHIP FOR CHILDREN APPLYING TO A CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER 2021?**

**(New FAQ – 8 September 2020)**

No. Nigel Genders, Chief Education Officer of the Church of England, in consultation with the DfE and Office of Schools’ Adjudicator (OSA) along with all Diocesan Directors of Education have issued advice that attendance at church worship should not be recorded until after Covid 19 restrictions have fully ceased. This is because we are not yet in a position where all churches can open fully for worship. Restricted seating measures are often in place in order to make churches Covid secure, hence technically churches are not fully open for worship.

Diocesan and national advice remains that children applying to a Church of England School to enter in September 2021 should not have their attendance at church services recorded post 17 March 2020 until restrictions imposed by Covid-19 have passed and there is unrestricted and open access to all for public worship, that is, until it is without any restrictions on numbers attending.