

St Mary's Church of England School



Learn. Grow. Achieve. Flourish.

Admissions Policy

POLICY: Admissions Policy

APPROVED BY: Full Governing Board

APPROVED DATE: September 2026

REVIEW DATE: September 2027

This policy is statutory and reviewed annually

Our School Vision

St Mary's school vision is to embrace a Christian like way of living, learning and teaching.

As a Church of England primary school, we value and are ambitious for all children and are committed to providing a positive, happy, safe and stimulating environment for them to enjoy and excel in their learning; grow in confidence, resilience and independence; achieve their full potential and flourish as individuals.

'I instruct you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths' (Proverbs 4:11)

Equality Statement

St Mary's CE Primary School is committed to ensuring that this policy is implemented in a way that promotes equality of opportunity, values diversity and fosters an inclusive environment for all members of the school community. We will not discriminate unlawfully against any individual based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

A. Criteria for Admissions

This policy has been generated using the Slough Local Authority criteria for St Mary's Church of England Primary School. As a maintained voluntary controlled school, the determined admissions arrangements is Slough Borough Council admissions department.

The school's Published Admission Number (PAN) for 2026-2027 is 90 pupils from Reception year to year 6. In nursery there is a 52-place provision (26am and 26pm allowing 3 hours per session, per day).

B. Over-subscription Criteria of Community Schools 2026-2027

Admission authorities for schools are required to have oversubscription criteria for each school. Oversubscription criteria refer to the published criteria that an admission authority applies when a school has more applications than places available to decide which children should be allocated a place.

All children whose Education, Health and Care Plan names the school will be admitted.

If a school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

Where a school is oversubscribed, the order of priority that will be applied for all children is as follows:

1. Looked after child

A Looked after child (as defined in the Children Act 1989) or a child who was previously looked after and has left care under a Child arrangements order, special guardianship order or who was adopted; and those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in care as a result of being adopted

2. Sibling

Children who have a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, stepbrother or sister, foster brother or sister (not cousins), living in the same family unit at the same address as the child on roll at the school - at the time of application and expected to still be on roll at the time of admissions.

3. Catchment Area

Children who live in the catchment area of the school.

4. Denomination

Children whose parents have selected the school on denominational grounds.

5. Strong Medical/Social need

Applicants whose child's medical or social circumstances require attendance at a particular school rather than any other school. The reasons must be fully supported in writing by a professional person involved with the child such as a doctor or social worker. This must show that the school requested is the only school that the child can attend because of the exceptional medical and social needs. All documents must be submitted with the common Application Form (CAF) or with a printed copy of the online form if completed online.

6. Distance

All other applicants who live nearest from home to school.

Tie Breaker

If there is one place available and two or more children next in order of priority or next on the waiting list meet the appropriate criterion equally, the place will be allocated using the distance criterion. Distance will be measured in a straight line using the co-ordinates derived from the National London Property Gazetteer from the centre of the child's home address to the school's main gate. If the distances are equal, a place will be allocated by drawing lots in the presence of an independent witness. Parents should note that admission to reception classes is determined using the admission criteria for primary schools.

Attendance at a nursery does not guarantee a reception place at an attached infant or primary school.

Multiple births

If children of multiple birth (twins and triplets) require admission in the same year group and there is only one place available within the published admission number, places will be offered to those children over and above the school's PAN.

Waiting list

Slough Local Authority will maintain a waiting list for all community and voluntary controlled schools. To ensure that the LA, as the admissions authority, meets its duty to continue to co-ordinate admissions beyond the offer date and comply with the parents' highest possible preference, we will ensure that waiting lists do not contain lower ranked preferences.

Waiting lists for all community and voluntary controlled schools will include all those that applied after the national closing date. Waiting lists will be held in the order of oversubscription criteria, not in order of when an application is received. This means a child's position can move down as well as up following the addition of any applications that may have a higher priority.

The waiting list will be in operation until 31 December 2027 in the academic year of the reception admission. Parents should complete and submit an in-year application form thereafter if they wish their child's details to be kept on the waiting list for the remainder of the academic year.

For the in-year waiting list, parents must complete and submit a new application form at the beginning of the new academic year.

Late applications

Application forms must be received by Slough Borough Council by the closing date (15 January 2027). Applications received after the closing dates will be considered as late applications and will be processed after places have been allocated to applicants who applied on time.

In exceptional circumstances, the application may be considered as on time but must be received by dates stated in the published scheme. This also applies to any changes to the application e.g. order of school preference.

C. Admission of children outside their normal age group

Delayed entry for summer born children

Children born between 1 April and 31 August are regarded as summer born children.

In exceptional circumstances, summer born children may be admitted to school in a different year group. This is usually due to concerns in relation to a child's development. If parents would like to request for their 'summer born child' to start school outside of their normal age group, and be admitted to reception rather than Year 1, the following process will apply.

Parents will apply for the normal reception year for their child. The normal year in this case, is the academic year when the child will be five years old – between 1 September and 31 August.

When parents apply, they will inform the School Admissions Team in writing, that you do not wish to send their child to school until the September after their fifth birthday and request that their child is admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than Year 1. The parent's letter or email would include reasons for their request and any evidence to support their case.

Evidence could show:

- whether your child is summer born
- information about their child's personal, social, emotional development and academic development
- if relevant, the child's medical history and views of a medical professional
- whether your child has previously been educated out of year group
- whether your child was born prematurely

The local authority, as the admissions authority will look at each case on its merits, considering the child's best interest and either agree or refuse the request on that basis. We will seek views of the headteacher of the school where the child is most likely to be allocated a school place before a decision is taken. We may also consider the views of the manager of their current early years setting and other professionals. We will make sure parents are aware of whether their request for admission out of year group has been agreed before the final offers are made in April. Any reasons for refusal will be shared with the parent.

If a parent's request is refused, the child will still be considered for admission to their normal age group. If we agree to the request, the child will be admitted into reception rather than Year 1 the following year; but they would need to apply again for a reception place for that year. Please note the decision to agree to delay a child does not guarantee that a place will be available, as this depends on the number of applications for entry in that year and it is not possible to reserve a place until the following year.

Requests for admission out of the normal year group will be considered alongside other applications made at the same time. An application from a child who would 'normally' be a Year 1 child for a reception place will be considered alongside applications for reception. There is no statutory right of appeal if a request is not agreed.

D. Deferred entry to school in the same academic year

Children start school in the September of the school year in which they will become 5 years of age, which means most children are 4 years old when they start school.

Children reach statutory school age on the prescribed date following their 5th birthday. The prescribed days are 31st August, 31 December and 31 March. Statutory school age means the age when a parent is legally required to make sure that their child attends school (or is educated other than at school).

If parents feel that their child is not ready to start school in the September following their fourth birthday, they can either arrange for their child to attend part-time until they reach statutory school age or defer the date the child is admitted to the school until later on in the Reception year.

If the child's entry is deferred, the school must hold your child's place and not offer it to another child. The child must also start school in the school year for which the offer was made. The latest the child can start school is at the beginning of the summer term 2027.

If a parent wishes to defer their child's entry, they will need to confirm this with the school where their child has been offered a reception place. They may also need to confirm this with the early learning provider so that their child can continue to receive their free early learning entitlement.

E. Information regarding Primary In-Year Admissions and Fair Access Protocols

In-Year Admissions

A casual admission is either a new applicant who is moving to Slough or an existing resident attending a Slough school who wishes to transfer. Entry is to year groups R-11 during the academic year and outside of the above entry to Year R or junior transfer process.

The local authority, as admissions authority manages in year admissions to the four schools. If a parent/carer wishes to apply for a Slough school as an in-year admission, they must apply direct to the local authority using the In-Year Application Form.

The admissions authority will notify the parents of the outcome of their application in writing within 15 school days. Where the school is unable to offer a school place, parents will be informed of the reason for refusal and provided with information about their right of appeal in accordance with Paragraph 2.32 of the Admissions Code.

Places for in-year admissions must be offered in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria for the school.

Details of the in-year admissions processes for Slough schools will be published on the Slough Borough Council In Year Admissions webpage for each academic year by 31 August.

Parents/carers must be advised of their right of appeal if a school named on the application cannot offer a place.

Fair Access Protocols:

Slough Borough Council administer the locally agreed Fair Access Protocols for children who meet the relevant criteria on behalf of and in partnership with all Slough primary, infant, junior schools, and academies.

The Local Authority will ensure that there is a fair distribution across all Slough schools/academies of pupils who are identified as having challenging behaviour under the agreed Fair Access Protocols.

Full details of the agreed Slough Fair Access Protocols will be published on the Slough Borough Council In Year Admissions webpage.

Definitions and notes

The following definitions will apply to all community and voluntary controlled schools in Slough.

Distance

Distance will be measured in a straight line using the co-ordinates from the National Property Gazetteer from the centre of the child's home address (including flats) to the school's main gate.

It may be necessary to use other OS maps or online resources for any home address outside of the Slough local authority area not covered by the local authority's computerised distance measuring system. In the case of flats, the priority is that of floor level i.e. ground, first, second etc. in that order.

Home Address

The home address is the address of the parent with whom the child normally lives from Monday to Friday. The address of a relative or childminder, or where the child stays or sleeps because of special domestic arrangements or personal circumstances cannot be considered.

Shared responsibility

When parents live separately but the child lives with both parents at different addresses, the child's home address will be taken to be the address where the child lives for most of the week. If the child spends an equal

amount of time with each parent, the address will be taken to be that of the main parent/carer eligible to receive Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit.

If different applications are received for the same child with different addresses, or the Admissions Team is made aware of a dispute between two parents, all applications will be placed on hold and will not be processed until such time that:

- one joint application is made; or
- written agreement is provided from both parents; or
- a court order is obtained confirming which parent's application carries precedence.

Previously looked after children

Previously looked after children are children who are looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order).