

Admissions Arrangements – DRAFT CONSULTATION

For admissions from September 2021

Name of Policy	Admissions Policy
Date ratified	To be ratified January 2020
Committee Responsible for Policy	Children, Families and Community
Date to be updated	Updated annually
Headteacher Signature	
Chair of Governors/ Committee Signature	

If you have any comments regarding this policy,
please email

consultation@holytrinity.merton.sch.uk

by 12th January 2020

Growing together as children of God

At Holy Trinity C of E Primary School:

- we want our pupils to **grow** in confidence, independence, resilience and knowledge, so that all achieve their full potential and develop a life-long love of learning and of the world around us.
- we work **together** with families, community and church to model positive relationships, supporting each other and acknowledging that we are stronger when we work together.
- we are growing together as **children of God**, strengthening our faith, secure in the knowledge we are unique, loved and cherished.

Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School is a community-based voluntary-aided school with a distinctive Christian ethos at its heart which provides an inclusive, caring and supportive environment where children learn and flourish in a setting shaped by Christian values. We welcome applications from all members of the community and we ask all parents to respect the Christian ethos of our school and its importance to our community.

The Governing Body is responsible for the admission of pupils to the school and admits 60 pupils to the reception class each year. This admission number has been agreed between the Governing Body and the local authority and applies to the 2021/22 school year onwards. The Admissions Policy is updated annually and ratified by the Governing Body; parents and the local community are consulted every seven years. The school has recently consulted on this policy, and the next consultation will be for entry in 2028.

The Governing Body is required to abide by the maximum limits imposed by central government for infant classes (5, 6 and 7 year olds), i.e. 30 pupils per class.

Where the child is attending the school nursery, a separate application must be made for entry into reception class. Places are allocated according to the admissions criteria shown below; no automatic entry or priority is given to children attending the school nursery.

Coordinated Admission Arrangements

The school is part of the locally agreed co-ordination scheme within London Borough of Merton and the timescales for applications to be received and processed are those agreed with the local authority. Parents must complete their home local authority's common application form and return the form to their home local authority. If applying for a place at the school parents must name Holy Trinity C of E Primary School as one of their preferences on the common application form.

Foundation Places

The Governing Body has designated 30 places to be offered as foundation places to pupils whose families are faithful and regular worshippers (see note 1) in an Anglican or other Christian church (see note 2).

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Applicants for a foundation place must also supply a clergy reference form directly to the school. Failure to provide a clergy reference form that satisfies the Governors of an applicant's eligibility for a foundation place within the time limits prescribed by the school will mean that the school cannot consider the application for a foundation place, although the applicant would still be considered for an open place.

If there are more than 30 applicants, places will be allocated according to the following criteria, stated in order of priority:

- i Looked after children or previously looked after children (see note 3);
- ii Children of staff with over two years of service at the point of the child's entry to the school (see Note 4);
- iii Children who will have a sibling (see note 5) in the school at the time of admission;
- iv Children whose families are faithful and regular worshippers at the parish churches (see note 6);
- v Children with an exceptional and professionally supported medical or social need for a place at this school (see note 7);
- vi Children in order of nearness of the home (see note 8) to the school (see note 9).

In the event of oversubscription in any of the above criteria, priority will be determined using subsequent criteria in the order given.

If there are fewer than 30 qualified applicants for foundation places, any unfilled places will become open places. Unsuccessful applicants for foundation places will be considered for open places.

Open Places

The Governing Body has designated 30 places each year as open places, to be offered to pupils who do not qualify for a foundation place (or are unsuccessful in applying for one), but whose parents have chosen the school for the type of education it provides. Parents applying for an open place do so knowing that the school aims to provide an education based on Christian principles and values.

If there are more than 30 applicants for an open place, places will be allocated according to the following criteria, stated in order of priority:

- i Looked after children or previously looked after children (see note 3);
- ii Children of staff with over two years of service at the point of the child's entry to the school (see note 4);
- iii Children who will have a sibling (see note 5) in the school at the time of admission, providing the sibling accepted an Open place;
- iv Children with an exceptional and professionally supported medical or social need for a place at this school (see note 7);
- v Children in order of nearness of the home (see note 8) to the school (see note 9).

In the event of oversubscription in any of the above criteria, priority will be determined using subsequent criteria in the order given.

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Tiebreaker

In the event that two or more applicants have equal right to a place under any of the above criteria and there are insufficient places, the Governing Body will use distances in the first instance, to decide between applicants; where applicants have identical distance measurements, priority will be determined by drawing lots, supervised by an independent adjudicator.

Notes

- 1 Faithful and regular worshipper is defined as attendance of the parent/carer at worship at least twice a month for at least two years prior to application. This must be supported by a clergy reference form, completed and signed by the relevant church minister or priest (or in the absence of a minister/priest by a responsible person in the church). In exceptional cases a parent/carer for whom unavoidable circumstances have prevented their attendance at worship at least twice a month for the previous two years prior to application may be considered to be a faithful and regular worshipper; the relevant Minister will determine whether, or not, there were unavoidable circumstances. Those who have recently moved to the area and who worshipped previously in a different church will be asked to supply a reference from that church so that the two-year period is covered. The governors do not give a higher preference to families where both parents worship.
- 2 A Christian church is defined as one that is a full member of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland or the Evangelical Alliance, or is an Affinity partner church.
- 3 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 definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). A previously looked after child is a child who was looked after immediately prior to being adopted, or becoming subject to a residence order (now termed child arrangement order under the Children & Families Act 2014) or special guardianship order.
- 4 Children of paid members of Holy Trinity school staff, who are employed on a permanent contract with the school and have been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made. Members of staff are defined for the purposes of this policy as: qualified teachers, teaching assistants, learning support assistants, School Business Managers, office staff, lunchtime supervisors, Site manager and site staff.
- 5 Qualifying siblings are brothers or sisters (including a brother or sister through adoption and a step or foster brother or sister provided that in each case they are living at the same address) in the school (excluding the nursery) at the time both that the application is submitted and that the applicant would be admitted to the school.
- 6 The Parish Churches are the three churches in the Merton Priory Team Ministry: Holy Trinity, South Wimbledon; St. John's, Merton; and Christ Church, Colliers Wood.
- 7 This must be supported by written evidence at the time of application, e.g. from a specialist health professional, social worker or other care professional. The evidence must set out the reasons why this school is the most suitable school and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. Governors will make a judgement based on the evidence available to them at the time of application.
- 8 The child's address should be that of the child's permanent residence. The address of a relative or carer may not be given unless they have legal custody of the child. If parents are separated and share custody of the child, the address given should be that of the parent with whom the child spends most of the school week. If the parent making the application lives at a different address to

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the child, a letter of explanation should be attached. An application can only be made from a single address, and only a single application can be made for each child. It is not acceptable for a family to use a temporarily rented address to secure a place of their preference. In disputed cases, the governors will make a judgement based on the evidence available to them.

- 9 Distance is measured in a straight line using the local authority's computerised mapping system, from the property at which the applicant lives to the pupil entrance gate closest to the applicant's home. In the event that two or more applicants live the same distance from the school and there are insufficient places to admit all applicants, places will be allocated by drawing lots.

Waiting List

Unsuccessful applicants (whether for nursery places, reception places or in-year applications) who are not offered a place in a higher preference school will be placed on a waiting list unless they indicate a contrary wish or in the case of applications to reception until the end of the autumn term (after which they will only be retained on the waiting list if the school receives a written request that they should remain on the waiting list).

The waiting list is divided according to whether the unsuccessful applicants had applied for a foundation place or an open place. Unsuccessful applicants for a foundation place will be put on the open place waiting list as well as on the waiting list for a foundation place. Places that become available will be filled applying the same criteria (either foundation or open) under which the place was originally offered.

Waiting lists are not fixed and may vary as further applications are received. Accordingly, a child's position on a waiting list can change (e.g. if another applicant moves in to the area and lives nearer to the school he or she may be placed higher up the list). **Year 2 and above waiting lists will operate as one list.**

Appeals

Parents who are not offered a place for their child (whatever the class and in the case of admissions other than to reception, regardless of the time of application) have the right to appeal to an independent appeals panel on certain grounds details of which are available from the school following notification of the decision not to admit.

Parents wishing to appeal should obtain an appeal form from the school. The appeal form should be sent to reach the clerk of the appeals panel, care of the school, within the period for the making of appeals laid down by statute from time to time or if no period is laid down then within 20 school days of the date of the letter confirming the governors' decision not to offer a place. Should some appeals be unsuccessful, the governing body will not consider further applications from those parents within the same academic year unless there have been significant and material changes in their circumstances.

In Year Applications (Occasional places)

The Governing Body is responsible for in-year admissions to this school. Parents/carers wishing to apply in-year should contact Merton School Admissions for vacancy information and application forms. **Where the application is for a foundation place then a supplementary form should also be completed which will be available from the school or local authority.** Where there are more applicants at any one time than places

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available within either the open or foundation categories they will be filled by applying the criteria for that category as set out above. Year 2 and above waiting lists will operate as one list.

Deferred or Part-time Entry

The School admits children to the Reception class in the September of the school year in which a child attains the age of 5 years. (The school year runs from 1 September to the 31st August.) All parents/carers are entitled to a full-time place for their child in the reception class from September, but may defer entry until the beginning of the term after their child is five years old (i.e. when the child reaches compulsory

school age) or until the beginning of the summer term whichever is earlier. Children may attend part-time until they reach compulsory school age. Parents/carers who have been offered a place at the School and wish to defer entry for their child and/or request part-time attendance must put this in writing to the headteacher at the earliest opportunity and before the start of the autumn term.

Education out of normal (chronological) age group

Children are normally educated in school with others of their age group; however, in exceptional circumstances parents/carers may seek a place outside of their child's normal age group. Decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case. Parents/carers must state clearly why they feel admission to a different year group is in the child's best interests and may provide recent professional evidence to support this. (See Appendix I for further details of how to make such a request).

Special educational needs

Parents of pupils who have an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) are required to apply for school places separately through the local authority from whom advice is available. If a child with an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) is placed in the school by the local authority before the normal admission round, the number of places available to other applicants will be reduced.

Late applications

The Governors will consider late applications in accordance with the procedure in the local authority's primary admission booklet.

Nursery Places

The school admits children to the nursery class in the September of the school year in which a child attains the age of 4 years (the school year runs from 1 September to the 31st August). Both Part Time and Full Time places may be offered.

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In allocating places in the nursery class the governors will apply this admission policy (excluding the ability to defer places but including the same equal ratio of foundation places to open places) with the one difference set out below.

Where an application is made for admission to the nursery class and an application has been made for admission for a sibling to the reception class for the same school year then the sibling criteria above shall be extended as follows: where a place has, or is to be, offered to the sibling for the reception class for the same school year then, in relation to the application for the nursery class only, the sibling criterion shall be deemed to be met. **If the older sibling is offered a waiting list place in the reception class after the normal reception offer day, the nursery waiting list will be updated accordingly.**

If any offer of a place in the nursery class is made solely because of this extension and would otherwise not have been made, then the offer shall be made conditionally upon both the sibling accepting the offer of a place in the reception class and either (a) taking up that place in the September or (b) at the time of admission to the nursery class having deferred, but not lost, the place in the reception class, as explained above. If those conditions are at any time not met then the offer of a place in the nursery class shall be automatically withdrawn and the application for the nursery class shall be placed on the waiting list, with no account being taken of this extension.

Please note: there is no right of appeal against the Governors' allocation of nursery places.

If there are places in the nursery after the end of the Autumn term the school may offer these to rising threes. The families of any children who join the nursery on this basis must reapply for a nursery place for the following academic year in the normal way and no priority will be given to children already attending the nursery.

Appendix I

PROCESS FOR REQUESTING EDUCATION OUT OF NORMAL (CHRONOLOGICAL) AGE GROUP - INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS

ADMISSION TO A RECEPTION CLASS

All children have a right to a full-time place in a reception class in the September following their child's fourth birthday. Most parents/carers are happy for their child to start school at this time and the Governors of this School agree with the Government's view that children should be educated in their normal age group with their peers with the curriculum differentiated, as appropriate, and that children should only be educated out of their normal age group in very limited circumstances.

Children must be in school full-time by the time they reach compulsory school age, ie, the beginning of the term after their fifth birthday. A parent/carer may choose to defer entry in accordance with our admissions arrangements until their child reaches compulsory school age, or, for a child born between 1 April and the 31 August, (ie, a summer-born child) until the beginning of the summer term. If, as a parent/carer of a summer-born child, you are considering requesting that your child is educated out of their normal age group, ie, admitted to the reception class a year later than other children in that age group, the following process will apply to such requests. This follows advice published by the DFE in December 2014.

- 1 Contact the school to make an appointment with the headteacher to visit the school and to discuss your request. The headteacher will be able to explain the provision on offer to children in the reception class and how it is tailored to meet the needs of the youngest pupils. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum which is taught in the reception year is largely based around learning through play.
- 2 If after your visit you decide that you wish to request education out of normal age group for your child, you should nonetheless apply to the school for a place in your child's normal age group at the usual time using your home local authority's common application form (and any supplementary information form, if applicable). (This will allow you the opportunity to accept a place for your child's normal age group should the governors decide not to allow your request.) At the same time you must submit your request for education out of normal age group. This request should be submitted by letter, or email, with any documents attached and should cover any relevant points from paragraphs 3(i) to (iii) below.
- 3 The Governors' Admission Committee will meet to consider your request. Decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. It is helpful if

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you provide as much information as possible and, in coming to its decision, the Committee will take into account the following:

- (i) your own views as to why it would be beneficial for your child to be educated in reception a year later, rather than year one. This may include information about your child's individual needs and abilities and the potential impact on your child of being admitted to year one without having completed the reception year. The governors will also take account of the professional views of the headteacher;
- (ii) whether, or not, your child was born prematurely and would have fallen into a different age group had they been born at full term;
- (iii) any information about your child's academic, social and emotional development, medical or special educational needs, if relevant; professional evidence may be provided to support this, but is not compulsory.

4 Once the Admissions Committee has considered all the information you have provided it must decide the age group to which your child would appropriately be admitted if a place is available. There are two possible outcomes:

(a) if the governors decide to allow your request for education out of your child's normal age group, you will need to make a new application for reception in the following admission round, ie, a year later than normal. There is no guarantee that you will be offered a place in that year, but your application will be considered alongside other applications and in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria. When making your application you must include a copy of the Governors' decision letter granting your request.

(b) If the governors decide not to allow your request for education out of normal age group, you may then decide whether to continue with your application for your child's normal age group, or to withdraw the application and to apply for a year one place as an in-year applicant the following September. Again your application will be decided in accordance with the oversubscription criteria; there is no guarantee of a place.

5 The Admissions Committee will notify you in writing of their decision and the reasons for it as soon as possible and in advance of the deadline for offers to be sent out to parents/carers.

6 If you are offered a place at our school, but it is not in the year group you wish for, there is no right of appeal. You may, however, make a complaint, following the Governing Body's complaints procedure which is available from the school.

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7 Any decision about a request to educate a child out of normal age group is made in respect of this school only; you may wish to consider whether to request admission out of normal age group at your other preference schools and should follow the process adopted by the admissions authority for those schools.

ADMISSION TO OTHER YEAR GROUPS

The Governors will consider requests from parents/carers for education out of normal age group where parents/carers request this when transferring their child from another school, or when an application is received to admit a child in-year. Decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. Parents/carers should contact the School to make an appointment with the headteacher (*or other appropriate person*) to visit the School and to discuss your request. The Admissions Committee will consider your request taking into account the following:

- (i) your own views as to why it would be beneficial for your child to be educated out of their normal age group; this may include information about your child's individual needs and abilities and the potential impact on your child of being admitted to their normal age group; the governors will also take account of the professional views of the headteacher;
- (ii) any information about your child's academic, social and emotional development, medical or special educational needs, if relevant; professional evidence may be provided to support this, but is not compulsory;
- (iii) whether your child has been educated out of their normal age group prior to your request and any evidence provided by your child's previous school.

If you are offered a place, but it is not in the year group you wish for, there is no right of appeal. You may, however, make a complaint, following the Governing Body's complaints procedure which is available from the school.

MOVING CHILDREN TO THEIR NORMAL AGE GROUP

Once a child has been admitted to school, it is for the headteacher to decide how best to educate them. It may be appropriate for a child who has been admitted out of their normal age group to be moved to their normal age group at a future date. Any decision to move a child to their normal age group will be based on sound educational reasons and made by the headteacher in consultation with the parents/carers.