

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



**ADMISSION POLICY FOR ADMISSION IN SEPTEMBER 2025
Academic Year 2025 / 2026**

Introduction

St Mary's Church of England Primary School ("the 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.

Applying for Places

Applications for a Reception class place must be made on the Local Authority's Common Application Form by the national closing date of 15th January.

Details of all the applications made will be forwarded to the School by the Local Authority.

The Local Authority will inform parents of the offer of a place on behalf of the Board of Governors on the national offer date of 16th April or the next working day.

In addition to the Local Authority Form, parents/guardians seeking a place under the faith-related criteria (criteria 4, 5 and 6) below should also complete and return the School's Supplementary Information Form (Appendix 1).

Admission Arrangements for Admission to Reception in September 2025

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. Children in public care and previously looked after children.

This includes any "looked after child", "previously looked after child" and any child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order.

'Looked after child' means a child(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.

"Previously looked after child" is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order immediately following having been looked after.

This criteria also includes looked after children and all previously looked after 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.

2. Children who have an Education and Health Care Plan, where the school is the named school.

3. Children who will have an older brother or sister attending the School at the time of their admission to the Reception class.

'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.

4. Children who reside within the ecclesiastical boundaries of the Prestwich and Kersal Mission Community and who have attended Public Worship at a Church of England Church on a minimum of 18 occasions in the calendar year prior to admission.

A map of the ecclesiastical boundaries of the Prestwich and Kersal Mission Community can be found at Appendix 2.

“Public Worship” meaning worship conducted according to the rules and regulations of the relevant ecclesiastical authority performed in a public place and open to all members of the public equally without privacy.

Only 1 attendance per week will count towards the qualifying attendance during the calendar year.

Evidence of the child’s attendance must be provided on the School’s Supplementary Information Form at Appendix 1. It must be completed and signed by a member of the clergy or other designated church officer and signed by the child(ren’s) parent/guardian.

Where a child has shared parenting arrangements involving different addresses, the home in which the child resides 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.

5. Children who reside within the ecclesiastical boundaries of the Prestwich and Kersal Mission Community and who have attended Public Worship at any other Christian Church on a minimum of 18 occasions in the calendar year prior to admission.

A map of the ecclesiastical boundaries of the Prestwich and Kersal Mission Community can be found at Appendix 2.

“Public Worship” meaning worship conducted according to the rules and regulations of the relevant ecclesiastical authority performed in a public place and open to all members of the public equally without privacy.

‘Other Christian church’ means a church which is Designated under the Ecumenical Relations Measure 2018, nationally by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, or locally by the diocesan bishop, or which is a member of Churches Together in England, or affiliated to the Evangelical Alliance or a Partner Church of Affinity. The list of nationally Designated churches can be found at:

https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-04/list_of_designated_churches_3_o ct_18.pdf.

Only 1 attendance per week will count towards the qualifying attendance during the calendar year.

Evidence of the child’s attendance must be provided on the School’s Supplementary Information Form at Appendix 1. It must be completed and signed by a member of the clergy or other designated church officer and signed by the child(ren’s) parent/guardian.

Where a child has shared parenting arrangements involving different addresses, the home in which the child resides 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.

6. Any other children who have attended Public Worship at any Church of England Church on a minimum of 18 occasions in the calendar year prior to admission

“Public Worship” meaning worship conducted according to the rules and regulations of the relevant ecclesiastical authority performed in a public place and open to all members of the public equally without privacy.

Only 1 attendance per week will count towards the qualifying attendance during the calendar year.

Evidence of the child’s attendance must be provided on the School’s Supplementary Information Form at Appendix 1. It must be completed and signed by a member of the clergy or other designated church officer and signed by the child(ren’s) parent/guardian.

7. Any other children, with priority given to those living nearest the school.

For the purpose of prioritising applicants under criterion 7, 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 '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 admitted outside the normal admissions round with statements of special educational needs or Education, Health and Care Plan specifying a school
- (b) Children in public care 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.

Late Applications for Admission

Where the Local Authority accepts that there are exceptional 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. A child's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the over subscription criteria and not by the date of the application. It is therefore 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 oversubscribed, 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.

Nursery

If a child has attended the Nursery class at the School it does not automatically mean that they have a school place. ALL pupils must apply though the Local Authority website for a place in school in accordance with the process set out above.

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.