



St. Alban & St. Stephen Catholic Primary School & Nursery

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Nursery Admissions Policy for September 2024 – August 2025

St. Alban & St. Stephen Catholic Primary School & Nursery (the **School**) was founded to provide education for children of Catholic families. As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. At a Catholic school, Catholic doctrine and practice permeate every aspect of the School's activity. It is essential that the Catholic character of the School's education be fully supported by all families in the School. All applicants are therefore expected to give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the School.

The governing body has sole responsibility for admissions to this School and intends to admit 60 pupils to Nursery in the school year under our Published Admission Number (**PAN**), which begins in September 2024. **Our Nursery & School** work very closely together and share the same ethos; **however, entry to Nursery does not guarantee entry to the Primary school. This is by separate application.**

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic children in accordance with the over subscription criteria listed below.

Application Procedures and Timetable

Applications for Nursery are welcome from families whose child attains 3 years of age between 01/09/2023 and 31/08/2024 who wish their child to join the Nursery in September 2024.

Applications open on 1st November 2023 and are made directly to the school. Applicants are requested to complete our Nursery application form and (if applicable) obtain a Certificate of Catholic Practice. Nursery application forms are available from the School office and the School website <http://www.ssas.herts.sch.uk/>. The CCP is available from the Priest at the parish where the family normally worships and should be dated less than 6 months before the date of the application to the School. **If you do not complete the application form and the CCP (where applicable) and return them by the closing date, 23rd February 2024, the governing body may be unable to consider your application fully.** The School will write to all applicants on behalf of the governing body with the outcome of your application on 15th March 2024.

Unsuccessful applicants will be given reasons related to the over subscription criteria listed below. Parents may appeal in writing to the Headteacher of the School. Any change of decision is subject to places being available.

Late applications will be considered only after the initial allocation of places.

In the event that once your child is in Nursery, you request that your child defers their entry to Reception and the governing body agrees to this request, your child will be given priority when allocating Nursery places for the following year.

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

The admission of pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Details of the procedure are set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. If your child has an EHCP you must contact your local authority Children's Services. Children with this School named in their EHCP will be admitted to the School.

Over subscription criteria

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority:

1. Catholic 'looked after' children and Catholic children who ceased to be 'looked after' because they were adopted or made subject to Child Arrangements Orders or Special Guardianship Orders.
2. Catholic children who can evidence to the governing body that they have been in state care outside England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organization or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.
3. Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice of families who will have a sibling at the School at the time of admission.
4. Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice of a member of staff of the School provided that the member of staff is the child's parent and (1) has been employed at the School for two or more years at the time of application, or (2) where the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. For the purposes of satisfying these criteria, a member of staff is defined as a permanent member of the teaching staff or leadership team. This definition does not include contract staff or peripatetic staff employed by HCC.
5. Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice who are determined by the governing body to be resident in the parish of St. Alban & St. Stephen. Please be aware that the parish information has been under review and, when finalized, will be available from the Parish Office at St. Alban & St. Stephen.
6. Other baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice.
7. Other baptised Catholic children.
8. Other 'looked after' children and children who ceased to be 'looked after' because they were adopted or made subject to Child Arrangements Orders or Special Guardianship Orders.
9. Children who can evidence to the governing body that they have been in state care outside England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organization or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.
10. Children who have a sibling at the School at the time of admission. First consideration will be given to those children of other Christian denominations who provide a certificate of baptism or whose minister supplies a supporting letter confirming membership of the Church or faith community.
11. Children of a member of staff of the School provided that the member of staff is the child's parent and (1) has been employed at the School for two or more years at the time at which the application, or (2) where the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. For the purposes of satisfying these criteria, a member of staff is defined as a permanent member of the teaching staff or leadership team. This definition does not include contract staff or peripatetic staff employed by HCC.
12. Children of Catechumens and members of other Eastern Christian Churches who provide a certificate of baptism and/or certificate/letter of entry in the order of Catechumens.
13. Children of other Christian denominations resident within the parish of St. Alban & St. Stephen who provide a certificate of baptism or whose minister supplies a supporting letter confirming membership of the Church or faith community.
14. Any other children.

Distance

Where the offer of places to all of the applicants in any of the categories above would lead to over subscription, places up to the Published Admissions Number will be offered to those living nearest the school. To check the distance from your home to our school you can use the Hertfordshire mapping tool by following the link

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/school-admissions/research-a-school/find-a-school.aspx>

Please note this will check the distance between your home and all schools including those without a nursery.

Tie break

In the case of two applicants with exactly the same priority under the admissions criteria and they live exactly the same distance from school, but only one place is available, the governing body will draw lots in the presence of an independent witness.

Change of Details

If any of the details on any of your forms changes between the date of application and the receipt of the letter of offer or refusal, you must inform the School and the Local Authority immediately. If misleading information is given or allowed to remain on any of your forms, the governing body reserves the right to withdraw the place, even if the child has already started at the School.

Multiple Applications – Twins and Multiple Births

The governing body will admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children has been offered the final place in the School's PAN.

Fair Access Protocols

The School is committed to taking its fair share of children who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as set out in locally agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal admissions round the governing body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol that has been agreed by both the Diocese and the governing body for the current school year. The governing body has this power even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the PAN. Children admitted under this protocol will take priority over children on the continued interest list.

In-Year Admissions

Applications for In-Year admissions are made directly to the School. If more applications are received than there are places available, then applications will be ranked by the governing body in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. We will write to you with the outcome of your application and, if you have been unsuccessful, then you may ask us for the reasons why the application was unsuccessful and you will be informed of your right of appeal. You will be offered the opportunity of being placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained by the governing body in the order of the oversubscription criteria and not in the order in which the applications are received. Names are removed from the list at the end of each academic year. When a place becomes available the governing body will re-rank the list and an offer will be made.

Waiting Lists (Continuing Interest List)

Unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out above. Parents will be offered information on the appeals process. The waiting list is held open for a full academic year from the date of admissions.

Certificate of Catholic Practice

Applicants who wish to be considered within oversubscription criteria 3 to 6 inclusive should submit a Certificate of Catholic Practice (CCP) by the closing date for admissions. The CCP is available from the Priest at the parish where the family normally worships or the diocesan website. The CCP should be dated less than 6 months before the date of the application to the School. It is the parent's duty to ensure that the CCP is submitted to the School in good time.

Notes (these explanatory notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

1. **An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)** is a plan made by the Local Authority under s37 of the Children and Families Act 2014, specifying the educational provision for that child.
2. A **'looked after'** child means a child in the care of the Local Authority or provided with accommodation by them e.g. children with foster parents (see section 22 of The Children's Act 1989);
3. **'Adopted'**. An adopted child is any child who has been formally adopted and whose parent/ guardian can give proof of adoption.
4. **'Child Arrangements Order'**. A Child Arrangements Order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.8 setting the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live. Children 'looked after' immediately before the order is made qualify in this category.
5. **'Special Guardianship Order'**. A Special Guardianship Order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.14A appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s). Children 'looked after' immediately before the order is made qualify in this category.
6. **'Catholic'** means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. This will normally be evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism in a Catholic church or a Certificate of Reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy this includes a looked after child in the process of adoption and living with a Catholic family, where a letter from a priest demonstrates that the child would have been baptised were it not for his/her status as a looked after child. For a child to be treated as Catholic, evidence of Catholic baptism or reception in the Catholic Church will be required. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism should contact their parish priest who, after consulting with the diocese will decide how the question of baptism is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church.
7. **'Certificate of Catholic Practice'** means a certificate issued by the family's parish priest (or the priest in charge of the church where the family attends Mass) in the form laid down by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. It will be issued if the priest is satisfied that at least one Catholic parent or carer (along with the child, if he or she is over seven years old) have (except when it was impossible to do so) attended Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation for at least five years (or, in the case of the child, since the age of seven, if shorter). It will also be issued when the practice has been continuous since being received into the Church if that occurred less than five years ago. It is expected that most Certificates will be issued on the basis of attendance. A Certificate may also be issued by the priest when attendance is interrupted by exceptional circumstances which excuse from the obligation to attend on that occasion or occasions. Further details of these circumstances can be found in the guidance issued to priests
<http://rcdow.org.uk/education/governors/admissions/>

8. **'Catechumen'** refers to a person accepted into the catechumenate which is demonstrated by a Certificate of Reception into the Order of Catechumens for a child aged 7 or over. For a child under 7 years of age, it will be the certificate of the parent.
9. **'Eastern Christian Church'** includes Orthodox churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of Baptism or Reception from the authorities of that Church.
10. **'Children of other Christian denominations'** means children who belong to other churches and ecclesial communities which, acknowledging God's revelation in Christ, confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures, and, in obedience to God's will and in the power of the Holy Spirit commit themselves: to seek a deepening of their communion with Christ and with one another in the Church, which is his body; and to fulfil their mission to proclaim the Gospel by common witness and service in the world to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. An ecclesial community which on principle has no credal statements in its tradition, is included if it manifests faith in Christ as witnessed to in the Scriptures and is committed to working in the spirit of the above.

All members of Churches Together in England and of CYTŪN are deemed to be included in the above definition, as are all other churches and ecclesial communities that are in membership of any local Churches Together Group (by whatever title) on the above basis.

11. **'Parent'** means the person or persons who have legal responsibility for the child.
12. **'Resident'**. A child is deemed to be resident at a particular address when he/she resides there for 50% OR MORE of the school week.
13. **'Sibling'** means the sister, brother, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent/carer or partner or a child looked after or previously looked after (see definitions above) and in every case living permanently in a placement within the home as part of the family household Monday to Friday at the time of this application. A sibling link will not be recognized for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.