



Folkestone
St Mary's Church of England
Primary Academy

Policy for Admissions 2017/2018

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All Academy Policies should be read in conjunction with the Academy's Equality Plan

Introduction

This paper is mainly an administrative one which explains the procedures for applying for a place and the way the academy prioritises applicants when it is over subscribed. For details about the school itself, please visit our website at www.stmarysfolkestone.com or ring 01303 251390 to make an appointment to visit the academy.

St Mary's has a Church of England Christian foundation and this is reflected in our policy.

We would like to emphasise that we welcome applicants from families of all religious faiths and those who have no belief. We do however regard religious education as a very important subject which is used to inform the children about the various faiths, particularly Christianity, so that our children are well informed when they become adults and equipped to reflect on the wider and deeper aspects of life.

Our assemblies always include Christian worship and we use this to help children learn core values for wider life such as caring for others and a sense of social responsibility.

In the school year 2017/18, our planned admission number is 60.

Prospective parents are advised to read this section very carefully, as the school is heavily oversubscribed and the Governing Body regrets that it is often unable to offer places to all applicants.

As an academy, St. Mary's is operationally independent of KCC but as a provider of state education it works in collaboration with KCC because the latter is responsible for the strategic planning of services including school places. Reference to KCC in this policy must be understood in the context of this working relationship.

The school serves principally the East Cliff area of Folkestone, but because of changes in legislation, which rightly give parents a wider choice and because of our Church of England Foundation, St. Mary's admits children from a wider geographical area.

By law, children are required to attend school from the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday, but in order to provide a full year of the reception curriculum, we are able to offer places for children during the academic year following their fourth birthday. All children in this age group are offered full time schooling from the middle of September. In a few instances, parents prefer their young children to start later in the year and we are happy to accommodate their wishes. Parents have the right to defer entry or to take up the place part time until their child reaches compulsory school age. Please see Appendix 1 for details of parental right to defer entry. Some parents may feel

that their summer born children are not ready to being school before they reach compulsory school age but do not wish for their child to miss the reception year – please see Appendix 2 for information on Summer Born Children and Admission Outside of expected year group.

The size of the school building restricts the number of children the school is able to admit and the Governors are unable to offer more than 60 places (our standard number) in the reception year group.

1. How to apply for a place

All parents who wish their children to attend St. Mary's during the academic year 2017/18 should contact the school office and register their child as soon as possible and by the dates published by the local authority to comply with the county wide admissions policy procedure. We work closely with KCC and other schools to provide smooth and co-ordinated admission arrangements across the area.

All parents are required to complete both a KCC common application form and St. Mary's own admission supplementary information form and return to St. Mary's by the date stated above.

The number of applications usually exceeds the places available and the Governors' Admissions Committee, when it meets (usually at the end of the Spring Term) has to use the admissions policy to decide which pupils will receive the available places.

The admissions policy does not take account of how long a child has been registered, but it provides the criteria to enable applications received by the date published by the LA to be placed in an order of priority. This date from the LA will be published by January 2016.

The Academy's waiting list will be re-ranked in line with the published subscription criteria every time a child is added.

Before the application of oversubscription criteria, children with a statement of special educational need, which names the school, will be admitted. As a result of this, the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly.

Health and Special Access Reasons - medical, health, social and special access reasons will be applied in accordance with the school's legal obligations, in particular those under the Equality Act 2010. Priority will be given to those children whose mental or physical impairment, or that of their parent(s), means they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Such claims will need to be supported by written evidence from a suitably qualified medical or other practitioner who can demonstrate a special connection between these needs and the particular school.

Subject as above, the criteria for prioritising admissions are as follows:-

1. Children in Local Authority Care or formally in Local Authority care – a child under the age of 18 years for whom the local authority provides accommodation by agreement with their parents/carers (section 22 of the Children Act 1989) or who

ceased to be so because they were adopted or who is the subject of a care order under Part IV of the Act.

2. Children with parents/guardians who are actual communicant members of the Parish Churches of St. Mary's and St. Eanswythe's and St. Peter's.
3. Children with parents/guardians who are actual communicant members of any other Anglican Church in the Folkestone Area.
4. Children with parents/guardians who are committed members of any other Christian denomination in the Folkestone Area.
5. Children with brothers or sisters in the school at the time of entry.
6. Other applicants who have stated a wish to receive a place at a Church School. These applicants will be prioritised according to proximity of residence.
7. Other applicants. These applicants will be prioritised according to proximity of residence. We use the distance between the child's permanent home address and the school, measured in a straight line using Ordinance Survey address point data. Distances are measured from a point defined as within the child's home to a point defined as within the school as specified by the Ordinance Survey. The same address point on the school site is used for everybody. These straight line measurements are used to determine how close each applicant's address is to the school.

2. Definitions and Interpretations

The Governors agreed upon the following definitions and interpretations:

- (i) Actual communicant member of the Church of England means a person who is baptised is on the electoral roll of a Church of England parish and has declared him or herself to be a member of the Church of England or a church in communion with it and has received communion according to the use of the Church of England or of a church in communion at least three times during the twelve months preceding the date of application.
- (ii) Reference to parents includes either or both parents or a sole parent where only one of two parents satisfied the criterion; the application will be treated equally with applications where the criterion is satisfied by both parents.
- (iii) The expression "parents" includes legal guardians.
- (iv) In this context, brother or sister means children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers and sisters, adopted siblings, step brothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters.
- (v) A pupil's home address is considered to be a residential property that is the **child's only or main residence** and not an address at which the child might sometimes stay or sleep due to domestic or special arrangements. The address must be the pupil's home address on the day the application form is completed and which is either:
 - owned by the child's parent, parents or guardian, OR

- leased to or rented by the child's parent, parents or guardian under a lease or written rental agreement.

If you live separately from your partner, but share responsibility for your child and the child lives at two different addresses during the week, we will regard the home address as the one at which the child sleeps for the majority of weekdays.

A block of flats has a single address point reference, so applicants living in the same block will be regarded as living the same distance away from the school. In the unlikely event that two or more children live in the same block and in all other ways have equal eligibility for the last available place at the school, the names will be issued a number and drawn randomly to decide which child should be given the place.

Applications falling within criteria 2, 3 and 4 will be required to submit with their application a letter from their priest or minister confirming that the criteria is satisfied or give the name of the priest or minister from whom a reference may be obtained.

Folkestone area will be defined as the Shepway District Council Wards, which are included within the Folkestone Charter Trustees, the Shepway District Council Ward of Hawkinge and the Dover District Council Ward of Capel-le-Ferne, which for some purposes is included within Folkestone.

Committed members of any other Christian denomination are defined as having attended worship on at least three occasions within the last twelve months and being considered a member of that denomination by the relevant priest or minister.

Other Christian denominations are defined as being members of the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland.

Children in the care of the local authority are defined by the Governors as a child under the age of 18 years from whom the Local Authority provides accommodation by agreement with their parents/carers (Section 22 of the Children Act 1989) or who is subject of a care order under Part IV of the Act.

Please refer to the 'Pre-School' section of the school prospectus for details of the activities and information available to parents of children who will be attending St. Mary's.

3. Successful Applicants

Successful applicants are informed early in the Summer Term and sent details of pre-school visits and other activities to help prepare each child for school.

4. Unsuccessful Applicants

Unsuccessful applicants are notified in writing and may lodge an appeal under the relevant legislation through the Academy's Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who will provide all relevant information. Unsuccessful applicants who wish to appeal should therefore contact the school where they will be advised of the next steps they should take in order to lodge an appeal.

Any applications that the Governors receive after the places have been allocated are put on a waiting list and considered according to the same criteria when a place becomes available.

5. Further Points

Prospective applicants are advised to study the map on our school website, which indicates the geographical area in which our pupils live. This will help individuals to decide if their child is likely to gain a place under the proximity of residence criteria.

After a place has been offered, the school reserves the right to withdraw the place in the following circumstances:

1. When a parent has failed to respond to an offer within a reasonable time; or
2. When a parent has failed to notify the school of important changes to the application information; or
3. The admission authority offered the place on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent.