

Ss Alban and Stephen Catholic Nursery School

Nursery Admissions Policy for September 2016– August 2017

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 2016. **Our Nursery, Infant & Junior** 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 standard Common Application Form (CAF) form must be completed and returned to your Local Authority by the stated date. **In addition, applicants are requested to note that they should complete a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) in full and provide proof of address. (Home address refers to the address at which the child resides for 50% or more of the school week). If applicants wish to be considered as practising Catholics, they should also complete the Diocesan form.** Both the SIF and the Diocesan form 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 write to all applicants on behalf of the Governing Body with the outcome of your application on 16 April 2016.

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 practising Catholic children who will have a sibling at the Infant School or Junior School at the time of admission.

3. Baptised practising Catholic children 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 practising Catholic children.
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.
8. Catechumens and members of other Eastern Christian Churches. First consideration will be given to those whose minister supplies a supporting letter.
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.
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.
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.
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;
- '**practising Catholic**' means a Catholic child from a practising Catholic family where this practice is verified by a Catholic priest on the Diocesan form provided with the Supplementary Information Form;
- '**sibling**' refers to brothers and sisters, step brothers and sisters, half brothers and sisters or adopted brothers and sisters;
- '**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.

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. A 'straight line' distance measurement; from the address point of the child's home supplied by NLPG (National Land and Property Gazetteer) to the address point of the school is used in all home to school distance measurements for community and VC schools in Hertfordshire. In case of equidistance from the school, random allocation (lottery) in the presence of an independent witness will be used.

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.

Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or EHC (Education, Health and Care) Plan

The admission of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. This procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of statements by the pupil's home Local Education Authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*. Under Section 324 of the Education Act 1996, the governors are obliged to admit any child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs where this nursery is named in the statement. The governors must also admit a child with an EHC (Education, Health and Care) Plan that names 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.

