

Ss Alban and Stephen Catholic Infant & Nursery School

Reception Admissions Policy for September 2018– August 2019

Mission Statement:

“Building God’s community of love and learning”

Ss Alban & Stephen Infant & Nursery 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 be 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 to Reception in the school year under our Published Admission Number (PAN), which begins in September 2018. **Our Nursery & Infant and Junior** schools work very closely together and share the same ethos; **however entry to one does not guarantee entry to the other. 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

Applications are invited for September 2018 from families whose child attains 4 years of age between 01/09/2017 and 31/08/2018 and those whose child attains the age of 5 years of age between 01/04/2018 and 31/08/2019 who wish their child to join the Reception class in September 2018.

The e-admissions system for your Local Authority must be completed at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions by 15 January 2018 (paper forms are available on application to the Local Authority). **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).** The SIF is available from the school office and the school website www.ssasinfants.herts.sch.uk. The CCP is available from the Priest at the parish where the family normally worships. **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 school.** The local authority will contact all applicants on behalf of the Governing Body with the outcome of your application on 16 April 2018.

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.

For the last five years this school has been able to admit Catholic children from the parish (Criterion 4). It was not possible to admit applicants who did not fulfil Criteria 1, 2 or 4 (criteria 3 is new in this admissions year).

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 Child Arrangements 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 of a member of staff of Ss Alban and Stephen Infant & Nursery School provided that the member of staff is the child's parent and (1) 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, or (2) where the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. For the purposes of satisfying these criteria, a member of staff is defined as a permanent member of the teaching staff or leadership team. This definition does not include contract staff. This definition does not include peripatetic staff employed by HCC.
4. 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 or a map is available at Ss Alban & Stephen Church).
5. Other baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice.
6. Other baptised Catholic children.
7. Other 'looked after' children and children who ceased to be 'looked after' because they were adopted or made subject to Child Arrangements Orders or Special Guardianship Orders.
8. 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.
9. Children of Catechumens and members of other Eastern Christian Churches who provide a certificate of baptism and/or certificate/letter of entry in the order of Catechumens.
10. Children of other Christian denominations resident within the Catholic parish of Ss Alban & Stephen. 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 Christian denominations living outside the Catholic parish of Ss Alban & Stephen. First consideration will be given to those whose minister supplies a supporting letter confirming membership of the Church or faith community.
12. Children of other faiths living within the Catholic 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.
13. Any other children.

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;

- **'Certificate of Catholic Practice'** means a certificate issued by the family's parish priest (or the priest in charge of the church where the family attends Mass) in the form laid down by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. It will be issued if the priest is satisfied that at least one Catholic parent or carer (along with the child, if he or she is over seven years old) have (except when it was impossible to do so) attended Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation for at least five years (or, in the case of the child, since the age of seven, if shorter). It will also be issued when the practice has been continuous since being received into the Church if that occurred less than five years ago. It is expected that most Certificates will be issued on the basis of attendance. A Certificate may also be issued by the priest when attendance is interrupted by exceptional circumstances which excuse from the obligation to attend on that occasion or occasions. Further details of these circumstances can be found in the guidance issued to priests [<http://rcdow.org.uk/education/governors/admissions/>]

- **'Children of other Christian denominations'** means children who belong to other churches and ecclesial communities which, acknowledging God's revelation in Christ, confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures, and, in obedience to God's will and in the power of the Holy Spirit commit themselves: to seek a deepening of their communion with Christ and with one another in the Church, which is his body; and to fulfil their mission to proclaim the Gospel by common witness and service in the world to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. An ecclesial community which on principle has no credal statements in its tradition, is included if it manifests faith in Christ as witnessed to in the Scriptures and is committed to working in the spirit of the above.

All members of Churches Together in England and of CYTÛN are deemed to be included in the above definition, as are all other churches and ecclesial communities that are in membership of any local Churches Together Group (by whatever title) on the above basis.

- **'Children of other faiths'** means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of 'other Christian denominations' and which falls within the definition of a religion for the purposes of charity law. The Charities Act 2011 defines religion to include:

- A religion which involves belief in more than one God; and
- A religion which does not involve belief in a God.

Case law has identified certain characteristics which describe the meaning of religion for the purposes of charity law, which are characterised by a belief in a supreme being and an expression of belief in that supreme being through worship.

sibling' means the sister, brother, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent/carers 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 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 eg 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;

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 re-rank 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.

Admission of Children educated outside their chronological age group

Parents may request that their child be educated out of his/her chronological age group. Such requests must be made in writing to the Chair of Governors during the autumn term in the year of application ie Sept – Dec 2017 for children born between 01.09.13 – 31.08.14. Governors will consider each request on its own merits and permission will only be given in exceptional circumstances. When the application is made, it will be ranked with all the other applications and no further exceptions will be given. A statutory right of appeal will be given upon refusal if no place has been offered in any school year.

Reception Year Deferred Entry

Applicants may defer entry to school up until statutory school age, i.e. the first day of term following the child's fifth birthday. Application is made in the usual way and then the deferment is requested. The place will then be held until the first day of the spring or summer term. Applicants may choose for their child to attend part-time until statutory school age is reached. Therefore applicants who wish to defer entry should note that admission can only be deferred until 1 April 2019. However, summer born children may continue to attend part-time until the end of the summer term or until their 5th birthday, whichever is sooner.

Certificate of Catholic Practice

Applicants applying under criteria 2 to 5 inclusive must submit a Certificate of Catholic Practice (CCP) by the closing date. This is available from the Priest at the parish where the family normally worships or the diocesan website. It is the parent's duty to ensure that the CCP is submitted to the school in good time.