St Matthew's CE Primary School and Nursery

Admissions to School Policy

Policy Approved by:	Full Governing Body
Policy last reviewed	March 2025
Policy Due for Review:	March 2026

St Matthew's CE Primary Vision Statement

Rooted in our Christian foundation, we hold high expectations and ambitious aspirations enabling everyone to flourish, living life to the full with courage and hope. We want all children to enjoy coming to school, develop a love of reading and learning, in a culture of excellence and respect, so that everyone can be the best they can be.

Jesus said*, I came to give life, life in all its fullness* (John 10:10).

Our key values are:
Hope for the future,
Courage to face challenges,
Respect for ourselves and one another as we become the best we can be.

Rationale:

Children are admitted to school, fulltime, at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. Admissions are administered by Bradford City Council and details can be found here https://www.bradford.gov.uk/education-and-skills/school-admissions/guide-for-parents/

The planned admissions number (PAN) for admission to the reception class in the school year commencing September 2025 will be a maximum of 60. The PAN for 2026 will be 45 following a consultation to reduce the PAN.

Children may be admitted straight from home, from our nursery or from other organisations offering pre-school education.

Should it be that the number of children wanting a place at St Matthew's exceeds the admission limit of 60, then priority will be given to the following categories:

1. Looked after children or children who were previously looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a residence or special guardianship order (*see Note 1*).
2. Children who have **exceptional** social or medical needs, supported by a written recommendation from the child's paediatrician/consultant or professional from Children's Services. The letter must explain why the school is the only suitable school to meet the child's needs and why no other school could provide the appropriate support for the child.
3. Sisters and brothers of children living at the same address who are at present on roll at the school and will still be attending the school at the time of admission (*see Note 2*).
4. Children of parents who are members* of the Church of England or other Christian denominations for whom the preferred school is the nearest Church of England school to the home address (*see * below & Note 3 & 4*).
5. Other children.

** For admission under criterion 4, parents will be asked to demonstrate membership of the appropriate Christian denomination by submitting with their application, a letter from their minister or other church leader confirming the parents' regular and frequent attendance at church.*

Multiple Births

Where a family of multiple births (twins, triplets etc) request admission and only one of the siblings can be offered a place, the remaining siblings will also be offered places above the admission number.

Tie Break

When demand exceeds places in any of the above criteria, the distance between home and the preferred site, measured by a straight line distance from the Ordinance Survey address point of the home to the main entrance to the school building, will be used to decide who is given a place, those living nearest being given the available places. The distance is measured by a Geographic Information System (GIS) embedded in the admissions system.

Where the offer of places to applicants with equidistant addresses would lead to oversubscription, the decision of who will be offered the place will be made by random selection. A Local Authority Officer Independent of the Admissions Team will draw a lot at random.

Waiting Lists

Where an application has been unsuccessful parents/guardians may request that the child's name is added to the waiting list. The waiting list will be maintained until the end of the academic year. Any places that become available will be allocated according to the published oversubscription criteria of the admission arrangements with no account being taken of the length of time on the waiting list.

In accordance with the School Admissions Code as soon as school places become vacant the Governing Body must fill the vacancies from any waiting list, even if this is before admission appeals have been heard. Placing a child's name on a waiting list does not affect a parent's/guardian's right of appeal against an unsuccessful application.

It should be noted that children who are subject of direction by a Local Authority to admit or who are allocated in accordance with an In-Year Fair Access Protocol (The School Admission Code), must take precedence over those on a waiting list.

Appeals

Where governors are unable to offer a place because the school is oversubscribed, parents have the right to appeal to an independent admission appeal panel, set up under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education Act, 2002. Parents who intend to make an appeal against the Governing Body's decision to refuse admission must follow the Local Authority appeals procedure. Please note the right of appeal against the governors' decision does not prevent you from making an appeal in respect of any other school.

Special Educational Needs

The admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a separate procedure. Such children will be admitted to the named school, in Section I, without reference to the oversubscription criteria above.

Governors reserve the right to refuse admission for children, who have been identified as having Special Educational Needs, whose needs cannot be met at St Matthew's, or the attendance of the child or young person would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for others. They will, however, do everything in their power to make suitable provision within budget restrictions e.g. additional enhanced support, sufficiently trained staff, assistive technology, ramps, showers, adaptations for visual and hearing impaired and specially trained staff.

The Headteacher will endeavour to ascertain this information at the time when the parents enter the child's name on the waiting list. Admissions of children referred by the school medical officer or by social services will normally be preceded by a multidisciplinary conference called by the referring agency.

Administration

The Council administers our admissions policy with parents applying for a place in January of the year in which their child is due to start fulltime education. Parents are informed of the allocation of places in April and have to confirm their acceptation of the place within 2 weeks. Parents who wish to appeal regarding the outcome of this process are required to follow the LA guidelines.

In – year Admissions

Parents/carers seeking to transfer a child to the school during the school year should make an application by completing the In-Year Admissions Form which is available from the school, or the Local Authority Admissions Team. Where more applications are received than places available the over-subscription criteria will be used to support the decision. The Governing Body are the admissions authority for in-year admissions, but applications are dealt with on our behalf by the local authority which operates an in-year coordinated admissions scheme. Further details about admissions can be obtained from Bradford Local Authority (Pupil Access) on 01274 439200.

Fair Access Placements

Outside the normal admissions round, it may sometimes be necessary for a pupil to be placed by the Governing Body or the Local Authority, in a particular school even if there is a waiting list for admission. Such placements are made in accordance with the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol.

Three and Four Year Old Entitlement

All three and four year olds are entitled to a free early education place before they reach statutory school age (the beginning of the school term immediately following the child's fifth birthday).

Children are admitted into Reception in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the school year or until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age. Parents can also request that their child takes up the place part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. The admission criteria will apply to all children seeking a school place, whatever their term of entry. The place offered will be reserved on condition that it is taken up within the same school year.

Children attending a school's nursery are not guaranteed a place in the reception class and a separate application must be made.

Summer Born Children

Parents should refer to the Summer Born Guidance if they wish to apply for their child to be offset and secure a Reception place outside of their normal chronological year group. If parents do not apply for an offset or it is nor agreed, they will only be offered a Yr1 place.

When parents apply for an offset they should supply as much supporting information as possible including letters of support from professionals identifying the educational reasons for the offset.

The Local Authority will only agree an offset that they are assured is in the best interest of the child from an educational perspective, based on the judgements of professionals. Such requests will be considered in accordance with the Local Authority's 'Guidance on the admission of summer born children' and DfE Advice.

Parents who wish to request offset for reasons of special educational need should contact the Early Yeas Special Educational Needs officers to request assessment and support.

Fraudulent Applications

The Governing Body reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a place if fraudulent or intentionally misleading information has been used on an application, e.g. a false home address. This includes cases where parents take out a short term let or buy a property solely to use its address on the application form without any intention of taking up permanent residence there. In fairness to all parents, all allegations of fraudulent practice brought to the Governing Body's attention will be investigated.

Notes for Admission Policy

1. A “looked after child” is defined as a child who, at the time of making the application is: in the care of a local authority, or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989)
   A “previously looked after child” is defined as a child who: was previously looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a Special Guardianship order or a Child Arrangements order, or (in accordance with DfE guidance 2018) has been in state care outside of England and ceased to be so as a result of being adopted. Evidence will be required on a case by case basis.

2. The term ‘*sisters’ and ‘brothers’* refers to children who live with the same family at the same address. Children living with the same family e.g. foster, adopted children and step-sisters and brothers are also included.

3 *‘Home address’* refers to the child’s permanent home at the date of admission. Where the child lives with separated parents with shared responsibility, it is for the parents to determine which address to use when applying for a primary school. Proof of residency may be required at any time during or after the allocation process.

4 *‘Nearest Church of England School’* is measured by a straight line distance from the Ordnance Survey address point of the home to the main entrance of the nearest Church of England primary school, including those in neighbouring local authorities.

5 *Exceptional Medical or Social Need. Priority will be given to those children whose evidence establishes that they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend this school in particular*. All schools can support children with a wide range of additional needs and are expected to accommodate severe medical and social needs. An application made under this criteria should clearly demonstrate why this school is the only one that can meet your child’s need in a way that no other school can.

Evidence must be submitted in writing by the closing date for applications (above) and include recent independent objective evidence, for example from a doctor, psychologist, social worker or other professional involved with your child. It should confirm the circumstances of the case and must set out why the nearest school to your child’s home address, give specific reasons why closer schools will not meet your child's needs.

Providing evidence does not guarantee that a child will be given priority at this school and in each case a decision will be made based on the merits of the case and whether the evidence demonstrates that a placement should be made at this school above any other. In consideration of each case the board may consult with other medical or educational professionals for a further opinion as to whether the pupil should be allocated a place at this school.

‘Medical need’ does not include mild medical conditions, such as asthma or allergies. ‘Social need’ does not include a parent’s wish that a child attends the school because of a child’s aptitude or ability or because their friends attend the school or because of routine child minding arrangements.

Supplementary Information Form (SIF)

This Supplementary Form should be completed by the parent / guardian of the child who is seeking admission to the school. This form need only be completed to confirm and verify that you meet the requirements of the oversubscription criteria related to church attendance. **No additional information will be considered** unless a family has attended more than one place of worship for that period, in which case more than one form may be submitted to cover the two years. It is the responsibility of the parent to get both sections complete and returned to school.

Form should be returned to the school office by no later than midnight on 15th January 2026

Section A: Application for admission to St Matthew's CE Primary School and Nursery			
Please consider the following information as part of the admissions process for the following child:			
Child's Surname:		First name:	
Name of parent / guardian			
Address			
Postcode		Contact No	
I confirm that			
Is a regular worshipper at the church below, defined as attending public worship at that place, for at least once a month, for two years prior to the date of application.			
Place of Worship			
Name of Vicar / Priest / faith leader			
Address			
Postcode		Contact no	
Section B: Verification This section is to be completed by the above church leader			
I confirm that that child/parent/guardian named above has attended public worship at church at least once a month for the past two years.			
Name:			
Signed:		Date:	