

ST ALBAN'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY

Admission Arrangements for 2024/2025

St Alban's is a Roman Catholic Primary School provided by the Diocese of Salford and is maintained by the Blackburn with Darwen Local Education Authority as a Voluntary Aided School. The school's Governing Body is the Admissions Authority and is responsible for taking decisions on applications for admissions. For the school year commencing September 2024, the Governing Body has set the admissions number at 30.

Parents seeking a place for the child at this school must follow the admissions process (see below). Please note: even if your child has a place in St Alban's nursery, you must still submit an application for a place in the Reception class at St Alban's, or your child cannot be considered for a place in that class

Admission applications will be decided by the Governing Body, which will consider all stated parental preferences it receives. If there are more applications for admission than the school has places available, then places will be allocated using the following criteria in priority order.

Children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan, where the named school is St Alban's, will be given priority above all other children.

1. Baptised Roman Catholic Looked After Children and Baptised Roman Catholic previously Looked After Children (LAC) including Baptised Roman Catholic Internationally Adopted Previously Looked After children (IAPLAC- those children adopted from state care outside of England). (see notes a and e)
2. Baptised Roman Catholic children who are resident in the Historic Parish of St Alban and the Good Shepherd (see note c and d) and will have a sibling attending the school at the time of admission. (see note b)
3. Baptised Roman Catholic children who are resident in the Historic Parish of St. Alban and the Good Shepherd. (see notes a, c and d)
4. Baptised Roman Catholic children who will have a sibling attending the school at the time of admission. (see notes a and b)
5. Baptised Roman Catholic children. (see note a)
6. Other Looked After and previously looked after Children (see note e)
7. Other children with a sibling attending the school at the time of admission. (see note b)
8. Any other children.

Where there are more applicants for the available places within any category, then distance from home front door to the main gates of the school in a straight line, using a computer, will be used as the final determining factor, nearer addresses having priority over more distant ones.

Tiebreaker

If category (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) or (9) is oversubscribed, geographical proximity (as listed above will be used as the 'tiebreaker' to decide between the remaining cases within the category. If after measuring distances, it is still not possible to decide on the children to be admitted, (for example, if only one place is left but there are two children living at the same address seeking admission) the Local Authority's system of a random draw which is carried out on the local authority's computer system will determine which address(es) receive the offer(s).

Notes:

- a. Baptised Roman Catholic Child means one Baptised in a Roman Catholic Church (Baptismal certificate required), or a baptised Christian subsequently received into the Roman Catholic Church as evidenced by a letter confirming the reception from a Roman Catholic Priest. The certificate or letter must be sent to the school by closing date for applications (15th January 2024). It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that the school receives the certificate/letter.
- b. Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, stepbrother, or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case, the child should be living in the same family unit at the same address.
- c. Parents should check carefully whether they are resident within the parish boundary, (as agreed by the Diocese of Salford on 12/08/2017), of St Alban's and Good Shepherd. The Parish boundary can be found on the school's website: <https://www.stalbansrcprimaryschool.co.uk/admissions-appeals/>
- d. Where the parents live at different addresses, and there is shared parenting, the address used will normally be the one where the child wakes up for the majority of Monday to Friday mornings. If there is any doubt about this, then the address of the Child Benefit recipient will be used. Parents may be asked to show evidence of the claim that is being made for the address, e.g. identity cards of various sorts showing the child's address as the one claimed. Where there is dispute about the correct address to use, the governors reserve the right to make enquiries of any relevant third parties, e.g. the child's GP, Council Tax Office, Electoral Registration Officer, utilities provider. For children of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants returning to the area proof of the posting is all that is required.
- e. A "looked after child" is a child who is (a) in the care of the local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definitions in Section 22(1) of the Children's Act 1989) at the time of making an application to school. A previously looked after child is one who immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order, and those children who appear to this admission authority to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see footnote).

Footnote

An "adoption order" is an order under the Adoption Act (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders). A 'child arrangements order' is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 as amended by Section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians). 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."

Priority for Twins/Multiple births

Where a family of twins and children of multiple births request admission where one of the children is the 30th child admitted the other child or children may be admitted.

In 2023 the governors received 7 First preferences out of a total 28 applicants.

Application Process:

Applications for admission to the school must be made on your home local authority's common application form between 1 September 2023 and the national closing date 15th January 2024. Applications can be made online or paper forms can be requested from the School Admissions Team, but must be submitted by the closing date. When there are extenuating circumstances for an application being received after the closing date for applications and it is before the governors have established their list of pupils to be admitted, then it will be considered alongside the others. Otherwise applications which are received after the closing date will be considered after all the others and placed on the waiting list in order according to the criteria.

After the allocations process has been completed, the LA will send out offer letters to all parents within their area in April 2024.

Applicants who are not offered a place at St Alban's will have their name placed on the waiting list. The names on this waiting list will be in the order resulting from the application of the admissions criteria. Since the date of application cannot be a criterion for the order of names on the waiting list, late applicants for the school will be slotted into the waiting list according to the extent to which they meet the criteria. Thus, it is possible that a child who moves into the area later may have a higher priority than one who has been on the waiting list for some time. If a place becomes available within the admission number, the child whose name is at the top of the list will be offered a place. This is not dependent on whether an appeal has been submitted. Please note that looked after children, previously looked after children and those allocated a place at the school in accordance with the Fair access protocol must take precedence over those on the waiting list. The waiting list will operate until 31st December 2024 only.

Where the governors are unable to offer a place because the school is oversubscribed, parents have the right to appeal to an independent admission appeal panel. Parents should notify the clerk to the governors at the school by 16 May, 2024. Parents will then have the opportunity to submit their case to the panel in writing and also to attend to present their case.

'In Year' applications (received outside the normal admissions round) will be considered when they are received, and places offered if available. If more applications are received at a particular time than there are places available, then the published oversubscription criteria will be applied to those applications and places offered accordingly'.

The Governing Body reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a school place where false evidence is received in relation to Baptism, sibling connections or place of residence. If the offer is withdrawn, the application will be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.

Deferred entry and part-time attendance

If your child is due to start school during the next academic year, it is important that you apply for a place for September. If your child's fifth birthday is between the months of September and December, then, if you wish it, admission may be deferred until January; if it is between January and April, then admission may be deferred until the start of the summer term, though it is likely to be in your child's interest to start no later than January. If your child's fifth birthday is between April and August, your child is not legally required to attend school until the September after their fifth birthday, though it is likely to be in your child's interests to start no later than April. However, if you delay your child starting school until September 2025, you will have to re-apply for a place in the school as this is a new academic year, and the original offer of a place in the reception class will be withdrawn.

You may also request that your child attend school part time until he/she reaches his/her fifth birthday.

Admission to children outside their normal age group

Parent/Carer(s) may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if a child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health, Parents of a summer born child (born between 1st April and 31st August) may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group 0 to reception rather than year 1.

Children who are already of school age

Parent(s)/carer(s) must submit their written request for admission out of the normal age group to the Governing Body. If their request is agreed and a place is available in the requested year group, the child will be admitted.

Children seeking admission to reception in the September after their fifth birthday.

Parent(s)/carer(s) will need to submit a normal Common Application Form (CAF) to the Local Authority (in writing or online) for admission into the normal age group at the same time as they submit a written request to the Governing Body for their child to be admitted out of the normal age group.

Please note: This Governing Body will not honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parent(s)/carer(s), therefore, should consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all their preference schools, rather than just their preference school.

The Governing Body will decide on the request before the Primary national offer date if possible.

If the request is agreed, the parent(s)/carer(s) must make a new application for the next main admission round the following year, and their current application for the normal age group should be withdrawn before a place is offered.

If their request for admission outside the normal age group is refused, parent(s)/carer(s) must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group that they receive from the Local Authority, or to refuse it and make an in-year application to the Governing Body for admission to year one for the September following their child's fifth birthday.

Making the decision

Parent(s)/carer(s) seeking admission of their child outside their normal age group must send their written request to the Governing Body. It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/carer(s) to provide the Governing Body with all relevant information relating to this request, including the parent(s)/carer(s) views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; medical history and views of a medical professional (where relevant); whether the child would naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely; and whether the child has previously been educated out of their normal age group.

The Governing Body is required to consider the views of the Head Teacher on the application as well as the information from the parent(s)/carer(s). The Governing Body will make their decision based on the circumstances of each individual case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

The Governing Body will then inform the parent/carer of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to and will provide the reasons of their decision.

Parent(s)/carer(s) have a statutory right to appeal to an independent admission appeal panel against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. As the purpose of the appeals process is to consider whether a child should be admitted to a particular school, the right of appeal does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred year group. However, they may make a complaint about an authority's decision not to admit their child outside their usual year group.