



## ST JOHN'S C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL, LEMSFORD DETERMINED ADMISSIONS POLICY (2026/2027)

St John's is a Voluntary Aided Church of England School in the Diocese of St Albans. The Governing Body of the School is the Admissions Authority, who will provide for the admission of up to 15 children (the Published Admission Number) to the Reception class in the September term following their 4th birthday each academic year.

### **Deferred entry within normal age group**

Parents can defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which the child reaches the compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year.

### **Part time attendance**

Successful applicants are entitled to a full-time place in Reception in the September following their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday. However, where parents so wish, a child may attend Reception on a part-time basis until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age.

### **Deferred entry out of child's normal age group - summer born children**

The parents of a summer born child, i.e. born between 1st April and the 31st August, may choose not to send their child to school until the start of the September term following the child's 5th birthday if they feel their child is not ready to start school. The child's parents would then need to make an in-year application for a place in Year 1. However, if parents wish their summer-born child to start Reception in the September following the child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday and to be educated out of the child's normal age group they should contact the school, their home local authority and the child's current Early Years provider for advice at the earliest possible stage. The Governors will allow such parents to submit a deferred application for a reception place for their summer-born child (that is, for a place in the reception class beginning in the September after the child turns 5) as part of the main Reception admissions round for the desired year of entry. The application will be processed in the same way as all other applications received as part of the main Reception admissions round and there is no guarantee that a place will be available in the desired year group.

### **Other applications for out of year group education**

The school supports Hertfordshire County Council's policy that children are normally educated in their correct chronological year group, with the curriculum differentiated as necessary to meet the needs of individual children. If parents believe that their child should be educated in a different year group they should, at the time of application, make a request that their child is admitted out of year group, enclosing supporting evidence (including evidence from relevant professionals working with the child and family, where available), stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age-appropriate cohort. Requests should be addressed to the Governors' Admissions Committee (c/o the school), who will decide whether the application should be accepted and will make their decision on the basis of the individual circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. This will include taking account of the parent's' views and those of the headteacher;



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information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, the child's medical history and the view of a medical professional; whether the child has previously been educated out of the year group; and whether the child might naturally have fallen into a lower age group if not for being born prematurely. If the application is not accepted the Governors' Admissions Committee will provide written reasons for the refusal. Where an application is not accepted, this does not constitute a refusal of a place and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal.

## **Fair access**

The school fully participates in the Local Authority Fair Access Protocol. Children admitted under the Protocol will be prioritised above those on the school's continuing interest (waiting) list, and above the PAN if necessary.

## **A. APPLICATION FORMS**

Hertfordshire County Council's Children's Services ([www.hertsdirect.org/admissions](http://www.hertsdirect.org/admissions)) operate an agreed coordinated admissions scheme in line with government legislation. The County Council will manage the process on behalf of the school according to the scheme published each year. St John's Governing Body, as the Admission Authority, will allocate the available places in-line with this policy, and offers will be made by the County Council. The closing date for both application forms and online applications to be received by the applicant's home local authority is the 15 January 2026. All applications must be made on the home local authority's common application form. As St John's is a Voluntary Aided School, the oversubscription criteria are those of the Governing Body. You are requested therefore also to complete the St John's Supplementary Information Form, to enable the Governors to give full consideration to your application. Whether St John's is your first preference school, or a lower ranked preference, please complete and return to this school, by the closing date for applications, the following documents:

- The school's supplementary information form;
- If you are applying under Criterion 5 or 6, a statement by your Priest or Minister on the reverse of the form, to endorse your application.

(If the School's form is not completed and submitted, the Governors will only be able to apply the admission arrangements using the information on the home local authority's common application form, which may result in your application being given a lower priority).

## **B. SORTING APPLICATIONS**

After the closing date for applications, the County Council will send the school a full list of those who have included our school in their preferred list of schools.

1. The Governors' Admissions Committee will meet to consider all applications.
2. Children with Education, Health and Care Plans that name the school will be admitted to the school. Those children will be admitted as part of the school's Published Admission Number, but before the oversubscription criteria are used.
3. If the school has fewer applications than places available, all applicants will be offered a place.
4. If the school has more applications than places available, the oversubscription criteria set out in Section C below will be used to allocate places.
5. In the event of more applications than available places, Hertfordshire County Council will maintain a continuing interest (waiting) list on behalf of the Governors. These and late



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applications will go onto the list in a position determined by the criteria and the list will be re-ranked each time a child's name is added to or removed from the list. If a place becomes available in the school, it will be offered to the child that best meets the published admission rules. 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 application). To remain on the continuing interest list after this time parents must confirm they are still interested in a place by completing an In Year application form.

6. Parents who submitted applications which are successful will receive an allocation letter with a deadline for returning an acceptance form to the school, after which a personal letter of welcome will be sent by the Headteacher and Governors. Parents who are not allocated a place for their child have the right to appeal – see Section E below.

## **C. CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION IN THE EVENT OF OVERSUBSCRIPTION**

If there are more applications than places available, Governors will allocate places in the following Rule order (see Explanatory Notes below):

**Rule 1.** Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, including those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England, and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Previously looked after children are those who were looked after but ceased to be so because of being adopted or becoming subject to a Child Arrangements Order or a Special Guardianship Order.

**Rule 2.** Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school. Medical and social category applications are considered by the school's Admissions Committee of Governors.

**Rule 3.** Children whose home address at the time of application, is in the ecclesiastical parish of Lemsford, as shown on the map available at the school and on the school's website.

**Rule 4.** Children who have a sibling who will be attending the school at the time of entry.

**Rule 5.** Children, one or both of whose parents have attended worship at St John's Church, Lemsford, at least once a month for 1 year at the time of application. Parents should ask the Vicar of St John's Church to complete the statement on the reverse of the supplemental form endorsing this commitment. If during the period specified for attendance at worship, the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of the admission arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when premises have been available for public worship.

**Rule 6.** Children, one or both of whose parents have attended worship at another Christian Church, at least once a month for 1 year at the time of application. In this context another Christian Church is one which is affiliated to Churches Together in England and/or Churches Together in Welwyn/Hatfield and/or the Evangelical Alliance. Parents should ask their priest or minister to complete the statement on the reverse of the supplemental form endorsing this commitment to a Christian place of worship. If attendance has been at more than one Church over the previous 12 months, the further statement should also be completed, to cover attendance over the whole of the past year. In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the relevant place of worship has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of



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these admissions arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when alternative premises have been available for public worship.

**Rule 7.** Any other children.

## **Tiebreak in the event of oversubscription within any one criterion**

If there is more demand than places available within a criterion, the available places will be allocated, in priority order, to children living nearest to the school. Priority will be determined using Hertfordshire County Council's home to school measurement system - a straight line distance measurement provided by Hertfordshire County Council's GIS system - as outlined in the County's admission arrangements and application literature (see Explanatory Notes below).

In the event of two children having an equal claim on the last available place e.g. living in a block of flats, priority will be given to the lowest flat number. If two completely different addresses are the same distance from the school, they will be referred to HCC's random allocation system (using the admissions database).

Where the last available place is offered to a twin or multiple birth child the other twin or sibling(s) will be offered a place as exceptions to the infant class size rule.

## **D. IN YEAR ADMISSIONS**

Older children can be admitted to the school at any time provided there are places available in the year group. All In Year admissions to the school will be made in line with the County Council's coordinated admissions scheme and fair access protocol. In Year application forms can be completed online at <http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions>. Applications must be submitted to the County Council using the County Council's In Year application form and allocations will be made in accordance with the County Council's scheme. In Year forms can be obtained from the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043. St John's supplementary information form should also be completed and returned to the school. If more applications are received than places available, a waiting list will be made, and any vacancy will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

As the school is part of the County Council's scheme for In Year co-ordination, a new In Year application must be made at the end of the academic year to ensure that a child is on the continuing interest list.

## **E. RIGHT OF APPEAL**

Parents who applied through Hertfordshire's online system and who wish to appeal should log into their online their online application and click on the link 'register an appeal'. Out of County residents and paper applicants should call the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request their registration details, log into [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals) and click on the link 'log into the appeal system'.

For In Year Admissions: 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](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals)

## **EXPLANATORY NOTES AND DEFINITIONS**

The governors use the same definition of the following terms as the County Council:



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**Rule 1: Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, including those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England, and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Previously looked after children are those who were looked after but ceased to be so because of being adopted or becoming subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order.**

Places are allocated to children in public care in accordance with paragraph 1.7 of the School Admissions Code and Chapter 2, Section 7 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

A "child looked after" 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 (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989).

All children adopted from care who are of compulsory school age are eligible for admission under Rule 1.

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under Rule 1.

Children who were not 'looked after' immediately before being adopted, or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order, will not be prioritised under Rule 1. Applications for these children with suitable supporting professional evidence can be considered under Rule 2.

**Child Arrangements Order** - under section 8 of the Children Act 1989, an order which settles the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

**Special Guardianship Order** – under section 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians.

Children previously looked after outside England and subsequently adopted will be prioritised under Rule 1, if the child's previously looked after status and adoption is confirmed by Hertfordshire's 'Virtual School'.

The child's previously looked after status will be decided in accordance with the definition outlined in The Children & Social Work Act 2017:

- to have been in state care in a place because he or she would not otherwise have been cared for adequately, and
- to have ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted.

A child is in "state care" if he or she is in the care of, or accommodated by - (a) a public authority, (b) a religious organisation, or (c) any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

**Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school** 'Rule 2' applications will only be considered at the time of the initial application, unless there has been a significant and exceptional change of circumstances within the family since the initial application was submitted.



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All schools in Hertfordshire have experience in dealing with children with diverse social and medical needs. However, in a few very exceptional cases, there are reasons why a child has to go to one specific school.

Few applications under Rule 2 are agreed.

All applications are considered individually but a successful application should include the following:

- a) Specific recent professional evidence that justifies why only one school can meet a child's individual needs, and/or
- b) Professional evidence that outlines exceptional family circumstances making clear why only one school can meet the child's needs.
- c) If the requested school is not the nearest school to the child's home address clear reasons why the nearest school is not appropriate.
- d) For medical cases – a clear explanation of why the child's severity of illness or disability makes attendance at only a specific school essential.

Evidence should make clear why only one school is appropriate. A Rule 2 application will generally not be upheld in cases where more than one school could meet the child's need.

In exceptional cases relating to a disability, where more than one school in the county can meet the child's specific needs, a clear and compelling case can be made for the "nearest" school with the relevant facilities, environment or location. You must clearly explain why attendance at the "nearest" school with these facilities is essential.

Applications under Rule 2 can only be considered when supported by a recent letter from a professional involved with the child or family, for example a doctor, psychologist or police officer. The supporting evidence needs to demonstrate why only one named school can meet the social/medical needs of the child.

Applications for children who were not "looked after" immediately before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order may be made under this rule.

## **Home address:**

The address provided 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, 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



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majority of the school week. If a child lives at two addresses equally, parents/carers 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.

Addresses 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/carers 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/carers 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 "on-time" by HCC, an amended joint application will also be considered "on-time" if received before 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026 (the late deadline). If the amended joint application is received after 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026, it will be treated as "late".

## **Home to school distance:**

A 'straight line' distance measurement is used in all home to school distance measurements for community and VC schools in Hertfordshire. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal points. 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.

## **Tiebreak (distance):**

A tiebreak is used if 2 applications have addresses that measure the same distance from a school. For example, if 2 applications had identical home to school distance measurements, a random tiebreak would be used to decide which applicant is offered a place. Every applicant is given a unique random number for each of their school preferences. When a random tiebreak is needed, this random number is used to allocate the place – the lowest number is given priority.

## **Multiple births:**

The Governing Body, as the admissions authority, will admit over the school's Published Admission Number when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated the last place at the school. Where a twin or multiple birth child has been offered the last available place, the governors will admit the other twin or siblings.

## **Sibling:**



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A sibling is defined as: 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\* and in every case living permanently\* in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of this application.

A sibling must be on the roll of the named school at the time the younger child starts.

If a place is obtained for an older child using fraudulent information, there will be no sibling connection available to subsequent children from that family.

\*A sibling link will not be recognised 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.

If an applicant lives at 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.

Please note that the information in this policy is correct for the year shown. Policies for future years may well be different.

Applications for 2026/27