



St Nicholas C of E (VA) Primary School and Nursery

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Proposed Admissions Arrangements for 2028/29

For In Year Admissions see page 9

Thank you for considering St Nicholas, Church of England, Primary school and Nursery for your child. This policy outlines the oversubscription criteria and information that you will need when making an application for a place at our school.

Please note the closing date for Primary admission application forms to be received by the home Local Authority is 15 January 2028. Information on completing the 'online' application and notification dates of admission decisions are published in each LA's admissions literature which is also available from their website.

To apply for a place under criteria 4, 5 or 6 at this school parents are also requested to complete the **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)**. *If no SIF is received then the governors will apply these admission arrangements using the information submitted on the LA's application form only, which may result in your application being given a lower priority*

Admission application forms must be received by the home LA by 15 January 2028 and the school's supplementary information form must be received by the school by the same date.

Rationale

St Nicholas is a Voluntary Aided Church of England School within the Diocese of St Albans. We are a school teaching Christian Values and educating the 'whole child' through our spiritual, moral, social and cultural teaching. We work closely with the Diocese, local Deanery and the Anglican Churches of Stevenage. We welcome applications from families of all faiths, and none.

Voluntary Aided schools are mainly religious or 'faith' schools, although anyone can apply for a place. The Governing Body employs the staff and sets the oversubscription criteria. School buildings and land are normally owned by a charitable foundation, often a religious organisation. The Governing Body contributes to building and maintenance costs.

Admissions information

Our published admission number (PAN) (which is the number of children we will admit to our Reception Class) is 30.

If we have fewer than 30 applications, then all will be offered places.

There is some further information for parents of Reception applicants, including summer born children, on page 8.

Parents of children currently in our Nursery **must** re-apply for a place in the Reception class.

Attendance at our Nursery **does not** guarantee a place in Reception.

The school does not have any specific units or facilities for pupils with particular special needs or for pupils with physical disabilities. The school is, however, on a level site, and all the accommodation is on one floor. As far as possible, the school will ensure that pupils with disabilities have access to the same opportunities as other pupils.

How places are offered

The Governing Body, as the Admission Authority, will rank the applications in line with this policy.

The Local Authority (LA) – Hertfordshire County Council – operates an agreed co-ordinated admissions scheme in line with government legislation.

Parents must apply to their home local authority. Hertfordshire residents can apply online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions or parents can contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request a paper application form.

The LA co-ordinates the admissions process and informs parents of their allocation on behalf of the Governors of the School.

PRIORITY ORDER

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

Children who have an EHC (Education, Health and Care) Plan which names this school will be admitted to the school before any oversubscription criteria are applied.

Category 1

Children Looked After and children who were previously looked after, including those who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside England, and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Previously looked after children are those who were looked after but ceased to be so because of being adopted or becoming subject to a Child Arrangements Order, or a Special Guardianship Order.

Places are allocated to children in public care according to Chapter 2, Section 7 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

A “child looked after” 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 (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989)*

All children adopted from care who are of compulsory school age are eligible for admission under criterion 1.

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under criterion 1.

*Children who were not “looked after” **immediately** before being adopted, or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order, **will not** be prioritised under rule 1. Applications made for these children, with suitable supporting professional evidence, can be considered under criterion 3.*

¹ Child arrangements order

Under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders which settle the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

² Special guardianship order

Under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian or guardians.

Children previously looked after abroad and subsequently adopted will be prioritised under criterion 1 if the child’s previously looked after status and adoption is confirmed by Hertfordshire’s “Virtual School”.

The child’s previously looked status will be decided in accordance with the definition outlined in The Children & Social Work Act 2017:

- i. to have been in state care in a place because he or she would not otherwise have been cared for adequately, and
- ii. to have ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted.

A child is in “state care” if he or she is in the care of, or accommodated by –

- (a) a public authority,
- (b) a religious organisation, or
- (c) any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

Category 2

Siblings of children already enrolled at the school who are expected to still be on roll when the sibling takes up their place. Please note this does not include children currently enrolled in the nursery.

Sibling refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister or the child of the parent/carer’s partner or a child looked after or previously looked after and in every case, the child should be living permanently in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of application. The sibling must be in the school at the time of this application and be likely to remain in the school at the proposed date of admission. A sibling must be on the roll of the school at the time the applicant child starts.

If a place is obtained for an older child using fraudulent information, there will be no sibling connection available to subsequent children from that family.

A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement. If an applicant lives at more than one address, the sibling must also reside at the same address for the majority of the school week. The sibling’s address will be verified by the school.

Category 3

On very exceptional social or medical grounds.

On very exceptional social or medical grounds refers to known social or medical needs where there are **exceptional** reasons which make it essential that a child should attend St Nicholas and where it is the only school locally that could meet the child's needs. Parents will need to submit specific professional evidence (e.g. from a consultant doctor or senior social worker) that justifies why only St Nicholas can meet the child's needs or which explains the exceptional family circumstance which clearly show that only St Nicholas can meet the child's needs. The Governors will consider each application on its own individual merits.

Category 4

Children, one or more of whose parents/carers have, at the time of application, shown commitment to the Church of England by attending an act of public worship at an Anglican church at least twice a month for the two years immediately prior to an application being made. Applicants in this category are required to provide evidence in the relevant section of the SIF duly completed by their Parish Priest.

This can be verified by the Priest, Minister, Pastor or appropriate religious leader using the Supplementary Information Form.

Category 5

Children, one or more of whose parents/carers have, at the time of application, shown commitment to another Christian denomination by attending an act of public worship at least twice a month for the two years immediately prior to an application being made. Applicants in this category are required to provide the relevant section of the SIF duly completed by their Priest, Minister or Pastor.

'Other Christian Denominations' (category 5) is understood broadly as an established Christian church, tradition or group of churches that shares the core beliefs of Christianity, including belief in the Trinity.

Category 6

Children from families of other established World Faiths with at least one parent/carer who has, at the time of application, shown commitment to their place of worship by attending at least twice a month for the two years immediately prior to an application being made. Applicants in this category are required to provide the relevant section of the SIF duly completed by their religious leader.

Established World Faiths (category 6) means the following: Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Islam.

Category 7

Any other children.

FURTHER INFORMATION FOR CATEGORIES 4, 5 AND 6

Applicants who are seeking admission under category 4, 5 or 6 will be required to complete and submit a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) as evidence of their eligibility.

In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church or, in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship 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, in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION

Where there is oversubscription in any of the above criteria, the available places will be allocated to those children whose permanent home address is nearest to the school. Distances will be measured using Hertfordshire County Council's measuring system which is a 'straight line' distance measurement from the address point of the child's home to the address point of the school. A 'straight line' distance measurement is used in all home to school distance measurements for community and VC schools in Hertfordshire. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

In the case of twins and multiple birth children, if one twin/multiple birth child is offered the final place available, the other/s can also be offered places over the planned admission number (PAN) as exceptions to the infant class size legislation.

The Governors cooperate with the Fair Access policies of the Local Authority and children admitted under the protocol will be prioritised above those on the Continuing Interest list (waiting list) and above the PAN if necessary. Parents of children entitled to be considered for a place under the Fair Access protocol may also make an in year application to the school.

HOME ADDRESS

The address provided on the application form must be the child's current permanent address at the time of application

- "At the time of application" means the closing date for applications
- "Permanent" means that the child has lived at that address for at least a year

Where a family has not lived at an address for a year at the time of application, they must be able to demonstrate that they own the property or have a tenancy agreement and the child must be resident in the property at the time of application.

Where the tenancy agreement does not include a fixed term, or where additional evidence is required to confirm that the address is the child's normal place of residence, we (or the local authority on our behalf) may request further proof of address and verify this through the Shared Anti-Fraud Service where necessary

It is for the Governing Body (as the admission authority) to determine the address to be used for admission purposes.

The application can only be processed using one address. If a child lives at more than one address (for example due to a separation) the address used will be the one where the child lives for the majority of the school week.

If a child lives at two address equally, parents/carers should make a single joint application naming one address.

If the child's living arrangements change after you apply and they now spend the majority of the school week living at a different address, you must provide evidence of the new permanent address.

Applications made as part of the main Reception admissions round and in-year admission applications are processed by Hertfordshire County Council ("HCC") on behalf of the Governing Body, in accordance with HCC's published coordinated admission schemes.

If a child's permanent residence is disputed, parents/carers should provide court documentation to evidence the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes. If two applications are received, with different addresses, neither will be processed until the address issue is reconciled.

If HCC receives two different applications for the same child from the same address e.g. containing different preferences, parents/carers will be invited to submit a joint application or provide court documentation to evidence the preferences that should be used for the admission process. Until the preference issue is reconciled, neither application will be processed.

For the main Reception admission round, if the initial differing applications (one or both) were received by HCC "on-time", an amended joint application will also be considered "on-time" if received before 1st February 2028 (the late deadline). If the amended joint application is received after 1st February, it will be treated as "late".

TIE BREAK

When there is a need for a tie break where two different addresses are the same distance from a school, in the case of a block of flats for example, the lower door number will be deemed nearest as logically this will be on the ground floor and therefore closer. If there are two identical addresses of separate applicants, the tie break will be random. Every child entered onto the HCC admissions database has an individual random number assigned, between 1 and 1 million, against each preference school. When there is a need for a final tie break the random number is used to allocate the place, with the lowest number given priority.

UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

Appeals.

Parents who are not offered a place for their child have the right to appeal to an independent appeal panel. At transfer time parents wishing to appeal who applied on-line should log into their on-line application and click on the link 'register an appeal'. For those who did not apply on-line, please contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request an appeal pack. 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. Should some appeals be 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.

Continuing interest list (waiting list).

After places have been offered, Hertfordshire County Council will maintain the continuing interest (waiting) list on behalf of the governors.

A child's position on a CI list will be determined by the oversubscription criteria outlined above and the list will be re-ranked each time a new name is added to the list, so a child's place on the list can change as other children join or leave it. The county council will contact parents/carers if a vacancy becomes available and it can be offered to a child. Continuing interest lists will be maintained for every year group until the summer term (date to be specified and confirmed to parents at the time of application). To remain on the CI list after this time, parents must confirm they are still interested by completing an In Year application form.

NB. Please note that the information in this policy is correct for the year shown. Policies for future years may well be different.

FURTHER INFORMATION FOR RECEPTION APPLICANTS AND PARENTS OF SUMMER BORN CHILDREN.

Parents offered a Reception place for their child may defer the date of their child's admission until later in the year, or (at the latest) until the child reaches compulsory school age. **Summer born children may only have admission deferred until the start of the summer term.**

If parents so wish, a child may attend on a part-time basis until the child reaches compulsory school age. The exact pattern of part-time attendance has to be agreed with the school.

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, then they would normally have to make an in-year application for a place for their child in Year 1.

However, if parents wish such a child to be admitted "out of year group" i.e. in the Reception Year starting in September 2029 rather than Y1 they may request this by letter addressed to the chair of governors c/o the school office and are advised to discuss their child's needs with the school as soon as possible. Such requests will be considered by the governors on a case by case basis and decisions made in the best interests of the child. Each case will be judged on its individual merits but to admit out of year group would require evidence explaining why the child's needs cannot be met in the chronological year group. Please see page 9 for the factors which the governors must take into account in deciding out of year group admission requests.

All such parents are advised to make an on-time application for a Reception place in their child's normal age group and to 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 for a Reception place 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 for a Reception place as part of the main admissions round the following year.

Reasons will be given for the governors' decision. 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.

In Year Admissions

Hertfordshire County Council co-ordinates the In Year Admissions process for our school. Information about how to apply and the online application form can be found at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/inyear. Parents may also contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request a paper application form.

Parents wishing to make an in year application **MUST** complete the online in year application form but are welcome to also contact the school to arrange a visit.

Admission will be on the basis of places being available in the relevant class. The above criteria will be applied in order to rank applications if there are other children on the waiting list or other applications for places in that class.

Parents who wish their application for an In Year place to be ranked under criteria 4, 5 or 6 are requested to also complete the **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)**. *If no SIF is received then the governors will apply these admission arrangements using the information submitted on the LA's application form only, which may result in your application being given a lower priority.*

If the In year Application is unsuccessful the county council will write to you with registration details to enable you to log in and appeal online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals

Children Out of Year Group

Children are normally educated within their correct chronological year group, with the curriculum differentiated as necessary to meet the needs of individual children.

If parents/carers believe their child(ren) should be admitted to a different year group they must, at the time of application, make a separate request in writing to the governors c/o the school office for their child to be admitted out of year group. Parents should enclose with their request any supporting evidence which they wish the governors to take into account in making their decision. The governors must consider the views of the child's parents; the view of the headteacher; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, the child's medical history and the view of a medical professional; whether the child has previously been educated out of year group; and whether the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if not for being born prematurely. The governors will consider each request individually and make their decision in the best interests of the child. Reasons will be given for the governors' decision. There is no right of appeal if the request for out of year group education is refused.

Nursery Admissions for 2028/29

There is a separate policy and application form for nursery admissions which is available on our website or can be requested from the school.

Help and advice

If you would like more guidance, help or advice relating to admission, please contact the school and speak to the Admissions Manager on 01438 352706, ring the LA Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043, or visit your LA's website.