Admissions Policy for 2017-18

We believe in the values of the gospel: goodness, truth, justice, hope, the love of God and of each other.

We show this by respecting and caring for each other.

As a Catholic school, we learn about God and His church. We play together, we learn together and we pray together especially in the celebration of Mass.

We are aware that we are part of a wider world of other faiths and cultures that deserve our respect and understanding.

We aim to ensure everyone in our school community is treated with respect, fairness and a sense of belonging.

INTRODUCTION

St Gildas Catholic Primary School is a Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, which was established by the Church to serve the parish of The Holy Ghost, Yeovil. A map of the appropriate parish is available for viewing on request from the school office. Today, St Gildas provides inclusive education for children in the Yeovil area. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Governors acting as the admission authority undertake admissions in a fair and equal manner in line with the school's trust deed and Catholic ethos. This policy has been drawn up according to the School Admissions Code and in consultation with Clifton Diocese and Somerset Local Authority. However, the Governors are the admissions authority for the school.

PUBLISHED ADMISSION NUMBER

The Admission Number for the reception year group is 30 and this is the number of place available in each year group.

APPLICATION AND ADMISSION FOR RECEPTION.

In order to be considered for a place at St Gilda’s Catholic Primary School, an application form must be completed and submitted to your home Local Authority. For those living in Somerset, starting school applications can be made on-line at
www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions or paper forms can be obtained from Somerset Local Authority. School place application forms must be submitted by the following closing date and time:

The closing date for reception year applications in the 2017-18 school year is 23.59 hours on 15 January 2017. Outcomes will be sent by e-mail or post on the published outcome date, 16 April 2017 (or next working day).

Any applications received after the closing date will be recorded as late and cannot then be administered until all on time applications have been considered by which time places may no longer be available within the Published Admission Number (unless accepted as on-time under exceptional circumstances by the home LA).

Places will be allocated strictly in accordance with the National Equal Preference with ranking allocation method.

IN YEAR APPLICATIONS

In-year application forms are available from the School. Applications for a place during the academic year must be made directly to the school office, by completing the in-year application form. Applications will not be processed more than six weeks or half a term in advance of being required. For those wishing to be considered from a new address, proof of address may be required to be submitted with the application. This will be either the formal ‘exchange of contracts’ letter from the solicitor for a house buy, a recent utility bill or the signing of a minimum of a six month tenancy agreement. The Governing Body reserve the right to seek further documentary evidence to support a claim of residence.

The Governors’ Admissions Committee will consider applications on a weekly basis with a 4pm deadline every Friday (during term-time). Where possible, applicants will receive a written response within 10 school days following receipt of the application. Where a school place is offered it will be held open for 10 school days and applicants will need to confirm acceptance within this time or the offer may be withdrawn.

CHILDREN WITH STATEMENTS OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) OR EDUCATION HEALTH CARE PLANS (EHC)

There is a different procedure for the admission to school for children with a Statement of SEN or EHC plan. It is administered by the Local Authority in whose area the family lives. The Local Authority is responsible for issuing the Statement of SEN or EHC plan and consulting with the parent/carer and the Governing Body of the school, if a preference has been made for the school, before the school is named in the Statement of SEN or EHC plan. Once the school is named then children with a Statement or EHC plan are admitted before the over-subscription criteria are applied.

OVER-SUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

In the event of oversubscription (i.e. more applications than available places) places will be offered in accordance with the following criteria.

1. Children who are in the care of a Local Authority or have previously been and are now formally adopted or subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order who are Baptised Catholic. (see important note 1).
2. Children who are Baptised Catholic, identified with a sensory, physical or medical disability (High Needs Pupils), where a multi-agency professional team has identified the school as the nearest suitable school (see important note 2).


5. Children who are in the care of a Local Authority or have previously been and are now formally adopted or subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order (see important note 1).

6. Children identified with a sensory, physical or medical disability (High Needs Pupils), where a multi-agency professional team has identified the school as the nearest accessible school (see important note 2).

7. Children who will have a brother or sister (as defined below) at the school at the time of their admission.

8. Children of a Baptised Catholic parent/carer with parental responsibility for the child, who live within the parish of The Holy Ghost, Yeovil.

9. Other applicants not in the above categories.

In Categories 1, 2, 3, 4, and 8 a copy of a valid baptismal certificate or equivalent validation should be submitted to the school by the closing time and date for consideration in the first round of allocations. The school may also request sight of the original.

IMPORTANT NOTES

1. A ‘Looked After Child’ is a child who 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 (see the definition in Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989). Previously Looked After Children includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).

2. This enables schools to plan with SEN Officers for the school entry of children with physical, medical or sensory impairments. This includes children that are in receipt of Early Years School Action Plus funding at level 3 and/or where significant capital works (e.g., accessible toilets, changing space, access to classrooms) are required. The lead time on these projects mean that school place outcome dates are too late for work to be completed in time for school entry in September. However, with the support of this criterion plans can be actioned with certainty early in the year.

3. Priority within each criterion will be given to:

   (a) Children living closest to the school as a straight line measurement (see distance measurement definition below)

   (b) The drawing of lots supervised by a person independent of the school.

DEFINITIONS

SIBLING

Brothers and sisters:

To be considered as a brother or sister, a child must be living at the same address for the majority of the time as a full, half, step or adoptive brother or sister. Step brothers/sisters are
defined as children who are not necessarily related biologically (including Foster children) but are living in the same household for the majority of the time* at the address considered to be the address of the child for whom the application is made.

*A child must be living at an address for at least 50% of the time to be considered as living there for the majority of the time.
The brother or sister must be attending (or is expected by the school and/or Somerset Local Authority to be attending) the school at the time of admission.

HOME ADDRESS
A child’s home address is considered to be where the child spends the majority of their time with the person(s) who have care of the child.

Documentary evidence of ownership or rental agreement may be required, together with proof of actual permanent residence at the property concerned. Places cannot be allocated on the basis of intended future changes of address unless the house move can be confirmed through the formal ‘exchange of contracts’ or the signing of a minimum of a six month tenancy agreement. An address change due to a move to live with family or friends will not be considered until the move has taken place and suitable proof of residency has been obtained. Proof that a move from the previous address has taken place may also be required e.g. proof of the house sale, a tenancy agreement showing the end date of the tenancy or a notice to quit from the landlord.

It should also be noted that an address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place. A fraudulent claim to an address may lead to the withdrawal of the offer of a place.

You must notify your home LA of any change of address during the admissions procedure.

DISTANCE MEASUREMENTS
For the purpose of measuring home to school distance, all calculations will be measured using a straight line measurement from the address point of the home to the address point of the school using Somerset LA GIS mapping system. (Address Point is a dataset that uniquely defines and locates residential, business and public postal addresses in Great Britain. It is created by matching information from ordnance survey digital map databases with more than 27 million addresses recorded in the Royal mail)

PARENT OR PARENT/ CARER
Natural parents, whether they are married or not, any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person. Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child is considered to be a parent in education law).

WAITING LIST
A waiting list of unsuccessful applicants into the reception class will be held by the school until at least 31st December of the admitting year. This will be kept strictly in order of oversubscription criteria by the Governing Body. Where places become available within the Admission Number they will be allocated to the highest ranked eligible child on the maintained list. Applicants are re-ranked in line with the published admissions criteria . Each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the oversubscription criteria, so a child’s position on the waiting list may change.

APPEALS PROCEDURE
A parent/carer has the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel against the refusal by the Governing Body to admit their child, and should submit their appeal form to The Admissions & Entitlements Team within 20 school days of receiving the letter of refusal.
Appeals will be arranged by the Local Authority and conducted in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code. Information on the timetable for the appeals process is available on the school and Local Authority website by 28 February each year.

Agreed for consultation by the Governing Body of St Gildas Catholic Primary School on 01/12/15
CHILDREN FROM OUTSIDE THE UK
The Governing Body will process applications for children who are citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA) if proof of the Somerset address and the expected date of arrival in the UK are provided by 15 January for primary phase applications. The application can then be considered on this address. If proof of the Somerset address is not available by the dates above the application will be considered on the current address. Please click on this link for a list of the countries in the EEA. http://www.dwp.gov.uk/international/social-security-agreements/list-of-countries/
The Governing Body will also process applications for UK citizens living in any other country if proof of the Somerset address and the expected date of arrival back in the UK are provided by 15 January for primary phase applications. The application can then be considered on this address. If proof of the Somerset address is not available by the dates above the application will be considered on the current address. The only exceptions are children of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants (including Diplomats) returning to the area.
The Governing Body will not allocate a place to any non EEA citizen moving into Somerset from outside the UK prior to their arrival in the country. The Governing Body will require copies of the passports, appropriately endorsed visas and proof of residency – see home address definition.

MULTIPLE BIRTH APPLICATIONS (EG TWINS)
Where the last place within the Published Admission Number is allocated to a multiple birth application, a place(s) will be allocated to any siblings above the Published Admission Number at the point of allocation. This will ensure that multiple birth siblings can be allocated places at the same school (sibling definition still applies).

This includes situations whereby admitting a multiple birth siblings would breach the Infant class size legislation of a statutory limit of 30 infants (key stage 1 children) per qualified teacher.

DEFERRED ENTRY FOR INFANTS
Parents offered a place for their child have a right to defer entry, or to take a place up part-time, until the start of the term beginning immediately after their child has reached compulsory school age. However, places cannot be deferred until the next academic year.

SUMMER BORN CHILDREN
Parents of summer born children may request that they are admitted into reception rather than year one when they become of compulsory school age. Applications will be considered as set out below (see admission of children outside their normal age group)

ADMISSIONS OF CHILDREN OUTSIDE THEIR NORMAL AGE GROUP
Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group. When such a request is made, the academy trust will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the views of the headteacher and any supporting evidence provided by the parent.
The process for requesting such an admission is as follows;
  • The parent/carer is required to make an application for their child’s normal age group but can submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time.
  • The parent/carer is required to submit a request for admission out of the normal age group and attaching supporting evidence as necessary. The Governing Body have the right to request further evidence that may be required.
  • The Governing Body will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.
  • The Governing Body will write to the parent with the outcome and set out clearly the reasons for their decision.
  • In the case of applications for summer born children to be admitted out of their normal age group the parent will receive the outcome before the primary national offer day.
• If their request is agreed, their application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. If their request is refused, the parent must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or to refuse it and make an in year application for admission to year one for the September following the child’s fifth birthday.
• Where a parent's request is agreed, they must make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year.
• One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parents, therefore, should consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all their preference schools, rather than just their first preference schools.

WITHDRAWAL OF PLACES
The Governing Body will consider withdrawing the offer of a place at the school if;

• The place has been offered on the basis of an application which is subsequently found to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading.
• The parent/carer has not responded to the offer within a reasonable period of time and a further opportunity has been given for the parent to respond within 10 days having explained that the offer will be withdrawn if they do not.

ISSUES RELATING TO SHARED RESIDENCY ARRANGEMENTS
Legislation and guidance states that only one offer per child is made by the Local Authority. Therefore where separated parents/carers issue separate applications for their child the home Local Authority can only offer one place. In this situation the Governing Body requires parents/carers to resolve matters between themselves. If an agreement cannot be reached parents/carers may wish to seek legal advice. The Governing Body will not become involved in private disputes. The Governing Body does recognise that there may be situations where parents/carers cannot ultimately reach an agreement between themselves and it is, therefore, necessary for the Governing Body to take a decision. Where this is the case the Governing Body will try to establish where the child spends the majority of their time and prioritise the application made by the parent/carer living at this address.

Each parent/carer will be required to write to the Governing Body and inform them of the number of days each week the child spends with them. Where the child spends equal time with both parents/carers the Governing Body may ask for additional information including evidence of which parent/carer is in receipt of child benefit, and/or the name of the GP surgery at which the child is registered. When the Governing Body has received all the necessary information from both parents/carers a decision will be reached based on the evidence provided.

CHILDREN OF UK SERVICE PERSONNEL
The Governing Body endeavours to ensure that its admission arrangements support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children. In year applications are usually considered for admission up to a maximum of half a term in advance of the place being taken up. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area and other Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area where a place can be made available up to a year in advance of being required providing the appropriate documentation is provided as proof of posting (an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting.)

Usually, an in year place may be allocated prior to actual residency, only on receipt of exchange of contracts or a formal signed rental agreement. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area and other Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area. This means that, providing the application is accompanied by an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting, the admissions authority will process the application on that address. If proof of a home address is not available at this stage the admissions authority will accept a unit postal address or quartering area address.

Agreed for consultation by the Governing Body of St Gildas Catholic Primary School on 01/12/15
If the parent/carer is moving to the area as a result of leaving the armed forces then no special consideration will be given to the application under the grounds of the application being made by a service family.

For further information please refer to the DfE explanatory note on Admission of Children of Crown Servants;


**ADMISSIONS DATA**

Information relating to the following areas for the year preceding this policy will be published on the school website as soon as it is available:

- Number of applications received in each category
- The number of applicants in each category offered
- The number of appeals heard and upheld