



Determined Admissions Arrangements for 2025/26

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 admissions 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 2025. Information on completing the 'on line' application and notification dates of admission decisions are published in the LA admissions literature which is also available from their website.

To apply for a place under categories 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 LA by 15 January 2025 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.

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 admissions 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 maximum number of children we will admit in 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 summer born children and those currently in reception 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.

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 rule 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 Rule 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 category 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 Rule 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. Please note this does not include current Y6 children who will be leaving the school or 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 named school at the time the younger 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 of practising Anglicans, one or more of whose parents/carers have, at the time of application, shown commitment to the Church of England by worshipping 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. Applicants in this category should note there is an expectation that the family will continue to attend church after admission to the school.

Attendance at the place of worship – it is recognised that some families are unable to attend the 'main act of worship' on a regular basis but show commitment through attendance at weekday events instead. This can be verified by the Priest, Minister, Pastor or appropriate religious leader using the Supplementary Information Form. This attendance should still meet the minimum requirement of twice monthly for two years prior to application

Category 5

Children from practising families of other Christian denominations, one or more of whose parents/carers have, at the time of application, shown commitment to that 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 Priest, Minister or Pastor. Applicants in this category should note there is an expectation that the family will continue to attend church after admission to the school.

'Other Christian Denominations' (category 5) are established members of Churches together in England or the Evangelical Alliance or who profess Trinitarian Faith.

Category 6

Children from families of other established World Faiths whose parents/carers have, at the time of application, shown commitment to that 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. Applicants in this category should note there is an expectation that the family will continue to attend their place of worship after admission to the school.

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

Category 7

Any other children.

FURTHER INFORMATION FOR CATEGORIES 4, 5 AND 6

Attendance at the place of worship – it is recognised that some families are unable to attend the ‘main act of worship’ on a regular basis but show commitment through attendance at weekday events instead. This can be verified by the Priest, Minister, Pastor or appropriate religious leader using the Supplementary Information Form. This attendance should still meet the minimum requirement of twice monthly for two years prior to application.

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 places will be allocated on the basis of distance from the child’s permanent home address to the school 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.

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 for a minimum of 12 months and the child must be resident in the property at the time of application. If, because of the nature of the agreement, it is not possible to provide a 12-month tenancy agreement, alternative proof of address will be requested.

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.

Addresses will be verified as necessary with Hertfordshire County Council's Shared Anti-Fraud Service.

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 3rd February 2025 (the late deadline). If the amended joint application is received after 3rd 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 admission criteria outlined above and 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 parents of Nursery children.

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.

FURTHER INFORMATION FOR PARENTS OF SUMMER BORN CHILDREN.

Parents offered a place may defer the date of their child's admission until later in the year, or 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 educated "out of year group" i.e. in the Reception Year starting in September 2026 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 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.

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.

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 wishing to make an in year application **MUST** complete the In year application form but should 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 apply if there are other children on the waiting list or other applications for places in that class.

To apply for an In Year place under categories 4, 5 or 6 at this school parents may also be 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.*

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 – In year admissions

The school follows Hertfordshire County Council's policy on children out of year group.

The policy is for children to be 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 educated in a different year group they must, at the time of application, make a separate application in writing to the governors for their child to be educated out of year group and submit supporting evidence from relevant professionals working with the child and family stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age appropriate cohort. The Governors will consider each application individually and make their decision in the best interests of the child. There is no right of appeal if the request for out of year group education is refused.

Nursery Admissions for 2025/26

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 Office Manager Sue Brinded on 01438 352706, ring the LA Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043, or visit the LA website.