

Admissions policy

St. Margaret's CofE Primary School



Reviewed by the Local Governing Body: Autumn 2024
To be reviewed: Annually
Next review: Autumn 2025

Our vision is based on Proverbs 22:6 'Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.'

St Margaret's C of E Primary School Mission Statement: 'Training children to be confident, independent learners with enquiring minds, a life-long love of learning and an approach to life that reflects core biblical values and principles.'

Our Christian Values of love, joy, patience, kindness and self-control are based on the fruits of the spirit, found in: Galatians 5:22-23

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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at the school
- Set out the school's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- School Admissions Code 2021
- School Admission Appeals Code

As an academy, the school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority.

Looked after children are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

- **Previously looked after children** are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:
 - Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
 - Became subject to a child arrangements order, or
 - Became subject to a special guardianship order.

This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

A child reaches **compulsory school age** on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

4. How to apply

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the application form provided by your home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools are in). You can use this form to express your preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order.

A supplementary information form can be downloaded from our website or be provided by the school office. Prospective parents must complete this form and hand into the school office as well as completing the form for the Local authority.

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority.

5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parents' views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- The headteacher's views

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

6. Allocation of places

6.1 Admission number

The school has an agreed admission number of 60 pupils for entry in Reception

6.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plans name the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

When the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, we apply the following criteria in priority order for deciding which applications to accept. We give priority to the children of parents who worship in Church of England churches, particularly those within Barking.

After we have offered places to any children who are or were in the care of a local authority, the remaining places will be filled by children with the highest number of points using the criteria below.

10	<i>Is 'at the heart of the church' - a regular worshipper (one who worships usually twice a month)</i>
2	<i>Is 'known to the church' - an occasional worshipper</i>
1	Does not attend a Christian church

Extra points

2	<i>Children who have one or more siblings at the school on the date they start school. (Sibling means a full brother or sister, a half-brother or half-sister, a stepbrother or step sister, or an adopted or long-term fostered brother or sister living at the same address and going to the same school.)</i>
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Important notes

- In the case of children who are or were in the care of a local authority, parents or carers will need to provide a letter signed by a fully qualified social worker employed by that local authority. A Looked After Child defined by Section 22 of the Children Act 1989, is a child who is in the care of a local authority, or provided with accommodation by a local authority. Children previously Looked After in the care of the local authority are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or subject to residence or special guardianship orders immediately following having been looked after.
- Within each category the school will give priority to children who have siblings attending the school at the time of admission excluding Year 6 (the final year of primary education). Sibling means a full brother or sister, a half-brother or half-sister, a stepbrother or stepsister, or an adopted or long-term fostered brother or sister living at the same address.
- If two or more children have an equal claim to a place in any one category, we will give priority to children who live closest to the school, measured in kilometres in a straight line (as the crow flies). We (the Barking and Dagenham Admissions Team) measure all distances using a geographical information system from the centre of the child's home to the school's main gate. If you live outside the area, we will use the same system to measure distances. When children have an equal claim to a place because their measurements are the same (for example, from a block of flats), we will use a lottery system (random allocation) to offer places to children.
- We cannot consider other factors not listed in the criteria. The governing body makes sure its decisions are consistent by using only the criteria listed above (which have been agreed following the consultation period).
- If we discover that we have given your child a place at a school based on false or misleading

information, we will withdraw the place and may take legal action.

6.3 Tie break

If more children qualify under a particular rule than there are places available, a tiebreak will be used by applying the next rule to those children. Where there is a need for a tie-breaker where two different addresses measure the same distance from a school, in the case of a block of flats for example the lower door number will be deemed nearest as logically this will be on the ground floor and therefore closer. If there are two identical addresses of separate applicants, the tie break will be random. Where there is a tie breaker between siblings within the same family living at the same address, the place will be offered to the first born.

6.4 Challenging behaviour

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. We may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, i.e. where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that isn't the normal point of entry, only in such a case that we have good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour that may adversely affect the provision we can offer. In this case, we will refer these pupils to the Fair Access Protocol. We will not refuse admission on these grounds to looked after children, previously looked after children and children with EHC plans listing the school.

6.5 Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Barking and Dagenham Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible.

7. In-year admissions

Parents can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose EHC plans name the school will be admitted.

Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for, your child will be offered a place.

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by one of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6.2 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Applications for in-year admissions should be completed using the online portal SAM

<https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/school-admissions>

The in year SIF form can be downloaded from the school website or collected from the school office and sent to the following address:

st-margarets-school@genesistrust.net

Parents will be notified of the outcome of your in-year application in writing within 15 school days.

8. Appeals

St Margaret's is a popular School and parents will appreciate that, owing to over-subscription, it may at times not be possible to offer a place to everyone who applies. The 1980 Education Act gives parents the right to appeal against decisions of the Governors regarding admissions. Parents wishing to do so should notify both of the following:

a) Complete the admission appeal form at-
<https://www.lbdd.gov.uk/school-admissions-appeal-form>

b) Chair of Governors,
ST Margarets C of E Primary School
15-19 North Street
Barking
IG11 8AW

You can find details of the school's appeals timetable on the following webpage:

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Local Governing body every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the governing board will publicly consult on these changes. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years.