

DETERMINED POLICY



St. Michael's Woolmer Green C of E Primary School

'Shine as Lights in the World'

Admissions Policy 2025-2026

Date of review:
Date of next review:
Responsibility:
Classification:

January 2024
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Full Governing Body
Public

St Michael's Woolmer Green is a Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School within the Ecclesiastical Parish of Welwyn and Woolmer Green which is part of the Diocese of St Albans. The Governing Body of the School is the Admission Authority and will admit up to the Planned Admission Number (PAN) of 30 children to the Reception class during each academic year. The Governing Body is required to abide by the maximum limits in Early Years Foundation Stages (EYFS) and Key Stage 1 (KS1) classes of 30 pupils per class.

Shine as Lights in the World is our school vision and we believe it is central to the care and protection of our children, our first and most important duty as educators. Our vision, which has been developed and widely shared with our whole community, makes protection and safeguarding everybody's responsibility. Our School adheres to the highest standards and adults model day-to-day fair and equal treatment so that all our children see in action that respect and dignity is about how we treat one another. **Our Golden Rule** is: We will treat one another in a fair and equal way and treat others in the way we wish to be treated.

Reception Admissions Round

The Local Authority, Hertfordshire County Council, (LA) operates an agreed co-ordinated admissions scheme in line with government legislation. The LA will coordinate the process on behalf of the school according to the scheme published each year. The Governing Body, as the Admission Authority, will allocate the available places in line with this policy.

Information on completing the online application and notification dates of admission decisions are published in the LA admissions literature which is also available from their website: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions.

All applications **must** be made on the **home** LA common application form.

Applicants under Category 5 (see page 3) must also complete the Supplementary Information Form (SIF), available on the school website, and ensure it is signed by either the Rector, parish priest or minister, as appropriate. If a SIF is not completed the Governing Body will apply their admission arrangements using the information submitted on the LA form only, which may result in your application being given a lower priority.

How Places Will Be Allocated

In accordance with Section 324 of the Education Act 1996, children who have an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) which names the school will be admitted to the school. Any such children will be admitted as part of the school's PAN but before the oversubscription criteria are applied. In the event of there being more applicants than there are places available, the Governors will apply the following criteria in the priority order of categories as listed. If the school has fewer applications than places available, all applicants will be offered a place.

Category 1 All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after' but immediately after being 'looked after' became subject to an adoption, child arrangements' or special guardianship order. This includes those children who appear (to the admission authorities) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

Children previously looked after outside England and subsequently adopted will be prioritised under category 1 if the child's previously looked 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 outside England and Wales 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 at the school at the time of admission, living within that part of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Welwyn and Woolmer Green which is outlined in black on the map displayed at the school and published on the school website.

Category 3 Children who at the time of admission are living within that part of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Welwyn and Woolmer Green which is outlined in black on the map displayed at the school and published on the school website.

Category 4 Children who live outside the area as defined in Category 2, but who are siblings of children already at the school at the time of application.

Category 5 Children living outside the area as defined in Category 2, but where one or more of the child's parents/guardians have, at the time of application, and for a period of six months previously, attended public worship at a Church of England church at least once a calendar month. Applicants in this category are required to provide written evidence of this and hence are requested to complete the school Supplementary Information Form.

In the event that, during the six month period specified for attendance at worship, the church or place of worship has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of category 5 will only apply to the period when the church (or place of worship) or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

Category 6 Any other children.

Where the application of the above criteria results in a situation where there are more children with an equal right to admission to the School than the number of places available, the determining criterion will be the distance from the child's home address to the school.

Deferred entry and part-time places

(a) All successful applicants are entitled to a full-time Reception place from the September after they turn four, however parents 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 (1 st April to 31 st August) must take up the offered place by the start of the summer term.

(b) If parents so wish, a child may attend on a part-time basis until the child reaches compulsory school age.

(c) If parents do not take up the offered place by the deadline in paragraph (a) above then a new, in-year application will be required for a place in year 1.

Summer-born Reception deferral requests

A parent of a summer-born child who wishes their child to start school in the autumn term following their fifth birthday and to be educated "out-of year group" (i.e. in the Reception Year rather than Y1) should contact the school to discuss their situation at the earliest possible opportunity.

All such parents should apply for a Reception place in their child's normal age group at the usual time and submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time. The Governors will consider each application and make a decision based on all the circumstances of the case, and in the best interests of the child.

The governors will respond to the request before an offer of a Reception place is made. If the request is agreed to, the application can be withdrawn for that year before a place is offered and the child's parents must then make a new application for a Reception place at the school as part of the main admissions round the following year. Please note that there is no guarantee that a place will be available in the desired age group.

If the request is refused but the child is offered a place at the school in their normal age group, parents must decide whether to accept the offer of that place, or refuse it and make an in-year application for admission into Y1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday. 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.

Education of other children outside normal age group

The school's policy is that children should normally be educated within their chronological age group. However, if parents make a request in writing to the governors for a child to be educated outside their normal age group, the governors will consider the request and will make a decision based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking

account of the parents' views, the child's academic, social and emotional development; (where relevant) their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether the child has 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 governors will also take account of the views of the head teacher. The governors will set out the reasons for their decision when informing parents of their decision as to the year group the child should be admitted to.

If the governors agree to the request for out of year group education then an application must still be made for a place for the child in the school. Approval of an out of year group education request does not automatically mean that a place will be available in the preferred year group. There is no right of appeal where a child is offered a place at the school but not in their parents' preferred age group.

Twins & Multiple Births

Where the first twin or a multiple birth sibling is offered the last available place, the Governors will admit the other twin or sibling(s) as exceptions to the infant class size legislation.

In-Year Admissions

Requests for admission to other year groups should be made direct to the School using the In Year Application form available from the Admissions page on our website. Parents applying under Category 5 are still required to complete a SIF.

The School will inform the LA of every application and allocation and of vacancies and numbers on roll. The LA will then be able to prevent duplicate offers being made, ensure safeguarding and that all children are offered places and to ensure that parents are informed of their right of appeal.

Unsuccessful Applications

Appeals

Parents who have not been allocated a place for their child in the Reception class have the right of appeal to an independent panel. Hertfordshire parents wishing to appeal who applied online for a Reception place should log on to their online application and click on the link "register an appeal". If you did not apply using Hertfordshire's online application system please contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request an appeal pack.

For In-Year applications, we will write to you with the outcome of your applications and, if you have been 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.

The statutory right to appeal does not apply if the child is offered a place at the school but not in their preferred age group.

Continuing Interest List

In the event of more applications than available places the Governors will maintain a continuing interest list (waiting list). These applications, together with late applications, will go onto the list in a position determined by the admissions criteria. If a place becomes available in the school it will be offered to the child that best meets the published admissions criteria.

The school co-operates with the LA's Fair Access Protocol. Such children will be admitted above any children on the Continuing Interest list and over the PAN if necessary. The school will review the in-year waiting list at the end of each academic year. Parents are requested to inform the school if they wish their child's name to be removed.

Definitions

Looked After Children

The Children Act 1989 defines a child who is 'looked after' as a child or young person who is accommodated by the local authority (Section 20) or a child or young person who is the subject of a full care order (Section 31) or interim care order (Section 38).

An 'adoption order' is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. A 'child arrangements' order is an order setting out the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian.

Sibling

A sibling refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, foster sibling, step brother or sister or the child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case, the child should be living at the same address. The sibling must be in the school at the time of the application and be likely to remain in the school at the proposed date of admission.

A sibling also refers to a child looked after or previously looked after and in every case living permanently in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of this application. 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.

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 and verified as necessary with Hertfordshire County Council’s Shared AntiFraud Service.

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

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.

Applications made as part of the main Reception admissions round are processed by Hertfordshire County Council (“HCC”) on behalf of the Governing Body, in accordance with HCC’s published coordinated admission scheme.

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 the ‘late deadline’. If the amended joint application is received after ‘the late deadline’, it will be treated as “late”.

Distance and Tie Break

If any category is oversubscribed the available places will be allocated to those applicants whose home address is closest to the school, using Hertfordshire County Council’s straight line distance measurement system. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of the child’s home to the address point of the school. AddressBase premium is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

Where two or more addresses measure the same distance from the school, the governors will use a random, independently supervised ballot to decide which child will be offered a place.