THE ABBEY CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Grove Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 1DQ
T: 01727 851802

Policy review date: September 2025

Next policy review date: September 2026

Admissions Policy for 2027-2028

a. The school complies with all fair access policies drawn up by Hertfordshire County Council.

b. The School has a Published Admission Number of 30. The Governing Board will admit the Published Admission Number of 30 to the Reception Class each academic year.

c. Responsibility for admissions lies with the Governing Board. In the event of there being more applicants than places available, the Governing Board will apply the following criteria in the priority order of the categories listed below.

d. The Governing Board is required to admit a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan which names The Abbey CE VA Primary School. These children will be admitted before any oversubscription criteria are applied.

Category 1
Children in public care ("looked after children"), who are either in the care of the local authority or being provided with accommodation by the local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

Or

Children in the process of being placed for adoption and children who were previously 'looked after' but who have subsequently become adopted under the terms of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Section 46).

Or

Children who were previously looked after but ceased to be so because they became subject to a Child Arrangements Order under the Children Act 1989 (Section 8), immediately following having been looked after.

Or

Children who were previously looked after but ceased to be so because they became subject to a Special Guardianship Order under the Children Act 1989 (Section 14A) appointing one or more individual(s) to be his/her special guardian(s), immediately following having been looked after.

Or

Children who appear (to the Governing Board) to have been in state care* outside England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

Category 2
Siblings** of children already at the school at the time of entry.

Category 3
Children of qualified teachers directly employed by the school on a permanent contract (full-time or part-time) who have been either:

i) employed by the school for a minimum of two years at the time of application

or

ii) recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

In either case, the teacher must be the biological or adoptive parent of the child, or have legal parental responsibility for that child or (where the child is the child of the teacher's partner) must have lived with the child at the same address for at least two years prior to the date of application.

Category 4
Children resident in the Designated Area***, as shown on the attached map.

Category 5
Children resident outside the Designated Area but where one or more parent, with their child, are regular**** worshippers at the Cathedral.

Category 6
Children resident outside the Designated Area but where one or more parent, with their child, are regular worshippers***** at another Christian Church. For the purposes of this policy another Christian church is one which is a member of Churches Together in England and/or Churches Together in St Albans and/or the Evangelical Alliance.

Category 7
Any other children.

Definitions not already explained in this policy

***'State Care'**: "*A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society*."

****'Sibling':** *brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent / carer or partner, children looked after or previously looked after. This doesn't include children temporarily living in the same house. For example, a looked after child in a short term foster or bridging placement. In every case, the sibling must be living permanently in the same family home (at least Monday to Friday). A sibling must be on the roll of the school, or have been offered and accepted a place, at the school at the time of application (and be expected to still be on roll when child starts). If an applicant has more than one address, the sibling must also reside at the same address for the majority of the school week. The sibling's address will be verified by the school.*

***** Designated Area** *means the area outlined on the map published on the school website and includes the streets listed in the Designated Area Street List published on the school website*

*****'Regular' worshipper** *means the parent has attended Cathedral services for an average of twice a month for a period of two years immediately prior to the application date. A parent who moves to St Albans and joins the Cathedral congregation within the two-year period must have similar attendance at his or her previous church confirmed in writing by a member of the clergy at that church.*

******'Regular worshipper** *means the parent has attended services at any Christian church for an average of twice a month for a period of two years immediately prior to the application date. This must be confirmed in writing by a member of the clergy or minister of the church currently attended and of any former churches attended within the required two-year period.*

Notes

a. Distance and tie-breaker

In the event of there being an over-subscription in any one of the above categories, the determining factor in that category will be the proximity of the child's permanent home address to the school. The Governing Body uses Hertfordshire County Council's 'straight line' distance measurement for all home to school distance measurements. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences. Where two families live in the same block of flats, the flat with the lower number will be given priority. Where two family's addresses are equidistant random allocation will be used.

b. *Home address*

The address provided on the application form must be the child's current permanent address at the time of application

- "At the time of application" means the closing date for applications
- "Permanent" means that the child has lived at that address for at least a year

Where a family has not lived at an address for a year at the time of application, they must be able to demonstrate that they own the property or have a tenancy agreement for a minimum of 12 months **and** the child must be resident in the property at the time of application. If, because of the nature of the agreement, it is not possible to provide a 12-month tenancy agreement, alternative proof of address will be requested.

.

It is for the Governing Body (as the admission authority) to determine the address to be used for admission purposes.

The application can only be processed using one address. If a child lives at more than one address (for example due to a separation) the address used will be the one where the child lives for the majority of the school week. If a child lives at two address equally, parents should make a single joint application naming one address.

If the child's living arrangements change after you apply and they now spend the majority of the school week living at a different address, you must provide evidence of the new permanent address.

Address will be verified as necessary with Hertfordshire County Council's Shared Anti-Fraud Service.

Applications made as part of the main Reception admissions round and in-year admission applications are processed by Hertfordshire County Council ("HCC") on behalf of the Governing Body, in accordance with HCC's published coordinated admission schemes.

If a child's permanent residence is disputed, parents should provide court documentation to evidence the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes. If two applications are received, with different addresses, neither will be processed until the address issue is reconciled.

If HCC receives two different applications for the same child from the same address e.g. containing different preferences, parents will be invited to submit a joint application or provide court documentation to evidence the preferences that should be used for the admission process. Until the preference issue is reconciled, neither application will be processed.

For the main Reception admission round, if the initial differing applications (one or both) were received by HCC "on-time", an amended joint application will also be considered "on-time" if received before 3rd March 2026 (the late deadline). If the amended joint application is received after 3rd March, it will be treated as "late".

c. Parents wishing to apply under category 5 (regular Cathedral worshippers) should ask the Canon for Mission and Pastoral Care or the Youth Chaplain to sign the Cathedral's **Supplementary Information Form** (obtainable from the School Office and the School and Hertfordshire County Council websites).

d. In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the Cathedral or other Christian church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these admissions arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the Cathedral or church or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

e. Where a place is offered to a twin or to one or more multiple birth children the other twin or multiple birth child(ren) will be offered a place, even if this means that the PAN is exceeded. The other twin or multiple birth child(ren) will be admitted as a permitted exception to the infant class size rule, if necessary.

Admissions Procedures

All applications **must** be made on the common application form (CAF) supplied by the local authority covering the child's home address. Hertfordshire Residents can make an online in year application via the Hertfordshire County Council website www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions or contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 for a paper application form.

In addition, parents/carers applying under categories 5 or 6 are requested to complete our **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)** (available from the School and County websites) and return it to the school office by the closing date for applications (15th January 2026). Applicants under category 5 should also complete the Cathedral Information Form. If a Supplementary Information Form and/or Cathedral Information Form is not completed the Governing Board will apply their admission arrangements using the information submitted on the Common Application Form only, which may result in your application being given lower priority.

All successful applicants are entitled to a full-time Reception place from the start of the autumn term. However please note the following:

a. Parents offered a place may defer the date of their child's admission until later in the year, or until the child reaches compulsory school age. **Summer born children may only have admission deferred until the start of the summer term.**

b. If parents so wish, a child may attend part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

c. Where a parent of a **'summer-born' child (1 April – 31 August**) wishes their child to start school in the autumn term following their fifth birthday, the Governing Board will consider the request.

If parents do not take up the offered place before the start of the summer term of the school year of entry, then they would have to re-apply for a place in Year 1.

If parents wish such a child to be educated "out of year group" i.e. in the Reception Year rather than Year 1 they may request this and should discuss it with the school as soon as possible before application. Such applications will be considered by the Governing Board on a case by case basis. Each case will be judged on its individual merits and in the best interests of the child but to admit out of year group would require exceptional and extenuating circumstances and professional evidence (if available) explaining why the child's needs cannot be met in the chronological year group.

All such parents should apply for their child's normal age group at the usual time and may submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time.

The Governing Board will respond to this request prior to the offer of a place being made. If the request is agreed to the application can be withdrawn for that year before the place is offered.

If the request is refused, parents may decide whether or not to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or refuse it and make an in-year application for admission into Year 1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday.

Where a parent's request has been agreed, they must make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year.

Parents do not have the right of appeal against a decision not to place the child in a year group outside their normal age group.

Children Out of Year Group (except applications for Reception from summer born – see above)

The Governing Body supports Hertfordshire County Council's policy that children should be educated within their correct chronological year group, with the curriculum differentiated as necessary to meet the needs of individual children. This is in line with DfE guidance which states that "in general, children should be educated in their normal age group".

If parents believe their child(ren) should be educated in a different year group they should, at the time of application, submit supporting evidence from relevant professionals working with the child and family stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age appropriate cohort. DfE guidance makes clear that "it is reasonable for admission authorities to expect parents to provide them with information in support of their request – since without it they are unlikely to be able to make a decision on the basis of their circumstances of the case".

The Governing Body will make decisions based upon the circumstances of each case including the view of parents, the relevant headteacher(s), the child's social, academic and emotional development and whether the child has been previously educated out of year group. There is no guarantee that an application will be accepted on this basis. If the application is not accepted this does not constitute a refusal of a place and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal.

Similarly, there is no right of appeal for a place in a specific year group at a school. The internal management and organisation of a school, including the placement of pupils in classes, is a matter for the Headteacher and senior leadership of the school.

Continued Interest

The names of unsuccessful applicants will be added to the Continued Interest (CI) List. A child's position on the CI list will be determined by the admission criteria outlined above and a child's place on the list can change as other children join or leave it. Hertfordshire County Council will contact parents/carers if a vacancy

becomes available and it can be offered to a child. Continuing interest lists will be maintained for every year group until the summer term (date to be specified and confirmed to parents at the time of allocation). To remain on the CI (waiting) list after this time, parents must confirm they are still interested in a place by completing an In Year application form.

Fair Access Protocol

The school complies with the Hertfordshire County Council's Fair Access Protocol, which means that any child allocated under the protocol will be admitted even if the school is already full. The School will, if necessary, admit children through Fair Access over the PAN and before children on the continuing interest list.

Transfer Appeal

Parents who have not been allocated a place for their child have the right of appeal to an independent panel. At transfer time, parents wishing to appeal who applied on line should log into their online application and click on the link 'register an appeal '. For those who did not apply on line, please contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request an appeal pack.'

In Year application

In the case of older children for whom application is made to join the school in other year groups, admission will be on the basis of places being available in the relevant year group. If there are more applicants than there are places available, the available places will be allocated according to the admissions criteria set out above.

Parents can make an online in year application via the Hertfordshire County Council website www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions or contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 for a paper application form. Parents should return the application form direct to the County Council.

Parents making an In Year' application under categories 5 or 6 should complete a Supplementary Information Form and return it to the school office. Applicants under category 5 should also complete the Cathedral Information Form. If a Supplementary Information Form and/or Cathedral Information Form is not completed the Governing Board will apply their admission arrangements using the information submitted on the local authority's in-year application form only, which may result in your application being given lower priority.

In Year Appeal

The county council will write to you with the outcome of your application and if you have been unsuccessful, will include registration details to enable you to login and appeal online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals