

# **St Nicholas Church of England VA School Admissions Policy 2017-2018**

## **Vision Statement**

**‘At St Nicholas we nurture everyone to be the best we can be, in a caring and inclusive Christian environment.’**

UNCRC Article 29: All children have the right to learning that allows you to become the best that you can be.

## **Part I – General Information**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This document sets out the 2017/18 Admission Arrangements for St Nicholas CE VA Primary School. The Governing Body of **St Nicholas CE VA Primary School** is the admission authority responsible for the production of this document and for admission decisions in connection with the school.

Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the churches at parish and diocesan level.

The school aims to support children and their families by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils. However parents have the right to withdraw their children from the daily Christian act of worship and from Religious Education.

- 1.2** Every year the governing body will review and publish admission arrangements. The admissions authority will set a Published Admission Number (P.A.N), which indicates the number of places available within the year(s) of entry. This information will explain how places will be allocated until the PAN is reached at which point the governors will consider whether the resources available at the time will enable additional places to be made available. If not, the decision will be to refuse all applications that would lead to the admission of a pupil above the PAN.

The PAN for Reception is set at 25 for the 2017/18 schoolyear. If this is increased at any point in time, the revised PAN will be clearly advised on the school website. A non-statutory admission limit has been set for all other year groups. This may be increased or decreased from time to time according to the level of resource available at the school and the preferred year group/class organisation.

## **Part 2 – Aims**

- 2.1 The overriding aim of these Arrangements is that it should work for the benefit of all the children and parents / guardians in our area. These admission arrangements have been designed so as to be simple to use and to assist parents/guardians when deciding on the preferred school for their children. It should contribute to improving the standards for all children.
- 2.2 The school aims to maximise parental preference as fully as possible. However, the number of places that can be offered is dependent on the resources available to the school, which will be reflected by the Published Admission Number set for the year of entry.

## **Part 3 – Starting School in Reception in September 2017**

- 3.1 The procedure for applying to start school for the first time in Reception must be co-ordinated by the home local authority (the local authority responsible for the area in which the child subject to the application lives). Before applying for a school place, applicants are advised to refer to the 2017 Coordinated Admissions Scheme and Composite Prospectus (an admissions guide for parents) published by the 'home' Local Authority.
- 3.2 The application form (referred to as 'the Common Application Form') is available from the 'home' local authority. This must be completed and returned to the 'home' local authority, to arrive no later than 23.59 hours on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2017. This is available 'on line' or as a paper application form.
- 3.3 **Full time or part time attendance below statutory school age**  
Parents may apply for their child to start school, for the first time in the September following his/her fourth birthday and where offered a place, may choose for their child to start school either full time from day one, or on a part time basis as preferred. However, a child becomes of statutory school age during the term following his/her fifth birthday and, where registered at a school, must be accessing full time education from this point onwards.
- 3.4 **Deferred entry below statutory school age**  
Parents of children who have not yet reached statutory school age may choose to defer entry for their child until later in the school year, but cannot defer beyond statutory school age or the start of the last term in the school year.
- 3.5 **Applications submitted on behalf of summer born children**  
In the case of children born between 1st April and 31st August (summer born), parents may choose to delay their child's entry to school until the following September (2018), but must still apply during the 2017 admissions round making clear on the application form the intention to delay his/her child entry to school for one year.

Where the parent states a wish for his/her child to be considered with the 2018 Reception cohort rather than to join year 1 at that time, he/she will be required to formally withdraw the 2017 application and to make an entirely new application as part of the 2018 normal admissions round. The offer of a place in 2018 will be dependent on the number of applications received at that time and the number of places available to offer.

If the school is oversubscribed, all applications (initially those received on time) will be assessed according to the published oversubscription criteria in order to determine a priority for the offer of available places. The availability of any place will depend entirely on the outcome of the 2018 application ranking exercise.

- 3.6 The 'home' Local Authority will forward details of any applications submitted for St Nicholas CE VA Primary School to Dorset County Council. The Admissions Committee at St Nicholas Church of England Admission Policy 2017-18

Nicholas CE VA Primary School will meet and consider all application forms that indicate a preference for the school and where oversubscribed with applications the committee will apply the oversubscription criteria in order to prioritise applications and so determine a priority for admission. Applications submitted before the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2017 deadline will be administered and available places provisionally allocated before the consideration of any later application.

- 3.7** Decisions will be notified to applicants by the 'home' local authority. A letter and/or email will be sent on behalf of the Governing Body on or around 16<sup>th</sup> April 2017 (dependent on the date published in the Local Authority Coordinated Admissions Scheme).

#### **Part 4 - Waiting Lists**

- 4.1** During the normal admissions round it is always necessary to complete a Local Authority Common Application form to apply for a school place. Registering interest with the school before the admissions round guarantees neither a place nor priority on any subsequent waiting list.
- 4.2** If the school is oversubscribed for children due to start in reception in 2017-2018 a waiting list will be maintained until 31 December 2017. The position on the waiting list will be determined by applying the published oversubscription criteria and not by date of receipt. Each name added will require the list to be re-ranked. The existence of a waiting list does not remove the right of appeal against any refusal of a place from any unsuccessful applicant.
- 4.3** Names will be removed from the waiting list ahead of the waiting list formally shutting down, if a written request is received or if the offer of a place that becomes available is declined. Looked after children and previously looked after children, as defined within these admission arrangements, or children who are the subject of a local authority direction, or who are allocated to a school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over any child on the waiting list.

#### **Part 5 - Applications outside the normal admissions round (In-Year Admission)**

- 5.1** Applications for a place required during the academic year may be submitted to the school at any time, but will not be administered more than six school weeks in advance of a place being required, except in particular circumstances applying for Crown Servant or Service family children (see section 9.3). The In-Year application form is available from the school office upon request.
- 5.2** The Admissions Authority will consider applications during term time only and strictly in the order (by day) that they are received. Applications that arrive during a school holiday will be held and processed when school resumes. If the governors receive more than one application on the same day for the same year group they must apply the published oversubscription criteria in order to determine a priority for admission where insufficient places exist within the PAN or admission limit applying at that time.
- 5.3** The non-statutory admission limits (applying to years 1 – 6) indicate the number of places available in a particular year group at a particular time. The governors are permitted to adjust these limits according to the level of resource available to support the year group concerned. If the Admissions Committee determines that the admission of a further child would impact on the efficient delivery of education or the efficient use of resources the application will be refused.

- 5.4** Applicants will receive a written decision by first class letter post within 10 school days of receipt of the In-Year application form or receipt of any supplementary information where this is subsequently provided in support of an application and is deemed necessary in order to determine the admission decision. If an application is refused, the decision letter will set out the reasons for refusal and explain how to appeal against the Admission Authority's decision.
- 5.5** The applicant must confirm his/her acceptance of an In-Year offer within ten school days of the offer being made. The place will then remain available for the remainder of six school weeks from the date on the offer letter. If the child concerned is not on roll and attending before this deadline, the Admissions Committee will consider withdrawing the offer of a place.
- 5.6** Subject to the information provided on the application form and the circumstances at the school the Admissions Committee may decide to refer a refused application to Dorset Local Authority in order that the Fair Access Protocol may be applied. This would be where that child satisfies one or more of the criteria set out in the local authority Fair Access Protocol and is deemed to require a higher level of support than can be provided at the school. The Fair Access Protocol enables the local authority to engage, where necessary, directly with a family in order to help identify a suitable educational placement as soon as possible.

## **Part 6 - Oversubscription generally**

- 6.1** The policy of St Nicholas CE VA Primary School is to always offer a place, where one is available, irrespective of gender, religion, ethnicity or country of origin, disability or academic ability. However, where more applications are received than there are places available to offer, the oversubscription criteria set out in Part 7 will be applied for all applications received, in order to rank applications and so determine a priority for the offer of available places.
- 6.2 Education Health & Care Plan**  
A child who is the subject of an Education Health & Care Plan is admitted to school in accordance with a separate process managed and administered by the Local Authority in whose area the family lives. The Admission Authority must always admit a child to the school named in the Plan, irrespective of the Published Admission Number or any admission limit applying at that time and before the consideration of any other applications.
- 6.3** Where a parent wishes his/her application to be prioritised on the grounds of complying with a faith criteria he/she must submit the school's Supplementary Information Form (SIF) which is available from the school office and school website, [www.childokeford.dorset.sch.uk](http://www.childokeford.dorset.sch.uk). This form must be fully completed and returned to the school at the same time as the application is made otherwise it will not be considered during the admissions process. Confirmation of status may be requested from the relevant priest/pastor.

## **Part 7 - Oversubscription Criteria**

Where more applications have been received than there are places available within the required year group, the following priorities shall apply in order:

### **7.1 Looked After Children** Oversubscription criterion 1

A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child Arrangements, or special guardianship

order. For admission purposes, a looked after child is a child who, at the time of application, is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 applies).

## **7.2 Vulnerable children**

- (i) Children of families with confirmed refugee status
- (ii) Children with a medical condition or disability where written evidence is available from a senior clinical medical officer and the child's general practitioner or specialist, showing it would be detrimental to the child's health not to admit him / her to the school rather than any other. Details of this must accompany the initial description.
- (iii) Children where either parent has a disability which would make travel to a different school difficult. Evidence from a registered health professional such as a doctor or social worker will be required. Details of this must accompany the initial description.

## **7.3. SIBLINGS**

A child is considered in this category if an older sibling is attending the school at the deadline date, and will still be attending at the time of admission, and where the child lives outside the designated area at the same address as the older sibling. Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling. Children with a sibling living within catchment area (see section 9.8) at the time of application who will still be on roll at the time of admission and who lives at the same address

### **7.3.1. OTHER CHILDREN**

Children living within catchment area (see section 9.8) who do not qualify under one of the above criteria.

**7.4** Children living outside catchment area (see section 9.8) who are regular (*i.e. have attended church monthly for a period of at least 12 months prior to the date of application*) practising Christians, of whatever denomination, at a recognised church or religious group. (A recognised church or religious group is one that is a member of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (see [ctbi.org.uk](http://ctbi.org.uk)).

**7.5** Children living outside catchment area (see section 9.8) not satisfying a higher criterion

## **7.6 Tie breaker**

If the school is oversubscribed within any criterion above, the straight-line distance from the child's home address to the school will be used as the determining factor. Distances will be measured according to the Ordnance Survey eastings and northings for the child's home address and the school. Those living closer to the school will be given priority.

If two or more children with the same priority for admission live an indistinguishable distance from the school but cannot all be admitted then the available places will be decided by the casting of lots supervised by someone independent of the school or the Local Authority.

Once an offer of a school place has been made it may only be lawfully withdrawn in very limited circumstances, which include an offer of place based upon a fraudulent or misleading application. Where an offer of place is withdrawn the application will be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if an offer of place is refused.

## **Part 8 - Appeals Procedure**

**8.1** Applicants whose school place application has been turned down will have the legal right to appeal against the decision of the Admissions Authority, providing a formal application for a school place was submitted and a decision letter received. Full details explaining the appeal process will be set out in the decision letter.

**8.2** An appeal timetable is published on the school website by 28th February every year. This sets out the timeframe for the various stages in the appeal process and includes statutory dates by which appeals must be heard. The Admissions Authority does not organise appeal hearings during school holiday periods and any appeal received when the school is closed will not be administered until school resumes.

**8.3** An appeal form can be obtained from the school office. This must be completed and submitted directly to the school office.

## **Part 9 – Further General Information**

### **9.1 Applications for children to enter a year group other than chronological age**

The governors will consider applications on a case by case basis for retained or accelerated entry in cases where parents would like their child to be admitted to a year group either side of the chronological age year group. The reasons for the request must be fully explained in writing and included with the school place application form.

### **9.2 Multiple birth applications (for example twins)**

In the case of multiple birth applications the Published Admission Number or admission limit will be exceeded, or increased, at the point of allocation in order to ensure that multiple birth siblings (applying the definition of siblings in section 7.2) can be allocated places at the same school provided it is practicable.

### **9.3 Children from Overseas**

The Governors will process admission applications for children living overseas providing they have European Economic Area (EEA) citizenship, are United Kingdom (UK) citizens returning to the UK, or they hold an appropriate Home Office Visa at the time of application. All overseas applications will be considered according to the child's home address at the time of submission unless proof of the child's future UK address is provided with the application (see section 9.5 Home Address). The only exceptions are children of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants (including Diplomats) returning to the UK with a confirmed posting within the area.

### **9.4 Parent**

A parent in education law includes natural parents, whether they are married or not and a person other than the natural parent(s) who has parental responsibility or care of a child or young person. Having care of a child or young person means the person who looks after the child and with whom the child lives irrespective of what their relationship is with the child.

### **9.5 Home Address**

For the purposes of school admission, the governors' definition of a child's home address is considered to be where the child resides for the majority of their time with the person(s) who legally have care of the child. Documentary evidence of house ownership, or a minimum six-month rental agreement, may be required together with proof of the child's residency at the property concerned. Places will not be allocated on the basis of a future house move unless this can be confirmed through the exchange of contract or a signed formal lease agreement in place at the time of application. An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place.

## **9.6 Supplementary Information Forms (SIFS)**

The governors' Supplementary Information Form must be submitted in connection with oversubscription criteria. The governors define regular church attendance as 'at least once per month for a minimum period of 12 months prior to application'. Applicants must ensure that the governors' Supplementary Information Form is completed by the vicar, priest, minister, pastor or warden of their church and returned according to the instructions set out on the form.

## **9.7 Withdrawing the offer of a school place**

In the case of In-Year admissions, the child must be attending school within six school weeks of the date of the original offer letter. The governors reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a place if this condition is not met and to reallocate the place as necessary. The governors may also withdraw the offer of a school place if the child's home address is subsequently found to be fraudulent.

## **9.8 Catchment boundary maps**

A map indicating the catchment of St Nicholas CE VA Primary School is annexed to this Policy or available to view on the school website: [www.childokeford.dorset.sch.uk](http://www.childokeford.dorset.sch.uk). Alternatively, a paper copy can be made available at the School Office upon request.

## **9.9 Relevant Documents**

Important information published by local authorities applies to some areas of school admissions procedure. If you are considering submitting an application for your child to start or transfer school, you are advised to refer to your local authority's website. Documents of particular importance include:

- The Local Authority Coordinated Admissions Scheme
- The Composite Prospectus 'Primary Admissions Guide for Parents' (this will include detailed information about how to apply for a child to start school for the very first time in the Reception year group)
- The Local Authority School Transport policy
- The Local Authority Fair Access Protocol (this document applies only for applications made in connection with a place required during the academic year)

## **9.10 Enquiries about these arrangements**

These Admission Arrangements reflect the statutory requirements of the Department for Education 2014 School Admissions Code and the 2012 School Admissions Appeals Code [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk). The documents were compiled by the Governing Body (the Admissions Authority for the school) and published on the school's website following a public consultation. The administrative practices described in these arrangements are designed to be fair and reasonable and the information provided is intended to explain clearly:

- How to apply for a place at St Nicholas CE VA Primary School
- How the Admissions Authority administers admission applications
- How to appeal against a decision to refuse admission

Please contact the school office if you have any concerns about the content of these admission arrangements, or would like to discuss your particular circumstances in more detail.

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School website: [www.childokeford.dorset.sch.uk](http://www.childokeford.dorset.sch.uk))

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