

## Admission Arrangements for the Academic Year 2023/2024

At St Michael's we strive to develop and inspire **courageous, respectful** and resilient learners encouraging them to **serve** with **kindness, respect** and tolerance guided by our Christian values so that they can flourish, living 'life in all its fullness'. (John 10:10)

### Introduction

St Michael's Church of England Aided First School welcomes children from all backgrounds, faiths and no faith. The Governors of the School are committed to developing an inclusive school that reflects the diversity of the local community.

### School Ethos Statement

As well as being an inclusive neighbourhood school, as a Church school St Michael's First School has a distinctive character and ethos that reflects the teachings of Jesus Christ and Christian values. We ask all parents applying for a place here to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community. We hope that all children who come to the school will be able to participate "as appropriate" in the religious life of the school (including collective worship and religious education). This does not affect the right of parents who are not Christians to apply for a place. Indeed, through our commitment to inclusiveness, we actively welcome families from other faiths and no faith.

### Applications for Admission

Full time places in the reception class will be available in September of the academic year within which your child becomes five.

If you wish to make an application for your child's admission to this school **please complete an admissions form, available online at**

**<http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/Admissions/> , even if you are resident within the school's catchment area.**

In consultation with Staffordshire Local Authority the School Governors determine the number of pupils that may be admitted to a school in each year; this is generally referred to as the school's Published Admission Number (PAN). The PAN agreed by Governors for the school year beginning 2023 is 30.

### Oversubscription Criteria

If the number of applications for admission to a school exceeds the school's Published Admission Number the following order of priority will be used to allocate the available places. In line with the Special Educational Needs code of practice, St Michael's will not discriminate against an educational or physical need in deciding whether to offer a place. Any child with a statement of special educational needs or Educational Health & Care Plan or disability that names the school must be admitted. This will reduce the number of places available to applicants.

- 1) Children in care and children who ceased to be in care because they were adopted (or became subject to child arrangements order or special guardianship order), including those children 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.
- 2) Children who satisfy both of the following tests:
  - a. **Test 1:** the child is distinguished from the great majority of other applicants either on their own medical grounds or by other exceptional circumstances. Medical grounds must be supported by a medical report (obtained by the applicant and provided at the point of application). This report must clearly justify, for health reasons only, why it is better for the child's health to attend St Michael's rather than any other school. Exceptional circumstances must relate to the choice of school and the individual child, i.e. the circumstances of the child, not the economic or social circumstances of the parent/carer. They should be supported by a professional report (obtained by the applicant and provided at the point of application), e.g. social worker. This report must clearly justify why it is better for the child to attend the St Michael's school rather than any other school.
  - b. **Test 2:** the child would suffer hardship if they were unable to attend the St Michael's school. Hardship means severe suffering of any kind, not merely difficulty or inconvenience, which is likely to be experienced as a result of the child attending a different school. Applicants must provide detailed information about both the type and severity of any likely hardship at the time of application.
- 3) Children who have an elder sibling in attendance at St Michael's First school and who will still be attending the school at the proposed admission date; (For admission purposes, a brother or sister is a child who lives at the same address and either: have

one or both natural parents in common; are related by a parents marriage; are adopted or fostered by a common parent or are unrelated children who live at the same address, whose parents live as partners.)

- 4) Children who live in the catchment area who themselves are, or whose families are, faithful and regular worshippers of any Christian denomination (as recognised by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and/or the Evangelical Alliance). Written evidence of the applicants' commitment to their place of worship will be required, (see appendix 1).
- 5) Children living within the catchment area of the school, as defined by the Local Authority.
- 6) Children who are outside the catchment area and who themselves are, or whose families are, faithful and regular worshippers of any Christian denomination (as recognised by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and/or the Evangelical Alliance). Written evidence of the applicants' commitment to their place of worship will be required, (see appendix 1).
- 7) Children who are themselves, or whose families are, committed members of another religious faith. Written evidence will be required from the faith leader, *using the attached form*.
- 8) Other children arranged in order of priority according to how near their home addresses are to the main gate of the school determined by a straight-line measurement as calculated using the Local Authority's Geographical Information System.

### **Tiebreaker situation**

In the event of oversubscription in any of the above criteria, places will be allocated in the order of those living closest to the school determined by a straight line measurement from the applicant's home address to the main front gate of the school measured by the Local Authority's Geographical Information System (GIS). The coordinates of an applicant's home address are determined and provided by the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and OS Address Point data.

If there are limited number of spaces available and St Michael's cannot distinguish between applicants using the criteria listed, such as in the case of children who live in the same block of flats, then the child or children who will be offered the available spaces will be randomly selected by drawing lots.

**All children will be granted places using the above criteria regardless of ability, race or gender.**

If your application is unsuccessful you have the right to make an appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel, details available from the school.

### **Additional information**

#### **Home address**

The home address is considered to be the child's along with their parent's main and genuine principle place of residence at the time of the allocation of places, e.g. where they are normally and regularly living. If a child is resident with friends or relatives (for reasons other than legal guardianship) the friends or relative's address will not be considered for allocation purposes.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with both parents for part of the school week then the home address will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the school week (e.g. 3 out of 5 school nights available). Parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes.

If a child's home address changes during the admissions process it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the Local Authority immediately. Where there is a proposed house move taking place during the admissions process the Local Authority will only accept the revised address for purposes of allocation where parents/carers can provide documentary evidence of the move by 12<sup>th</sup> March 2021 before the Local Authority closing date. It will be necessary for sufficient evidence of a permanent move to be provided by the applicant by this date before it will be taken into account for allocation purposes at the national offer date.

If a place is offered on the basis of an address that is subsequently found to be different from the child's normal and permanent home address at the time of allocation of places then that place is likely to be withdrawn.

#### **Deferred Entry to Reception Class**

Parents may request that their child be admitted to Reception Class on a part-time basis, or that their child be admitted to school later in the same academic year until the child reaches compulsory school age (i.e. beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday). The effect is that the place will be held for the child in Reception and is not available to be offered to any other child within the same academic year in which it has been offered.

Before deciding whether to defer their child's entry to school, parents should visit St. Michael's to clarify how they cater for the youngest children in Reception and how the needs of these children are met as they move up through the school.

### **Admission Outside of the Normal Age Group**

Parents may seek to apply for their child's admission to school outside of their normal age group, for example if the child is exceptionally gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of summer born children may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted outside of their normal age group to Reception rather than Year 1.

These parents will need to make an application alongside children applying at the normal age which should explain why it is in the child's best interest to be admitted outside of their normal age which may include information such as professional evidence as to why this is the case and why an exception should be made in the case of the child. A decision as to whether this is an appropriate course of action will be made by the Governing Body who will take into account the circumstances of the case and views of the headteacher. Parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular year group.

### **Application on faith grounds**

"Faithful and regular worshipper" is defined as worshipping or taking part in church activities at least once a month for two years prior to application.

### **Siblings**

See note 4

### **Multiple-birth applications**

The requirement for the Governing Body to meet the Infant Class Size legislation may result in the refusal of catchment area or sibling applications where a class has already reached its limit of 30 pupils. However, as an exception, the Governing Body will give careful consideration

to offering places above the published admission number to applications from children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted even when there are no other vacant places.

### **Late Applications**

Preferences received after the closing date will be considered alongside those applicants who applied on time wherever possible. Where it is not practicable because places have already been allocated, or are shortly to be allocated, then late preferences will be considered only after those that were made before this point

A late application does not affect the right of appeal or to be placed on a school's waiting list.

### **Waiting Lists**

Waiting lists will be held where in any year the school receives more applications for places than there are places available. Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out above. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. It will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.

For cases where the Reception class size regulations apply, the waiting list will operate until the cohort concerned leaves Year 2 and parents will be written to each year by the Authority to ask whether or not they wish their child's details to remain on the list.

For all other cases, the waiting list will operate until 31<sup>st</sup> December in the year of admission.

Inclusion on a school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available at St Michael's First school.

A child's position on a waiting list is not fixed and is subject to change during the year i.e. they can go up or down the list since each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the oversubscription criteria

Children who are subject to a direction by a local authority to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those on the waiting list.

### **Appeals**

Parents who are not offered a place for their child have the right to appeal to an independent appeals panel. Parents wishing to appeal should obtain an appeal form from the School and

return this. The form/letter should be sent to reach the Clerk to the Appeals panel, care of the School, within 14 days of the date of the letter confirming the governors' decision not to offer a place. Should some appeals be unsuccessful, the governing body will not consider further applications from those parents within the same academic year unless there have been significant and material changes in their circumstances.

### **Repeat Applications**

Parents do not have the right to a second appeal in respect of the same school for the same academic year unless, in exceptional circumstances, the local authority has accepted a second application from the appellant because of a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school but still refused admission.

### **"In-Year Transfer" Arrangements**

Parents or carers seeking to transfer to St Michael's First School may make an application using the appropriate application form. This application will be processed in line with the procedure outlined in the determined admission arrangements and parents and carers need to be aware that any date set for joining the new school may be after the next term or half term holiday and those parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that their child continues to receive appropriate education in the interim.

Policy adopted: 11.1.2022

Date for next review 11.1.2023

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (CoG)

## Appendix 1

## Supplementary Information Form

To inform school about the commitment of the child's family to the Church as specified in the admissions criteria.

Child's name	
Permanent address	
Denomination of child	
Regularity of attendance at church including the length of time of this regularity	

**To be completed by the church Officer:**

I confirm that the above-named child has attended church as stated.

Yes /No

I confirm that the above-named child belongs to one of the denominations named in the policy.

Yes/No

I confirm that the information provided by the family is correct

Name ..... Date .....

Signature.....

If the child has attended more than one church where a family has recently moved, please complete an extra copy of appendix 1.



## **Annex – Frequently asked questions on implementing the new provisions on Fair Access Protocols and admissions priority for children adopted from state care outside of England**

### **Fair Access Protocols (FAPs)**

The new School Admissions Code 2021 (the 2021 Code) sets out a number of new provisions in relation to FAPs. These include:

- extending the mandatory categories of children who can be placed via the FAP to include children on a Child in Need/Child Protection Plan, children in refuge, children in formal kinship care arrangements, children who have been out of education for four or more weeks and previously looked after children for whom the local authority has been unable to promptly secure a school place;
- removing the ability for local authorities to introduce their own FAP categories and prohibiting the routine use of FAPs in place of the usual in-year admissions process;
- requiring that placement decisions need to be made within 20 school days of a child being referred to the FAP.

### ***When should new FAPs come into operation in order to comply with the new provisions in the 2021 Code?***

Local authorities must make changes to their existing FAPs in order to give effect to the new provisions in the 2021 Code, which come into force on 1 September. This means that a new FAP will be operational on 1 September.

As the 2021 Code requires FAPs to be consulted upon and developed in partnership with all schools in the area, local authorities must consult all the admission authorities in their area about the changes they intend to take forward before doing so.

### **Admissions priority for children adopted from state care outside of England**

The 2021 Code requires children 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 to be given equal first priority in admission arrangements, alongside looked after children (LAC) and children who were previously looked after by English local authorities (PLAC). This advice refers to these children as internationally adopted previously looked after children – “IAPLAC”.

### ***What action must admission authorities take in order to comply with the new IAPLAC provision?***

Paragraph 1.7 of the 2021 Code will require that highest priority is given to “looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those children 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”.

This new provision will necessitate variations to determined admission arrangements to take effect from 1 September 2021. Admission authorities will need to vary their admission

arrangements for 2021/22 (which would have been determined by 15 February 2020) and their admission arrangements for 2022/23 (which would have been determined by 15 February 2021). Without these variations, admission arrangements that have already been determined will not comply with the 2021 Code.

We expect admission authorities to hold a meeting sometime between now and 31 August 2021 to determine the necessary variations to admission arrangements for 2021/2022 and 2022/2023. All such variations should come into effect on 1 September 2021.

As these variations will be necessary to comply with a mandatory requirement of the Code, it will not be necessary to refer a variation request to either the Schools Adjudicator (in respect of maintained schools) or the ESFA (in respect of academies). See paragraphs 3.6 – 3.7 of the 2021 Code for further information on variations.

### *How will the new IAPLAC provision affect admissions in 2021/22?*

All applications received before 1 September 2021 will have been processed in accordance with the existing (2014) Code, and offers made and places allocated will be unchanged. This includes those applications received before 1 September but where the decision has not yet been made by 1 September.

Any applications received on or after 1 September 2021 will need to be processed in accordance with the 2021 Code. By way of example, when dealing with in-year applications for the 2021/2022 academic year, children who are determined as being IAPLAC must be given equal highest priority with LAC and PLAC.

A school's waiting list must be ranked in accordance with its oversubscription criteria. This means that where a child is added to a waiting list before 1 September 2021, but meets the definition of an IAPLAC, the waiting list must be ranked again on 1 September following the 2021 Code coming into force, so that the child is given equal highest priority with LAC and PLAC. This may mean other children who were higher up on the waiting list, may be moved lower down the list.

### *Other references to previously looked after children in the Code*

All references to previously looked after children in the 2021 Code mean children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after **as well as** those children 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.

This means that the other provisions in the 2021 Code which apply to PLAC (for example, in relation to the admission arrangements of schools with a religious character, selective arrangements, and boarding priority) apply to IAPLAC in exactly the same way as they do to PLAC.

### *In-year admissions*

The 2021 Code requires local authorities, admission authorities and governing bodies to publish information about how in-year applications for their school(s) will be dealt with. Details about how in-year applications will be dealt between 1 November 2021 until 31 August 2022 must be published by 31 August at the latest each year, to explain how in-year

applications can be made and how they will be dealt with from 1 September until the following 31 August.

**Taking forward other changes to give effect to the new provisions in the 2021 Code**

Where an admission authority deems it necessary to make other changes to its admission arrangements in order to comply with a mandatory provision in the Code, it is not required to refer a variation request to either the Schools Adjudicator (in respect of maintained schools) or the ESFA (in respect of academies).