

Admissions Policy

St John's Highbury Vale CE Primary School Vision
for Education:

*“I can do all things through
Christ who strengthens me.”*

Philippians 4:13

This can be live out through our school moto,
‘every child, every opportunity, every day.’

At the heart of our school vision is a desire for an authentic and life-giving relationship with one another and with God. We believe that it is through Christ who gives us the strength, all can achieve within a learning environment where every child is valued as a unique individual created in the image of God, and where teaching and learning is of a consistently high standard.

GOVERNORS' ADMISSIONS POLICY - SEPTEMBER 2020 – AUGUST 2021

[In accordance with the 1996 Education Act, the policy has to be reviewed annually]

St John's is a Church of England Voluntary Aided primary school. The ethos and practice of the school stress Christian values and the nurturing of links between home, school, churches and the local community. We ask all parents applying for a place for their child at St. John's to respect this ethos. This does not affect the right of parents who are not of the Christian faith to apply for and be considered for a place at the school for their child.

If there are more applicants than places available, The Governors will admit children according to the following over-subscription criteria and in the order of priority below:

1. 'Looked-after' children, and children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because, immediately after being looked after, they became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order

Recent written supporting evidence must be supplied, at the time of the application, from the relevant local authority.

2. Children with documented special medical or social needs who:

- either (a) live in one of the parishes of Christ Church, Highbury, St Augustine's Church, Highbury or St Thomas's Church, Finsbury Park
- or (b) for whom St John's is the nearest Church of England primary school.

Recent written supporting evidence must be supplied, at the time of the application, from a relevant professional, such as a doctor, social worker or educational psychologist. The supporting evidence should state the reason why St. John's is the most suitable school and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to go to another school. The Governing Body will not allocate a place to an applicant under this criterion without such supporting evidence.

3. Children who will have one or more siblings attending St John's at the time of their entry to the school and who have one parent verified by their minister to be a regular and committed* member of Christ Church, Highbury, St Augustine's Church, Highbury or St Thomas's Church, Finsbury Park.
4. Children who will have one or more siblings attending St John's at the time of their entry to the school and who have one parent verified by their minister to be a regular and committed* member of other Christian churches.
5. Children who will have one or more siblings attending St John's at the time of their entry to the school.
6. Children who have one or more parents who are members of staff at St. John's. To be eligible under this criterion, the parent must be directly employed by the school and:
 - either (a) have been employed on a permanent contract at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made
 - or (b) have been recruited to fill a vacant permanent post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

7. Children who have a parent verified by their minister to be a regular and committed* member of Christ Church, Highbury, St Augustine's Church, Highbury or St Thomas's Church, Finsbury Park, and who:
- either (a) live in one of the parishes of Christ Church, Highbury, St Augustine's Church, Highbury or St Thomas's Church, Finsbury Park
 - or (b) for whom St John's is the nearest Church of England primary school.
8. Children who have a parent verified by their minister to be a regular and committed* member of other Christian churches, and who:
- either (a) live in one of the parishes of Christ Church, Highbury, St Augustine's Church, Highbury or St Thomas's Church, Finsbury Park
 - or (b) for whom St John's is the nearest Church of England primary school.
- 9 Other applicants, according to the proximity of their home address to the school.

**See note 1c on page 3 for a definition of "regular and committed".*

ST JOHN'S Highbury Vale C of E Primary School

NOTES ON ADMISSIONS POLICY, CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES

Children with a statement of Special Educational Need or with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan where the school is named on the statement or plan, have automatic admission to the school and are not subject to the usual admissions protocols.

1. Notes on terms used in the criteria:

- (a) A '**looked-after child**' is defined as one in the care of a local authority, or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services function. An 'adoption order' is one made under the Adoption Act 1976 (Section 12) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Section 46). A 'child arrangements order' is one settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live (Children Act 1989, Section 8, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014, Section 14). A 'special guardianship order' is one appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian/s (Children Act 1989, Section 14A). Applications under this criterion should be accompanied by evidence to show that the child is looked after or was previously looked after (e.g. a copy of the adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order).
- (b) '**siblings**' (criteria 3, 4 & 5) are defined as all blood, half, step or adopted brothers and sisters who live at the same home address as the applicant.
- (c) '**at the time of their entry to the school**' (criteria 3, 4 & 5) refers to when the child takes up the place at the school.
- (d) '**regular and committed members**' (criteria 3, 4, 7 & 8) will be verified by the appropriate minister. A parent wishing church membership to be taken into account should complete the school's Supplementary Information Form and return this directly to the school. They should also ask the school to provide them with a clergy reference form which they should take to their vicar or minister and ask him/her to complete it and return it to the school. By "regular and committed" members, we mean having been a member of the church for at least two years immediately prior to **the date at which the application is considered by the Governors' Admissions Committee, which is during the February of the year of admission**, with attendance at least fortnightly, by at least one parent. Parents who have moved into the School's catchment area (defined, where relevant, as being within one of the parishes of Christ Church, Highbury, St Augustine's Church, Highbury or St Thomas's Church, Finsbury Park) recently, and have been attending their current church for less than two years, should also provide a reference from their previous church, if they wish that to be taken into account.
- (e) '**Christian churches**' (criteria 4 & 8) means churches which are full members of Churches Together in Britain & Ireland or of the Evangelical Alliance UK.
- (f) '**live in one of the parishes of Christ Church, Highbury, St Augustine's Church, Highbury or St Thomas's Church, Finsbury Park**' (criteria 2, 7 & 8). A map showing parish boundaries is available from the School Office.
- (g) '**nearest Church of England primary school**' (criteria 2, 7 & 8). Nearness to the school will be determined by a computerised mapping system using a straight line distance measurement. Routes will be calculated from the home address (as defined by the Land & Property Gazetteer) to the midpoint of the school grounds (as determined by Islington Local Authority).

- (h) **'proximity to the school'** (criterion 9). Nearness to the school will be determined by a computerised mapping system using a straight line distance measurement. Routes will be calculated from the home address (as defined by the Land & Property Gazetteer) to the midpoint of the school grounds (as determined by Islington Local Authority).
- (i) **'home address'** (criterion 9) will be defined as the address at which the child is normally resident. If the child is resident at more than one address, e.g. spends time with each of two parents living at different addresses, then it will be defined as the address at which the child spends the greater proportion of his/ her time. If the child lives equally with both parents, then it is the parents' responsibility to make this clear at the time of the application and to provide supporting evidence in respect of both addresses, e.g. a Residency Order from a court. Please note that only one address can be used for school admission purposes and the final decision will rest with the Governing Body.

General notes:

2. The responsibility for decisions on admission of individual children rests with the Governing Body. All applications will be considered equally against the criteria. Application forms may be completed at any time up until the closing date, but early completion does not ensure any priority, nor does completion of a form promise entry.

Please note that parents must complete a Common Application Form from their home local authority naming St John's as one of their school choices, in order to be considered for a place in Reception class. For Islington residents, an Islington Primary Common Application Form must be completed. The school's own Supplementary Information Form and the clergy reference form should also be completed if you are applying under the church criteria so that governors can consider your application fully.

The expected timetable for consideration of applications for the September 2020 Reception class intake is set out in Section 8 of these notes. Applications received after the closing date will be dealt with separately after other applicants have been considered for a place and will be ranked below applicants whose applications were received by the published deadline date.

There is an independent appeals procedure for unsuccessful applicants. Details of the appeals procedure are set out in the school's website. Appeals forms can be downloaded from the website or obtained from the School Office.

3. St John's is a very popular school and has been considerably over-subscribed in recent years. **We admit 30 children a year to our Reception class. We are not able to exceed this published admission number, as the Governing Body is required by law not to exceed 30 pupils in an Infant class.** However, the school is permitted to exceed the published admission number if the 31st child is either a twin or multiple birth sibling of a child ranked within the top 30, or is the child of a crown servant returning to the UK outside the time frame of the normal admissions round (*see note 10*).
4. Children are admitted to the Reception class in the September following their 4th birthday. Where a child is below compulsory school age, parents have the right to request that their child's entry be delayed until later in the school year. Entry cannot be delayed beyond the beginning of the term after the child's 5th birthday, nor beyond the end of the academic year for which the original application was accepted. They may also request that their child attend school on a part-time basis until they reach compulsory school age. They should discuss this with the head teacher at the earliest opportunity.

For children whose fourth birthday falls between 1 April 2020 and 31 August 2020, parents who do not wish them to start school in school year 2020-21, but to be admitted in September 2021 for school year 2021-22, should discuss this with the school at an early stage. Decisions will be made on the circumstances of each case and the best interests of the child. Parental views, academic achievement, social and emotional development and where relevant medical views should be taken into consideration. The views of the school's head must also be taken into account. The reasons for the decision must be clearly set out.

Parents may decide not to apply for a Reception place in the school but to apply for a Year 1 place in September 2021. Parents should be aware that the Year 1 group may have no vacancies as it could be full with children transferring from the 2020-21 Reception Year group. Alternatively, they may decide to apply in the normal round (no later than 15 January 2021) for a Reception Year place in September 2021, but would need to provide strong supporting reasons for seeking a place outside the normal year group and apply via the protocol outlined above.

5. In line with Government requirements, St. John's wishes to promote sustainable, healthy travel to school, e.g. walking or cycling, and our Admissions Policy should ensure that the majority of pupils live within walking distance of the school. No school transport is provided for the purpose of travelling between home and school.
6. St. John's 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. However, the school will ensure, as far as possible, that pupils with disabilities have access to the same opportunities as other pupils.
7. **In all cases:**
 - (i) Eligibility under the criteria will be judged according to circumstances and evidence applying at the time the Governors' Admissions Committee meets to allocate places. The Governors reserve the right to ask for evidence of place of residence. If there has been a change to the place of residence claimed in the application form between the date at which the application was submitted and the date on which the Admissions Committee meets to allocate places, the Governors reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a place, if this offer was made on the basis of the original address.
 - (ii) When it is not possible to include all children qualifying under a particular criterion, places will be allocated on the basis of proximity of the child's home address to the school. Nearness to the school will be determined by a computerised mapping system using a straight line distance measurement. Routes will be calculated from the home address (as defined by the Land & Property Gazetteer) to the midpoint of the school grounds (as determined by Islington Local Authority). In the event of two children living at the same distance from the school random allocation will be applied, using a computerised system.
 - (iii) Families who have moved into the school's catchment area within 2 years prior to the Governors' consideration of admissions and who wish previous church membership to be taken into account when their application is considered, must provide a completed clergy reference form from their previous vicar or minister, as well as a completed clergy reference form from the vicar or minister of their current church.
 - (iv) The Governing Body reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place if there is evidence that the application was fraudulent or deliberately misleading or where a parent has not responded to an offer by the specified date.
 - (v) The Governing Body reserves the right to withdraw a place from a child who has already entered the school if it is later discovered that the place was fraudulently obtained, e.g. by falsifying the address of the applicant's main residence.
8. **Expected timetable for consideration of applications for entry to the Reception class in September 2020:**

Admission to the Reception class of primary schools in Islington is co-ordinated by Islington local authority. **Parents wishing to apply for a place at St. John's must specify St John's as one of their preferences on the Primary Common Application Form of their home local authority, which should be returned to the home local authority by the deadline date specified by that local authority.** Parents applying under the church criteria are also requested to fill in St. John's own Supplementary Information Form and a clergy reference form and return them to the school by the date specified below.

- September 2018: Criteria for admission in September 2020 reviewed by the Governing Body and, if changes are proposed, sent to the London Diocesan Board for Schools, Islington local authority, other admissions authorities in the relevant area, admissions authorities in neighbouring local authority areas, the Admissions Forum and relevant community groups for a consultation period of not less than 6 weeks, to take place between 1st October 2018 and 31st January 2019.
- 28th February 2019: Deadline for criteria for admission in September 2020 to be determined by the Governing Body.
- 15th March 2019: Deadline for admissions authorities to send their determined admissions criteria for September 2020 entry to the local authority.
- October 2019: Parents of children currently at the school informed of agreed criteria. Criteria also sent to those who have already filled in a Supplementary Information Form relevant to entry in September 2020 and returned this to the school. These admissions criteria will be accompanied by a letter reminding parents that they must also complete their home local authority's Primary Common Application Form or they will not be considered for a place.
- November 2019: Where church involvement is claimed, parents will be sent a clergy reference form which they should take to their vicar or minister for completion. Unless the form is returned to the school by the parent or by the vicar or minister by the due date, the Governing Body will be unable to consider any evidence of church involvement, and other than in exceptional circumstances, the application will be processed without such evidence.
- 15th January 2020: Final date for Islington residents to return their Primary Common Application Form to Islington local authority and for residents of other boroughs to return their Primary Common Application Form to their home local authority. The St. John's Supplementary Information Form should also be completed and returned to the school by this date, if applicable.
- 31st January 2020: Final date for the completed clergy reference form (where applicable) to be returned to the school.
- February 2020: Admissions Committee meets to consider applications.
- 28th Feb 2020: Deadline date for admissions authorities to publish details of their appeals procedure on their websites.
- 16th April 2020: Parents notified of outcome of application by their home local authority (National Offer Day for primary school places).
- Late April 2020: Final date for parents to confirm their acceptance of a place at an Islington primary school.
- Early May 2020: Closing date for receipt of appeals for Islington primary schools. The exact deadline date for receipt of appeals for St John's will be the same date as the deadline date for community schools which will be published on the Islington local authority website.
- June/July 2020: Independent Appeals Committee meets.

9. Waiting list arrangements:

All unsuccessful applicants for the Reception class who have not already been offered a place at a school which was a higher preference on their Primary Common Application Form will automatically be placed on the waiting list for that year group. Applicants who have been

offered a place at a school which was a higher preference on their Primary Common Application Form will not be placed on the waiting list unless they specifically request to be added. The waiting list will be held by Islington local authority until the October half term following the September in which children were admitted to the Reception class. From the October half term onwards, the waiting list will be held by the school and will be kept until that cohort reaches the end of Y6 and transfers to secondary school. Parents of children on the waiting list will be asked annually whether or not they wish their child to remain on the waiting list. Where no reply is received by the specified date, the child will be removed from the waiting list.

The Governors' Admissions Committee will review the waiting list for a particular year group whenever a vacancy arises in that year group. The position on the waiting list will be determined by applying the published admissions criteria to each applicant. Length of time on the waiting list will not affect position on the list. If new applications are received, the waiting list for that year group will again be reviewed. It should be noted that new applications could adversely affect the position of those already on the list.

10. In year admissions:

Responsibility for in-year admissions rests with the Governing Body. Applications for places in classes other than Reception should be made both to the LA and also directly to the school.

If a place is available in a particular class and there is no waiting list for that class, the place will be offered to the applicant by the school. If more applications are received than there are places available, then applications will be ranked by the Governing Body in accordance with the over-subscription criteria set out in this policy

If a place cannot be offered at the time the applicant applies, the applicant is entitled to ask the reasons why they cannot be offered a place and should be informed of their right to appeal. The applicant will be offered the opportunity of being placed on the waiting list for that class. The waiting list will be maintained by the Governing Body in the order of the over-subscription criteria and not in the order in which the applications are received. It should be noted that new applications could adversely affect the position of those already on the list.

When a place becomes available in a given class, the Governing Body will offer the place to the child with the highest position on the waiting list. If new applications have been received since the waiting list for that class was last reviewed, the Admissions Committee will look again at all applications for that class and decide which applicant has highest priority according to the published admissions criteria. The place on the waiting list will be based on the information given at the time in the application form and Supplementary Information Form and Clergy Reference Form, if applicable, together with any new information which has been provided since the original application was made, e.g. change of address. Once the offer has been made, if the place is declined, or no reply is received within 48 hours of the offer being made, the child will be removed from the waiting list and the place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list.

Where an application is made for an in-year admission (to the reception class) for the child of a Crown servant returning from an overseas posting, the address to which the applicant will be returning at the end of the posting will be used as the home address of the applicant, provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address. When considering an in-year admission for the child of a Crown servant returning from an overseas posting, the admissions committee will establish whether that applicant would have been offered a place if they had applied in the normal admissions round. If the committee are satisfied that the child would have been ranked within the first thirty applicants, they may offer a place to the child, bringing the class size up to thirty-one. If they consider that the child would not have been offered a place even if they had applied during the normal admissions round, the child will be offered the chance to be added to the waiting list and ranked according to the usual criteria. In the case of in-year applications to all other year groups, the children of crown servants will be placed on the waiting list subject to the usual over-subscription criteria. If they are ranked in the first position on the waiting list, the governors may offer them a place even if it takes the

class size to 31. If they are placed further down the ranking, from that point forward they will be treated as any other child.