



ST. MARY'S  
ACADEMY TRUST

# **St Mary's Academy Trust**

## **Admissions Arrangements**

**Date to be reviewed: February 2025**

# St. Mary's Academy Trust

## Admissions Arrangements for the Academic Year 2024-25

The Governing Board/ Trust is the admissions authority for this school.

### Our Vision

*St Mary's Academy Trust is a family of schools founded upon our key values, delivering educational excellence in order that each child thrives within our safe and nurturing environment.*

We welcome equally, applications from parents of the Christian faith, of other faiths and of no faith. We ask all parents applying for a place here to respect our distinctive Christian ethos and its importance to the school community.

The planned admissions number (PAN) for admission to the reception class in the school year commencing September 2024 will be a maximum of **30**.

### Making an application

Applications for admission to the school should be made using the Local Authority Common Application Form by the national closing date of **13<sup>th</sup> January 2024**. This can be found here, [Primary school places \(barnsley.gov.uk\)](https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/primary-school-places)

By law, no infant class may normally contain more than thirty children. The Governing Board will not place any restrictions on admissions to the reception class unless the number of children for whom admission is sought exceeds this number.

The Governing board will consider first all those applications received by the published deadline (above). Applications made after midnight on that date will be considered after all on-time applications have been fully processed unless exceptional circumstances merit consideration alongside on-time applications.

### Admission procedures

The Local Authority operates a coordinated admissions scheme and administers a system of equal preferences under which all applications are considered equally and the Governing Board allocates the available places in accordance with its published admissions arrangements. In the event that there are more applications than places available, the Governing Board will allocate places using the criteria (below), which are listed in order of priority.

The Local Authority will inform parents of the offer of a place on behalf of the governors on the national offer date **16<sup>th</sup> April 2024**.

### Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

All governing boards are required by Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 or the Children's and Families Act 2014 to admit to the school a child with an education, health and care plan (EHCP), formerly a statement of special needs (SEN), which names the school. This is not an oversubscription criterion and relates only to children who have undergone statutory assessment and for whom an

EHCP has been issued. If this school is oversubscribed after the admission of children with an EHCP then the oversubscription criteria will be applied to other applicants.

### Oversubscription criteria

Where the number of applications received exceeds the planned admission number of the school the Governing Board will apply the following criteria in strict order of priority:

- 1. Pupils who are either currently or have previously been ‘looked after’**
- 2. Children who have an exceptional medical or social need** (recommended by the appropriate professional – please read notes and definitions carefully)
- 3. A child who has a sibling who will be attending the school at the proposed date of admission.**
- 4. A child who resides within the catchment area of the school and is eligible for the pupil premium** (or service premium) at the time of application
- 5. A child who resides within the catchment area** of the school.
- 6. Other children**

**For definitions and additional explanations, please see Notes section below.**

### Tie Breaker

Where there are more applications than available within any one of the above criteria applications will be allocated to those living closest to the school. This distance will be measured using the same method as the Local Authority. The distance to be measured by a straight line from the center point of the child’s ordinary place of residence to the main entrance to the school building. The distances vary each school year and there is no guarantee that if you reside under these distances, you will be offered a place in the 2024-2025 school year.

Where two or more applicants live equidistant from the school, as measured by the Local Authority, the remaining places will be allocated by random allocation; this process will be independently supervised. The Random Allocation will be computer generated via Admissions module in use at the time, currently Synergy.

### Waiting Lists

Where an application has been unsuccessful parents/guardians may request that the child’s name is added to the waiting list. The waiting list will be maintained until December 31st. Any places that become available will be allocated according to the published oversubscription criteria of the admission arrangements with no account being taken of the length of time on the waiting list.

In accordance with the School Admissions Code as soon as school places become vacant the Governing Board must fill the vacancies from any waiting list, even if this is before admission appeals have been heard. Placing a child’s name on a waiting list does not affect a parent’s/guardian’s right of appeal against an unsuccessful application.

It should be noted that children, who are subject of direction by a Local Authority to admit or who are allocated in accordance with an In-Year Fair Access Protocol (The School Admission Code), must take precedence over those on a waiting list.

## Appeals

Where governors are unable to offer a place because the school is oversubscribed, parents have the right to appeal to an independent admission appeal panel, set up under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education Act, 2002.

Parents who intend to make an appeal against the Governing Board's decision to refuse admission must submit a notice of appeal in writing within 20 days of receiving the offer letter to Trust Clerk to the governing body or email at [finance@smat.org.uk](mailto:finance@smat.org.uk).

Please note the right of appeal against the governors' decision does not prevent you from making an appeal in respect of any other school.

## In-year admissions

Parents/carers seeking to transfer a child to the school/academy during the school year should make an application by completing the In-Year Admissions Form which is available from [Transferring schools \(barnsley.gov.uk\)](http://Transferring schools (barnsley.gov.uk)) Forms should be returned to school office. Following receipt Governors will inform parents/carers whether a place has been offered within **21** days.

Where more applications are received than places available the over-subscription criteria will be used to support the decision.

## Fair Access Placements

Outside the normal admissions round, it may sometimes be necessary for a pupil to be placed by the governing board or the Local Authority, in a particular school even if there is a waiting list for admission. Such placements are made in accordance with the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol.

## Children below statutory school age

- Parents may request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the same school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age.
- Parents may request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.
- Requests for a child to start their schooling on a part-time basis or to defer the start until they reach compulsory school-age should be addressed to the Headteacher.
- Compulsory school age is the beginning of the term following the child's fifth birthday.
- Parents of children who are offered a place at the school before they are of compulsory school age may defer their child's entry until later in the school year. Where entry is deferred, the school will hold the place for that child and not offer it to another child during the remainder of the school year for which the application was made. It should be noted, however, that such children will only be allowed to start at the beginning of a term.
- Parents may not defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the beginning of the summer term of the school year for which the original application was accepted.

## Summer born children (children born between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 31<sup>st</sup> August)

The majority of parents/carers apply and take up a reception place in the school year in which their child will reach the age of five. However, there may be exceptions where parents feel this is not in the best interest of the child and request that the child's place is deferred. The non- statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE July 2013) states:

- School admission authorities are required to provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday, but flexibilities exist for children whose parents do not feel they are ready to begin school at this point.
- School admission authorities are responsible for making the decision on which year group a child should be admitted to but are required to make a decision based on the circumstances of the case.
- There is no statutory barrier to children being admitted outside their normal year group.

Applications need to be made under the normal round expressing the wish that the child be admitted the following year. This will be discussed through a joint agency meeting and a decision will be made in the best interests of the individual child.

### **Fraudulent Applications**

The Governing Board reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a place if fraudulent or intentionally misleading information has been used on an application, e.g., a false home address. This includes cases where parents take out a short term let or buy a property solely to use its address on the application form without any intention of taking up permanent residence there. In fairness to all parents, all allegations of fraudulent practice brought to the Governing Board's attention will be investigated.

## Notes and definitions

### Parents

'Parents' include all those people who have a parental responsibility for a child as set out in the Children Act 1989. Where responsibility for a child is 'shared', the person receiving Child Benefit is deemed to be the parent responsible for completing application forms.

### Siblings

Sibling refers to brother or sister, half-brother or half-sister, adoptive brother or adoptive sister, foster brother or foster sister, stepbrother or step sister living as one family unit at the same address. It will also be applied to situation where a full, half or adopted brother or sister are living at separate addresses.

### The home address and residing in

The address must be where the child lives permanently. If the residency is split between two parents, the address must be where the child lives for the majority of the time. If the residency is split equally between two parents, they can nominate the address they wish to use for the allocation of a school place.

Families who are due to move house should provide.

- a) a solicitor's letter confirming that exchange of contracts has taken place on the purchase of a property; or
- b) a copy of the current Rental Agreement, signed by both the tenants and the landlords, showing the address of the property; or
- c) in the case of Serving H.M. Forces personnel, an official letter confirming their date of posting from the MOD, FCO or GCHQ.

### Exceptional Medical or Social Need

Priority will be given to those children whose evidence establishes that they have a **demonstrable and significant need to attend this school**. Equally this priority will apply to children whose evidence establishes that their parents'/guardians' physical or mental health or social needs mean that they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend this school.

All schools can support children with a wide range of additional needs and are expected to accommodate severe medical and social needs. An application made under this criterion should clearly demonstrate why this school applied is the only one that can meet your child's need in a way that no other school can.

Evidence must be submitted in writing by the closing date for applications (above) and include recent independent objective evidence, for example from a doctor, psychologist, social worker or other professional involved with your child. It should confirm the circumstances of the case and must set out why the child should attend this school and why no other school could meet the child's needs. If this school is not the nearest school to your child's home address, give specific reasons why closer schools will not meet your child's needs.

Providing evidence does not guarantee that a child will be given priority at this school and in each case a decision will be made based on the merits of the case and whether the evidence demonstrates that a placement should be made at this school above any

other. In consideration of each case the board may consult with other medical or educational professionals for a further opinion as to whether the pupil should be allocated a place at this school.

‘Medical need’ does not include mild medical conditions, such as asthma or allergies. ‘Social need’ does not include a parent’s wish that a child attends the school because of a child’s aptitude or ability or because their friends attend the school or because of routine child-minding arrangements.

### Looked After

Children who are ‘looked after’ by the Local Authority in accordance with section 22 of the Children Act 1989 (i.e., a child who is in the care of the Local Authority or provided with accommodation by that Authority) and children who were ‘looked after’ but have been adopted or have become subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order.

This applies to all looked-after children, including those who are in the care of another local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services function at the time of making an application.

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. In the case of previously looked after children, a copy of the relevant documentation will be required in support of the application. This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 and children who were adopted under the Adopted & Children's Act 2002. Child Arrangements Orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a Child Arrangements Order. See Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a ‘special guardianship order’ as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian (or special guardians).

### Pupil Premium

The pupil premium is additional funding paid annually to schools under Section 14 of the Education Act 2002 for the purposes of supporting the attainment of disadvantaged children. The service premium is additional funding paid annually to schools under Section 14 of the Education Act 2002 for the purposes of supporting the pastoral needs of the children of Armed Services personnel. The early years pupil premium is additional funding paid (from April 2015) to support disadvantaged children receiving government funded early education.

## Useful resources:

School admissions Code 2021:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code-2021>

School Admissions Appeals Code 2022:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code>

Fair Access Protocols 2021:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fair-access-protocols-in-school-admissions>

Office of the Schools Adjudicator

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-schools-adjudicator>

