

# St Aldhelm's School Admissions Policy 2008/9

## Introduction

St Aldhelm's Church of England Voluntary Aided Combined School aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils. Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the churches at parish and diocesan level. However, parents do have the right to withdraw their children from the daily Christian act of worship and from Religious Education.

The Governing Body of the school is the Admissions Authority.

The Published Admission Number, which is the maximum number of pupils that can be admitted to a year group, is **60**.

In accordance with government legislation the governing body will consult with the Local Authority, the Diocesan Board of Education and other local schools annually in respect of the admissions policy.

All the admission authorities within Poole operate an equal preference admissions system. This means that all first, second and third preference applications are considered together. The local authority will offer the highest ranked preference possible.

Admission to all Poole schools will be in accordance with the agreed primary scheme for co-ordinated admission arrangements 2008/9.

## Aims

The overriding aim of this policy is that it should work for the benefit of children and parents/carers in our area.

The school aims to provide a place for children whose home address is within the primary designated area, (defined as being the area within the ecclesiastical boundaries of the parish of St Aldhelms). In addition the school acknowledges a secondary designated area, which is the catchment area determined by the Local Authority.

## Applications

Parents who wish their children to be admitted to the school should complete the common application form and return it to **the Admissions Team in Pupil, Parent and Youth Services by 12.00 noon on the published closing date set annually by the local authority.**

The purpose of the admissions policy of St Aldhelm's School is, whilst there are adequate places, to offer a place to all applicants irrespective of gender, religion, ethnicity

or country of origin, disability or academic ability. Admissions are, however, subject to there being adequate places available in the year group and adequate teaching capacity/support. Admissions are also subject to any constraints upon the school by the relevant authority (Salisbury Diocese, DfES, Local Authority).

Notification of the outcome of applications will be sent to parents on the date agreed with the Local Authority.

**Oversubscription criteria**

**If the number of applications exceeds 60 for any year group, the Governing Body will consider the following criteria to determine the priority order in which places will be offered:**

1. Children in the care of the Local Authority (Looked After Children).
2. Children resident within the parish of St Aldhelm's who are baptised in the Church of England or who have had an alternative service of thanksgiving according to the practice of another mainstream Christian Church (that is one within Churches Together in Britain and Northern Ireland)\*.
3. Other children resident within the parish of St Aldhelm's.
4. Children resident in the Local Authority's designated catchment area for the school and not resident in the parish of St Aldhelm's who are baptised in the Church of England or who have had an alternative service of thanksgiving according to the practice of another mainstream Christian Church (that is one within Churches Together in Britain and Northern Ireland)\*.
5. Other children resident in the Local Authority's designated catchment area for the school and not in the parish of St Aldhelm's.
6. All other children who are baptised in the Church of England or who have had an alternative service of thanksgiving according to the practice of another mainstream Christian Church (that is one within Churches Together in Britain and Northern Ireland)\*.
7. All other children.

\* Parents would need to return a completed copy of Form A, (Information in support of an application for a place at St Aldhelm's School), signed by a vicar/minister as proof of baptism or of there having been a thanksgiving service. This form would need to be returned to the Admissions Team, Borough of Poole with the main application form.

**Where there are more applications than places in any of the categories 1 – 7 above the following will be considered in order within each of the above categories:**

**i) Siblings:** Applicants with a sibling in the school who will continue to attend when the applicant is admitted. They will be considered before applicants with no siblings in the school. (For this purpose the term sibling is used to describe full brothers/sisters, half brothers/sisters, step brothers/sisters and children of co-habiting parents who are not related by blood. It also includes foster children).

**ii) Medical needs:** Applicants with medical needs. Applications for children with significant clinical conditions are to be supported by appropriate written evidence from

doctors or psychologists giving clear grounds as to why the school is the only school that can meet the child's particular needs.

**iii) Distance:** In the event of a tie break, where applicants have equal priority but there are not sufficient places available to offer all of them a place, the Governors will decide in favour of the applicant who lives nearest the school. This will be measured by the safest practical walking route using the centre line of public roads and footpaths from the pupil's home address to the nearest school gate that is for the use of pupils using a Geographical Information System. If applicants live in the same block of flats the allocation of places will be made by way of drawing lots.

### **Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs**

In accordance with the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, the Governors are legally required to admit a child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs issued by the Local Authority in which the school is named. In the event of this happening these pupils will be admitted first and it will reduce accordingly the number of places available. Prior consultation with the Governors is part of this process before the school is named on the Statement. Therefore, the above criteria do not apply to any child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

### **The home address:**

The school can only consider one "home address" for each child. Where a child spends time with parents with shared parental responsibility at more than one address, the school will consider the home address as being where the prime carer resides. The "prime carer" shall be determined as the parent/carer in whose name the Child Benefit for the individual child is made.

### **Unsuccessful applications**

In the event of an unsuccessful application for a child to attend St Aldhelm's School a parent may request that the child's name goes on the waiting list. Admissions from the waiting list will be in accordance with the priorities listed above. The length of time spent on the waiting list is therefore not taken into consideration when a place becomes available at the school. In the event of more than one child on the waiting list meeting the same criteria, the determinant will be the distance as detailed in (iii) above.

If parents decide to appeal against the Governing Body's decision not to offer a place, the appeal must be made in writing and addressed to the Clerk to the Governors, c/o St Aldhelm's Combined CE VA School, Winston Avenue, Branksome, Poole, Dorset, BH12 1PG. Information regarding the procedure will then be sent by the Local Authority.

### **Late applications**

Applications received after the closing date will be deemed as "late applications". Late applications will only be considered if there are places available after all applications received by the closing date have been considered.

### **Admission to other year groups**

Admissions are subject to places being available and to the same admissions criteria.

**Withdrawing offers of place**

Parents should note that, should evidence of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent be found (which effectively denied a parent with a stronger claim an offer of a place), the offer could be withdrawn. This statement is made in accordance with 'School Admissions Code of Practice' (DfES 2006).

**Looked after children**

This means any child who is in care of a local authority in accordance with section 22 of the Children Act 1989.

**Applications from separated parents.**

Only one application can be considered for each pupil. Where parents are separated it is essential that agreement is reached by both parties concerning the nominated preferred schools. If agreement cannot be reached the local authority will only consider the application from the parent who is the prime carer for the child. The prime carer is the parent in whose name Child Benefit payments are made.

**Applications for children of multiple births.**

If there are insufficient places to accommodate all the children of a multiple birth (i.e. twins, triplets etc) the parents of the children will be asked to nominate the child or children to take up the available number of places.

**Admission to an age group which is not the correct age related national curriculum year group.**

Pupils will only be considered for admission to their correct age related National Curriculum year group.

**Arrangements for admission into Reception classes:**

Children born between 1 September 2003 and the 28 February 2004 will attend part-time in September 2008 moving to full time attendance after the Autumn half term. Parents of children born between 1 March 2004 and 31 August 2004 can defer entry to the Reception Year until the start of Spring Term in January 2009 at which time the child will attend full-time.

Where an offer of a place is made to a child below compulsory school age the parents have the right to defer their child's entry to school until later in the school year. The place is held for that child and is not available to be offered to another child.

Entry may not be deferred beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday nor beyond the academic year in which admission is sought.

**Enquiries about this policy should be addressed to the Clerk to the Governors, c/o St Aldhelm's School, Winston Avenue, Branksome, Poole, BH12 1PG (01202 715100)**