

Ss Alban and Stephen Catholic Nursery School

Nursery Admissions Policy for September 2017– August 2018

Mission Statement:

“Building God's community of love and learning”

Ss Alban & Stephen Infant school was founded to provide education for children of Catholic families. As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. At a Catholic school, Catholic doctrine and practice permeate every aspect of the school's activity. It is essential that the Catholic character of the school's education is fully supported by all families in the school. All applicants are therefore expected to give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school.

The Governing Body has sole responsibility for admissions to this school and intends to admit 60 pupils in the school year under the Published Admissions Number (PAN), which begins in September 2017. **Our Nursery & Infant schools work very closely together and share the same ethos; however entry to the Nursery does not guarantee entry to the Infant School. This is by separate application.**

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic children in accordance with the over subscription criteria listed below.

Application Procedures and Timetable

The e-admissions system must be completed and returned to your Local Authority by the stated date. Paper forms are available from the Local Authority on request. **In addition, applicants are requested to note that they should complete a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) in full and, if applicable, obtain a Certificate of Catholic Practice (CCP).** Both the SIF and the CCP are available from the school office and the school website www.ssasinfants.herts.sch.uk. **If you do not complete both the LA application and the Supplementary Information Form and return them by the closing date, the governing body may be unable to consider your application fully and it is very unlikely that your child will get a place at the nursery.** The local authority will contact all applicants on behalf of the Governing Body with the outcome of your application on 17 April 2017.

Unsuccessful applicants will be given reasons related to the over subscription criteria listed below and advised of their right to appeal to an independent appeal committee. Hertfordshire parents wishing to appeal who applied on line should log on to their online application and click on the link “register an appeal”. If you did not apply using Hertfordshire's on line application system please contact the Customer Service centre on 0300 123 4043 to request an appeal pack.

Late applications will be considered only after the initial allocation of places.

Over subscription criteria

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority:

1. Catholic 'looked after' children and Catholic children who ceased to be 'looked after' because they were adopted or made subject to residence orders or special guardianship orders.
2. Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice of families who will have a sibling at the Infant School or Junior School at the time of admission.

3. Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice who are resident in the parish of Ss Alban & Stephen (for details of the parish, see the link to the Westminster Diocese parish map from our school website www.ssasinfants.herts.sch.uk).
4. Other baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice.
5. Other baptised Catholic children.
6. Other 'looked after' children and children who ceased to be 'looked after' because they were adopted or made subject to child arrangement orders or special guardianship orders.
7. Children who have a sibling at the Infant school or Junior school, at the time of admission and whose parents wish them to have a Catholic education. First consideration will be given to those whose minister supplies a supporting letter confirming membership of the Church or faith community.
8. Children of Catechumens and members of other Eastern Christian Churches. First consideration will be given to those whose minister supplies a supporting letter confirming membership of the Church or faith community.
9. Christian children resident within the parish of Ss Alban & Stephen, whose parents wish them to have Catholic education. First consideration will be given to those whose minister supplies a supporting letter confirming membership of the Church or faith community.
10. Christian children living outside the parish of Ss Alban & Stephen whose parents wish them to have Catholic education. First consideration will be given to those whose minister supplies a supporting letter confirming membership of the Church or faith community..
11. Children of other faiths living within the parish of Ss Alban & Stephen whose parents wish them to have a Catholic education. First consideration will be given to those whose minister supplies a supporting letter confirming membership of the Church or faith community.
12. Any other children.

The Governing Body will give top priority to an application within a category where compelling written evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child, which can only be met at this nursery.

Where the final place is offered to a child who has a twin/triplets etc. applying for a place in the same school year, these siblings will also be admitted.

For the purposes of the over subscription criteria above:

- '**Catholic**' means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. This will normally be evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism in a Catholic church or a Certificate of Reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church;
- '**sibling**' means the sister, brother, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent/carer or partner or a child looked after or previously looked after¹ 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 child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement;
- '**catechumen**' refers to a person accepted into the catechumenate which is demonstrated by a certified copy of the entry in the Register of Catechumens;
- '**looked after**' child means a child in the care of the Local Authority or provided with accommodation by them e.g. children with foster parents (see section 22 of The Children's Act 1989).

- '**Adopted**'. An adopted child is any child who has been formally adopted and whose parent/guardian can give proof of adoption.

- '**Child Arrangements Order**'. A Child Arrangements order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.8 setting the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live. Children 'looked after' immediately before the order is made qualify in this category.

- '**Special Guardianship Order**'. A special guardianship order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.14A appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s). Children 'looked after' immediately before the order is made qualify in this category.

- '**parent**' means the person or persons who have legal responsibility for the child;

- '**Christian**' means a member of a church which belongs to 'Churches Together in Britain and Ireland';

- a baptismal certificate will be required at the time of application to certify that your child has been baptised unless baptised in the Parish of Ss Alban & Stephen.

Tie break

If more children qualify under a particular rule than there are places available, a tiebreak will be used by applying the next rule to those children. In the case of two applicants with exactly the same priority under the admissions rules, but only one place being available, the Governing Body will draw lots in the presence of an independent witness.

Distance

Where the offer of places to all of the applicants in any of the categories above would lead to over subscription, places up to the Published Admissions Number will be offered to those living nearest the school. Hertfordshire County Council's straight line distance measurement system is used for all home to school distance measurements. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

Waiting Lists (Continuing Interest List)

Unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list in accordance with the over subscription criteria set out above. Parents will be offered information on the appeals process. The waiting list is held open for a full academic year from the date of admissions.

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC)

The admission of pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC) is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Details of the procedure are set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. If your child has an EHC plan you must contact your local authority SEN officer. Children with this school named in their EHC Plan will be admitted to the school.

In-Year Admissions

Applications for In-Year admissions are made directly to the school. Where there is no waiting list the local authority will be notified and the child will be admitted. If more applications are received than there are places available then applications will be ranked by the governing body in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. If a place cannot be offered at this time then you may ask us for the reasons and you will be informed of your right of appeal. You will be offered the opportunity of being placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained by the governing body in the order of the oversubscription criteria and not in the order in which

the applications are received. Names are removed from the list at the end of each academic year. When a place becomes available the governing body will decide who is at the top of the list and an offer will be made.

Fair Access Protocols

The school is committed to taking its fair share of children who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as set out in locally agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal admissions round the governing body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol that has been agreed by both the Diocese and the governing body for the current school year. The governing body has this power even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number. Children admitted under this protocol will take priority over children on the continued interest list.

Certificate of Catholic Practice

Applicants applying under criteria 2 and 3 must submit a Certificate of Catholic Practice (CCP) by the closing date. This form (which used to be called a priest's reference form) is available from the school or the diocesan website. Parents should fill in the top part of the form with their details and then take the form to their parish priest (or the priest at the parish where they normally worship) for signature. It is the parent's duty to ensure that the CCP is submitted to the school in good time.