

St John's Church of England VA Primary School



Proposed Changes to Admissions Policy 2025-2026

1. Removing the word 'older' from the sibling criteria
2. Clarification on shared care arrangements
3. Adding children of staff as criteria 3
4. Removing the religious criteria

St John's Church of England VA Primary School



Admissions Policy 2025-2026

Agreed by the FGB

Agreed: October 2024

Review: January 2025

St John's Church of England VA Primary School

Admissions Arrangements for 2025/26 Academic Year

These admission arrangements apply to all applications for admissions to St John's CofE Primary School for Reception entry in **September 2025** and any in year applications from **1st September 2025**.

Introduction

The Admissions Authority for St John's CofE Primary School is the Governing Board.

The Full Board of Governors is responsible for taking all admission decisions for children starting in Reception and for joining the school during the academic year.

Somerset Council is responsible for co-ordinating all applications for children starting school. These admissions arrangements should be read in conjunction with Somerset's published co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for September 2025.

Legislation and Statutory Requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- [School Admissions Code 2021](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

The school is required to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#).

The Published Admission Number

The Governing Board has set an Admission Number of **27** for the year of entry.

Applications for Reception Year in 2025

The closing date for Reception year applications in **September 2025** is **15 January 2025**. Outcomes will be sent by Somerset Council on behalf of the Governing Board by e-mail or second class post on the published outcome date, **16 April 2025** (or next working day).

If your child lives in Somerset, starting school applications can be made on-line at www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions or paper forms can be obtained from Somerset Council.

Any applications received after the closing date will be recorded as late and cannot then be administered until all on time applications have been considered by which time places may no

longer be available within the Published Admission Number.

Places will be allocated strictly in accordance with the National Equal Preference with Ranking allocation method.

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from Somerset Council.

In Year Applications

Applications for a place during the academic year must be made directly to the school office, by completing the in-year application form. Applications will not be processed more than six weeks or half a term in advance of being required. Proof of address is required to be submitted with the application. This will be either the formal 'exchange of contracts' letter from the solicitor for a house buy, a recent utility bill or the signing of a minimum of a six-month tenancy agreement. The Governing Board reserve the right to seek further documentary evidence to support a claim of residence.

The Headteacher will consider applications on a weekly basis with a 4pm deadline every Friday. Where possible, applicants will receive a written response within 10 school days following receipt of the application. Where a school place is offered it will be held open for 10 school days and applicants will need to confirm acceptance within this time.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where there are more applications received than places available within the Published Admission Number the following criteria will be applied to determine how the places will be allocated.

The school will be required to admit any child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care plan (EHC), if the school is named, then:

1. Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After – Children who are currently in the care of a Council or have previously been and are now formally adopted or subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. Previously looked after children also includes 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. (See important note 1).
2. In accordance with the School's Trust Deed dated 26th June 1896 priority is to be given to the poor of the parish. This is defined as children living in the parish of St John the Baptist who are entitled to pupil premium funding (eligible for Free School Meals) as of the application closing date. A supplementary Information Form will need to be submitted for an application to be considered under this criterion.
3. Children of permanent teaching and learning support staff at the school where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made; and/or if the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
4. Children living in the catchment area, with a sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.
5. Children living in the catchment area.
6. Children living outside the catchment area, with a sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.
7. Children living closest to the school using a straight-line measurement.

Important Notes

Sharing joy and hope in the community

A "Looked After Child" means any child who is (a) in the care of a council or being provided with accommodation by a council in the exercise of their social services functions in accordance with Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989. A child who was "a previously Looked After Child" means a child who after being Looked After became subject to an Adoption Order under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, a child arrangement order under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 or Special Guardianship Order under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989, as well as those 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. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society. Relevant evidence will be required to be submitted.

Tie Breaker

In the event of oversubscription within any of the criteria listed above, preference will be given to applicants who live closest to the school, as measured in a straight line by a Geographical information System (GIS) method from the address point of the school site to the address point for the pupil's home. Where two distances are equal and it is therefore not possible to differentiate between them, priority will be determined by independent drawing of lots.

Multiple Birth Applications (for example twins)

Where the last place within the Published Admission Number is allocated to a multiple birth application, a place(s) will be allocated to any siblings above the Published Admission Number at the point of allocation. This will ensure that multiple birth siblings can be allocated places at the same school (sibling definition still applies).

This includes situations whereby admitting a multiple birth siblings would breach the Infant class size legislation of a statutory limit of 30 infants (Key Stage 1 children) per qualified teacher.

Waiting Lists

The waiting list will hold the names of every child formally refused admission, in ranked order according to the oversubscription criteria. Waiting lists will be re-ordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever a child joins or leaves the waiting list. If a place becomes available within the Published Admission Number, this will be offered to the highest ranked child at that time.

Children who are the subject of a direction by a Council to admit or who are allocated to the school in accordance with the In-Year Fair Access Protocols, will take precedence over those children on a waiting list.

Withdrawal of Places

The Governing Board will consider withdrawing the offer of a place if:

- The place has been offered on the basis of an application which is subsequently found to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading.
- The parent/carer has not responded to the offer within a reasonable period of time and a further opportunity has been given for the parent to respond within 10 days having explained that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not.

Shared Care Arrangements

Where shared care arrangements are in place and parents/ carers of the child submit two separate applications for different schools, the Governing Board will only accept one application which will be the application made by the parent/carer that lives at the same permanent home address as the child. Where there are exceptional grounds such as on-going court proceedings for example, these applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Where it is necessary to establish the permanent home address for the child, parent/carers will be asked to write to the Governing Board stating the number of days each week the child spends with them. The Governing Board may also ask for evidence of which parent/carer was in receipt of child benefit at the point of application. If the parent/carer is not in receipt of child benefit, the Governing Board will ask for proof of the child's home address as held by the doctor's surgery at the point of application. If the child's home address cannot be verified the Governing Board reserve the right to request further documentary evidence to support any claim of permanent home address.

Catchment Map

The Governing Board prioritise some school places on the basis of living within a designated catchment area. Details of the catchment boundaries can be found at;
www.somerset.gov.uk/education-learning-and-schools/choosing-a-school/check-catchment=school1/

Deferred Entry for Infants

Parents offered a place for their child have a right to defer entry, or to take a place up part-time, until the start of the term beginning immediately after their child has reached compulsory school age. However, places cannot be deferred until the next academic year.

Summer Born Children

Parents of summer born children may request that they are admitted into Reception rather than year one when they become of compulsory school age. Applications will be considered as set out below (see admission of children outside their normal age group).

Admission of Children Outside Their Normal Age Group

Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group. When such a request is made, the School will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the views of the Headteacher and any supporting evidence provided by the parent.

The process for requesting such an admission is as follows:

- The parent/carer is required to make an application for their child's normal age group but can submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time.
- The parent/carer is required to submit a request for admission out of the normal age group and attaching supporting evidence as necessary. The Governing Board have the right to request further evidence that may be required.

- The Governing Board will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.
- The Governing Board will write to the parent with the outcome and set out clearly the reasons for their decision.
- In the case of applications for summer born children to be admitted out of their normal age group the parent will receive the outcome before the primary national offer day.
- If their request is agreed, their application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. If their request is refused, the parent must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or to refuse it and make an in-year application for admission to Year One for the September following the child's fifth birthday.
- Where a parent's request is agreed, they must make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year.
- One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parents, therefore, should consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all their preference schools, rather than just their first preference schools.

Supplementary Information Form (SIF)

In order for applications to be considered against criterion 2, 6 or 7 applicants will need to use the appropriate Supplementary Application Form (SIF) to demonstrate their ability to meet the particular criterion. The SIF will need to be completed and submitted along with the school place application.

Appeals

Applicants whose school place application is turned down have the legal right of appeal to an independent appeal panel against the decision to refuse admission. Details concerning how to appeal are explained in the decision letters sent out when a place is refused. Information on the timetable for the appeals process is available on the school website by **28 February** each year.

Children of UK Service Personnel

The Admissions Authority endeavour to ensure that their admission arrangements support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children. In year applications are usually considered for admission up to a maximum of half a term in advance of the place being taken up. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area and other Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area where a place can be made available up to a year in advance of being required providing the appropriate documentation is provided as proof of posting (an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting.)

Usually, an in-year place may be allocated prior to actual residency, only on receipt of exchange of contracts or a formal signed rental agreement. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area and other Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area. This means that, providing the application is accompanied by an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting, the admissions authority will process the application on that address. If proof of a home address is not available at this stage the admissions authority will accept a unit postal address or quartering area address. An offer of service family accommodation from the housing department is not sufficient to be accepted as proof of address, the signed tenancy agreement would be required.

If the parent/carer is moving to the area as a result of leaving the armed forces then no special consideration will be given to the application under the grounds of the application being made by a service family.

For further information please refer to the DfE explanatory note on Admission of Children of Crown Servants; https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/461481/Admission_of_children_of_crown_servants.pdf

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Governors every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the Governing Board will publicly consult on these changes. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years.

Definitions

Home Address The home address is very important, as school places are allocated on the basis of the home address of each child. A child's home address is considered to be where the child spends the majority of their time with parents or carers.

Documentary evidence of home ownership or suitable rental agreement may be required, together with proof of permanent residence at the property concerned. Places cannot be allocated on the basis of an intended future address, unless the house move can be confirmed through the formal 'exchange of contracts' or the signing of a minimum of a six month tenancy agreement from a letting agency. Please note private letting agreements may not be accepted as proof of residence. An address change due to a move to live with family or friends will not be considered until the move has taken place and suitable proof of residency has been obtained. Proof that a move from the previous address has taken place may also be required e.g. proof of the house sale, a tenancy agreement showing the end date of the tenancy or a notice to quit from the landlord. The Governing Board reserve the right to seek further documentary evidence to support a claim of residence which could include contacting the estate agent, solicitor landlord or relevant professional.

An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place. Fraudulent claims relating to the home address of a particular child may lead to the withdrawal of any offer of a school place. The Admissions Authority must be notified of any change of address during the admissions procedure.

Sibling For the purpose of admissions, a sibling is defined as a child living at the same address/permanent home address as a half or full brother or sister, foster sibling or an adoptive brother or sister. Also, children of the same household where the permanent home address is the same for both children.

Parent/Carer For the purpose of admissions parent/carers are defined as:

- natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person;
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law).

Supplementary Information Form for St John's CofE Primary School

Pupil Premium Funding (Free School Meal) Entitlement

The appropriate application form must be completed and submitted to the school if you would like your application for a St John's CofE Primary School to be considered under criterion 2 of the over subscription criteria which is:

In accordance with the School's Trust Deed dated 26th June 1896 priority is to be given to the poor of the parish. This is defined as children living in the parish of St John the Baptist who are entitled to Pupil Premium Funding (eligible for Free School Meals) as of the application closing date. A supplementary Information Form will need to be submitted for an application to be considered under this criterion.

Please ensure that this form is completed by you and proof of the relevant benefits (as listed on the form) is attached. It must be received by the School Admissions Team by midnight on **13th January 2025** for Reception admissions. For in year admissions it must be submitted directly to the school alongside an in-year application form.

Failure to send the correctly completed supplementary information form and proof of benefits to the School Admissions Team by the closing date will mean that your application cannot be considered under this criterion.

Forms are available on the School website of from the School office.