



# St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocesan Multi Academy Trust

## St Mary's C of E Primary School

**“Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” John 13:34**

### **St Mary's Church Of England Primary School**

#### **Admissions Policy 2023-24**

St Mary's Church of England Primary School aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

#### **Introduction**

The School is an Academy within the Diocesan Multi Academy Trust of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocese. The Multi Academy Trust is the Admissions Authority for the school. We are committed to considering all applications fairly and equally. This Admissions Policy is subject to a statutory public consultation and conforms to the 2021 Schools Admissions Code and the law relating to school admissions. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Admissions to Schools in Suffolk booklet – published by Suffolk County Council

#### **Policy principles**

We seek to be an inclusive school, welcoming children from all backgrounds and abilities. A child's level of achievement or special needs are not relevant to consideration for admission to the school. If the school is named on a child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC plan) then the school is required by law to admit the child.

We believe that ideally each child should be admitted to the school of their parents' choice, however the school buildings cannot accommodate an unlimited number of children. Excessive class sizes are detrimental to the education of all children. The law sets a limit of 30 for infant classes, with only a few specific exceptions. The Published Admissions Number for this school is **30** and we aim to organise the school so that there are classes of no more than **30** pupils.

#### **How parents can apply for their child to be admitted to the Reception Class of our school**

Copies of this Admissions Policy can be viewed on the school's website.

Parents can complete a paper application form (CAF1 – to be returned to The Admissions Team, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich IP1 2BX) or complete the form on-line at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

Applications for Reception Class admission **September 2023 to August 2024** (i.e. for children born **1<sup>st</sup> September 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019**) must be received by Suffolk County Council by **15<sup>th</sup> January 2023**. Second and late applications will be considered according to the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme published in the Admissions to Schools in Suffolk booklet.

In order that the Governors can make fair and open decisions, parents are invited to complete a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) if applying under criteria 4,5, and 7. The form is available from the school (website download or from the School Office) and Suffolk County Council. Please note that a SIF is an opportunity to provide more information as you are applying to a Church school – it is not compulsory but you must complete the SIF if you wish to be considered on the basis that the family are practising members of the Church of England under oversubscription criteria 4, 5, 6 and 7. On its own it does not constitute a valid application. SIFs should be returned direct to the School by the **15<sup>th</sup> January 2023**.

Applications are administered by Suffolk County Council on behalf of the Academy Trust.

Where there are more applications than available places, admissions are made according to the oversubscription criteria set out below. An Admissions Committee of the Local Governing Body will consider applications and apply the oversubscription criteria (if there are more applicants than available places) ranking applicants accordingly and providing a ranked list to Suffolk County Council.

Decision letters are sent by Suffolk County Council to all applicants on **16<sup>th</sup> April 2023**.

For admission to the **2023/24** school year, and subsequent years, all children will be eligible for admission to the school full time in the September following their fourth birthday. Where parents are offered a place for their child in Reception Year, they may decide either to take up the offer full time in September or take up the offer part-time (but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age) or defer entry. If a parent wishes to defer entry to later in the year the place at the school will be held open until the child starts school. However, parents must take up the place no later than the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday and must in any case take up the offer of a place by the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made.

It would normally be expected that parents will take up the offer of a primary school place (be that full- or part-time) at the beginning of a school term, unless there is agreement with the school that a place could be taken up at another time in the term.

A child born between 1 April and 31 August (a summer born child) is entitled to start school in the September following his or her fourth birthday but does not reach compulsory school age until the September following his or her fifth birthday and is not obliged to start school until then. If a place has been offered in the school in Reception year, but the parent or carer wishes to delay the child starting until the September following his or her fifth birthday, that child's chronological age group will be Year 1. The place in Reception Year will be withdrawn and an in-year application (see below) for Year 1 must be made for the following school year. There is no guarantee that a place will be available.

For summer born children whose parent or carer wishes them to start in Reception Year in the September following their fifth birthday (out of their chronological age group) see the section on **Children out of year group** below.

### **Waiting lists**

Unsuccessful applicants have the right to Appeal against the decision of the Governors (see below). All unsuccessful applicants are placed on a waiting list that is maintained in the rank order of the oversubscription criteria (taking into account the distance tie-breaker if appropriate). Late applications

for Reception year will also be ranked according to the oversubscription criteria. This does mean that the position of applicants on the list could change during the lifetime of the waiting list. If, at any time, the number of pupils to be admitted falls below the PAN of **30** then the available place(s) will be offered to the applicant(s) at the top of the waiting list. The waiting list ceases to be valid on 31 December 2023.

### **In-year applications and applications to other year-groups**

The Governors follow the accepted procedures agreed with Suffolk County Council in considering applicants at all other times of the year. The PAN of **30** for Reception Year is maintained (as far as possible) for all subsequent year groups. Governors apply the oversubscription criteria set out below. No waiting lists are maintained for year groups other than Reception Year.

### **In-year admissions.**

Applications are not normally considered more than one term ahead of the date the place is required.

Parents wishing to transfer their children from one Suffolk school to another where there is no change of address should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with the Head teacher of their current school before applying for another school.

Parents who wish to make an in-year application for a place at the school should contact the school office for an application form.

We will, on receipt of an in-year application, notify Suffolk County Council of both the application and its outcome, to allow them to keep up-to-date figures on the availability of places in the area.

When a place becomes available in a year group that has been full at this school, any applicant refused a place for that school year in the last 15 school days and any applicant for whom an appeal has been lodged and is still to be heard, will be considered alongside any new applications. The place will be offered to the pupil ranked highest in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

All in-year applications will be processed by the school within 5 school-days and the decision communicated in writing. An emailed decision will always be confirmed by letter. Acceptance of offers can be made by email or letter but, in all cases, within two weeks of the date the offer was made.

If the number of applications exceeds the number of places available the Governors will use their published oversubscription criteria to determine the offer of places. Any unsuccessful applicant has the right to appeal the decision to an independent panel and details of how to do this will be included in the decision letter.

Where an applicant is offered a school place following an in-year application, and the offer is accepted, arrangements should be made for the child to start school as soon as possible, particularly where the child is out of school.

### **Children out of year group**

It is expected that children will normally be educated within their chronological year group. However, sometimes parents may wish to request that a child is educated in a lower or higher year group.

This will apply when, for example, a parent wishes to delay their summer born (1 April to 31 August) child's entry to full-time education in Reception Year until the following school year, when they have reached statutory school age, and so would fall chronologically into Year 1.

When this is the case a parent must request that the school allow the child to be educated outside their chronological age group (that is, in Reception rather than Year 1). The school will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned, in line with paragraphs 2.18 – 2.20 of the School Admissions Code (2021). Parents or carers should make a request to the school in writing in good time, prior to the closing date for applications for the year in question. This will need to include, where relevant, any supporting evidence.

The school will make a decision on the request, taking into account the views of the headteacher. The school will write to the parent or carer with the outcome including the reasons for the decision. If the request is refused, details of how to complain will be given. Even if the request to start in Reception in the September after the child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday is agreed there is no guarantee there will be a place available. An application must be made in the normal admissions round for that year of entry using the usual application form, which must be sent to the LA, along with the decision letter(s) from the school, and other relevant evidence by the national closing date.

For more information on admissions of summer born children see Department for Education Advice on the Admission of Summer Born Children, which is accessible by following this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summer-born-children-school-admission>

## **Appeals**

If the Admission Authority's decision is not to grant a place for your child, you have the right to appeal against its decision. You will be sent information on how to appeal. There is no deadline for the submission of appeals which are independently administered by the Education Appeals Office, PO Box 579, Ipswich, IP1 2BX.

Unsuccessful applicants and appellants who are still unable to secure a place at the school may only submit a fresh application if there has been a significant change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school. Such circumstances might be a house move or a place becoming available at the school.

If there is no significant change in circumstances, you can make another application for the following school year, but this will not normally be considered more than one term ahead of the date when you want your child to start at the school.

## **Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed by the Local Governing Body and the MAT Directors annually but, in accordance with the 2021 School Admissions Code, will only be subject to public consultation every seven years unless changes are proposed (other than the correction of closing dates and definitions of academic years or to ensure compliance with the School Admissions Code and the law relating to school admissions). A consultation allows for parents, other schools and academies, the diocese, local authorities and the local community to raise concerns about any proposed changes to the admission arrangements.

## **Further information**

Applicants seeking clarification on any aspect of this policy are invited to consult the school.

## **Admissions Oversubscription Criteria 2023-24**

Children who have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan) which names the school must by law be offered a place at this school.

Where the number of applicants exceeds the PAN of **30** places will be allocated in the following priority order:

**Priority 1:** Looked after children (LAC) and all previously looked after children - children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order, immediately following having been looked after (PLAC), including 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 - internationally adopted previously looked after children (IAPLAC).

**Priority 2:** Children from service families with a confirmed posting or children living in the Hadleigh Benefice area (Hadleigh, Layham and Shelley) with confirmed refugee status

**Priority 3:** Children who have a sibling<sup>1</sup> who will be attending the school at the time of admission. If necessary, priority will be given to those children who are closer together in age.

**Priority 4:** Children who themselves or whose families (a parent or guardian) regularly<sup>2</sup> worship at the Anglican Parish Churches of Hadleigh, Layham or Shelley. Parents are encouraged to enclose a signed copy of the Supplementary Information Form.

**Priority 5:** Children who themselves or whose families (a parent or guardian) regularly<sup>2</sup> worship at another Christian Church<sup>3</sup> that lies within the parishes of Hadleigh, Layham or Shelley. Parents are encouraged to enclose a signed copy of the Supplementary Information Form.

**Priority 6:** Children of applicants<sup>4</sup> who are ordinarily resident<sup>5</sup> within the parishes of Hadleigh, Layham or Shelley and who themselves or whose families (a parent or guardian) regularly<sup>1</sup> worship at any Christian Church<sup>2</sup> that lies outside the parishes of Hadleigh, Layham or Shelley. Parents are encouraged to enclose a signed copy of the Supplementary Information Form.

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<sup>1</sup> The Governors define regular worship as someone who attends worship at least monthly. A Supplementary Information Form (SIF) will be provided on request to applicants seeking consideration under the criterion of committed Church members. Completion of this form is optional and a SIF in itself does not constitute a valid application. All applications must be made on the standard Suffolk County Council CAF1 form (hard-copy or on-line). The SIF must be completed and signed by the Parish Priest, or where there is no Priest, another authorised representative of the Church, sealed in the envelope provided and returned to the school. Where the parent of a child is a committed Church member, but not themselves the applicant, the commitment of that parent will be considered in relation to the admission of the child.

<sup>2</sup> Other recognised Churches are those in full membership of Churches Together in England (or in full membership of a federation of Churches that is in full membership of

**Priority 7:** Children of applicants<sup>4</sup> who are ordinarily resident<sup>5</sup> within the parishes of Hadleigh, Layham or Shelley and who are committed adherents of a recognised Faith<sup>6</sup> other than Christian and who wish their child to attend a Church of England school.

**Priority 8:** Children who are ordinarily resident in the parishes of Hadleigh, Layham or Shelley

**Priority 9:** Children who are ordinarily resident outside the parishes of Hadleigh, Layham or Shelley

In the event of a tie within any of the oversubscription criteria, i.e. the Published Admissions Number (PAN) of **30** is reached within a group of applicants in any of the criteria, then all the applicants under that criterion will be ranked according to their distance from the school and places will be offered (until the PAN of **30** is reached) to those living nearest to the school. We will measure the distance by a straight line from the child's ordinary residence to the school. All straight-line distances are calculated electronically by Suffolk County Council using data provided jointly by the Post Office and Ordnance Survey. The data plots the co-ordinates of each property and provides the address- point between which straight line distance is measured and reported to three decimal places. Where there is more than one home within a single building (for example apartments) we will measure to a single point within that building irrespective of where those homes are located.

In the unlikely event of two or more applicants living the same distance from the school and competing for a single place, lots will be drawn by someone independent of the school to determine the successful applicant.

## **Definitions**

**Sibling:** is defined as brothers or sisters living at the same address including adopted children, stepbrothers, step-sisters and children in foster care within a family unit.

**Ordinarily resident** By ordinarily resident we mean the place where your child usually lives. We consider this to be where they sleep overnight. We may need proof of this address. If you use another address to give the impression that your child lives at a different address to where they are ordinarily resident, such as a second home or a grandparent's address, so that you have a higher priority for a place at that school; we consider this to be a fraudulent application. Where a child lives at two or more addresses, each for part of the week, the address at which the child is ordinarily resident will be considered to be the address that the child lives at for most of the week (excluding weekends and school holidays). Separate evidence in writing from each parent or carer must be provided to confirm the child's living arrangements at the time of application.

In cases where the child spends an equal proportion of the school week at two or more different addresses, evidence of which is to be considered the main contact address will be required to support the application. Agreement in writing by the parents/carers will be required to state which address is to be used as the ordinarily resident address. This address will then be used when processing all school preferences expressed. It is not acceptable to use one address for one school preference and another address for another school preference.

If we are aware of a parental dispute affecting the application, we may not be able to deal with the application and you may need to seek independent legal advice in order to resolve the matter.

**Catchment area:** the school's catchment area is shown on maps which are available from the school office and also downloadable at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/catchmentmaps](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/catchmentmaps). Applicants may also contact the SCC Admissions Team on 0345 600 0981 (local number).

**Practising Church member:** The Governors define a practising Church member as one who attends worship at least monthly and this means worship at least monthly for a period of a year prior to the deadline for applications. A Supplementary Information Form (SIF) will be provided on request to applicants seeking consideration under the criterion of practicing Church members. Completion of this form is optional and a SIF in itself does not constitute a valid application. All applications must still be made on the standard Suffolk County Council CAF1 form. The SIF must be completed and signed by the Parish Priest, or where there is no Priest, another authorised representative of the Church, sealed in the envelope provided and returned to the school. Where the parent of a child is a practicing Church member, but not themselves the applicant, the commitment of that parent will be considered in relation to the admission of the child.

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.

**Multiple births:** if the final place at the School is offered to a twin/triplet or other multiple birth and the remaining sibling(s) would ordinarily be refused a place, places will be offered to the remaining sibling(s).

**Shared Responsibility:** Where a child lives with separated parents who have shared responsibility, each for part of the week, the address at which the child is ordinarily resident will be considered to be the address that the child lives at for most of the week (excluding weekends and school holidays). Both parents with shared responsibility must provide evidence in writing to confirm the child's living arrangements at the time of application. Where a child lives with each parent for 50% of the time the parents must state on the application form the address at which they wish the child to be considered as ordinarily resident.