



Admissions policy. St Catherine's C of E Primary School

**Reviewed and agreed by Chair of Governors
September 2023**

St. Catherine's is a nurturing community where differences are celebrated, and caring, happy children flourish. Children embrace their learning and develop skills of wisdom and resilience, enabling them to live life in all its fullness.

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." (John 10:10)

St Catherine's is a Hertfordshire County School and as such abides by the procedures and regulations laid down by Hertfordshire County Council. These rules were agreed by the Education Committee for implementation each academic year.

Visits

Prospective parents are welcomed into School and Nursery, by appointment, to meet with the Head and take a tour of the whole community during a working day. Groups are organised whenever possible to use the Head's time most efficiently, but individual tours are accommodated when necessary.

Information is offered to parents regarding our aims, ethos, organisation and management through discussion with staff, responding to questions, by practical example, the school website at www.stcatherines.herts.sch.uk or through written material such as the Ofsted and SIAMS Summary Reports and our school prospectus.

Admissions

Parents registered with the local health authority are contacted by the LA & HCC regarding admission in the autumn of the year prior to their child's attendance at School.

Parents apply online for Reception places. Nursery admissions are administered by the school and Reception admissions are administered by the Local Authority and County Admission Rules are followed if the nursery or school is oversubscribed. The LA informs the parent of the allocation of Reception class places by e-mail and acceptance of the place must be given on line by a set date.

Children start Nursery education at the start of the Autumn term before their 4th birthday and stay in Nursery for 3 terms. Parents apply directly to the school for Nursery places.

Children usually start Primary education at the start of the academic year in which they are 5 years of age. The LA is prepared to admit "summer born" children into reception a year late if parents request it – this needs to be through the LA. We recommend that all children start full time in September unless there are very exceptional circumstances. Parents are welcome to discuss this choice with the Head teacher to clarify the best interests of their particular child's needs.

The Nursery and Reception classes that comprise the Foundation Stage Unit work closely together, monitoring children's progress and offering the level of learning appropriate to each child. All classes are supported by Teaching Assistants, a Nursery Nurse or Early Years Practitioners.

County Admission Rules

The admission rules regarding priority of places given for County Schools are as follows:

- a. Children who must go to the school because they have a statement of special educational needs under the 1996 Education Act which names that school.
- b. Children in Public Care (Children Looked After)
- c. Children who can prove that they have a particular medical or social reason why they must go to the school.
- d. Children who have a brother or sister on the roll of the school at the time of admission: this applies from YrR through to Y5.
- e. Children for whom the school is the nearest community or voluntary-controlled school. For infant class entry if more children qualify under this rule than there are places available, priority is given to twins/multiple births then to those who live nearest.
- f. Children who live nearest to the school.

Complete guidance may be found online at www.hertsdirect.org/admissions.

Appeals

There is no right of appeal against decisions regarding a place in Nursery, as Nursery education is not statutory.

Parents may appeal against the County decision regarding a Reception class place if their preferred school is not allocated. A booklet explaining the appeals procedure may be requested from County Hall.

The appeal may be upheld if it does not result in the class exceeding 30 children which is the legal requirement from Government for Infant classes from September 2000.

Admission Arrangements for disabled children and those with additional needs

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines a disabled person as one who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a persons' ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Most children with Special Needs will not be disabled within the meaning of the Act. The admission of students with disabilities is considered in the first instance in the same way as non-disabled students. Further considerations are made in the light of need and accessibility. Steps are taken to prevent any students being treated less favourably than other students. In practice we ensure that classroom and extra-curricular activities encourage the participation of all students, including those categorised as having Special Educational Needs. Staff organise human and physical resources within the school to increase access to learning and participation by all students.

Aids to Transition

We recognise that all children have to cope with many transitions in their education: from home to pre-school setting; from pre-school to Nursery; to Reception; to Key stage 1 and onwards. For some children these transitions may be noticed daily as they adjust from one environment to another, in terms of culture, routines and expectations. We try to ease this time for children and parents by offering many opportunities to become acquainted with school life, and by staff talking with parents about their children's individual needs:

- Our Nursery teachers makes visits to our pre-school feeder settings to meet children and exchange information about their particular needs.
- Parents of children due to enter St Catherine's Nursery and Reception classes are encouraged to attend welcome meetings at the end of the term before admission, which are hosted by the Head, the Foundation Stage staff, representatives of FOSC, admin staff and the School Health Service.
- Welcome packs are provided containing necessary paperwork and information about the running of the school, the curriculum to be delivered and many practical suggestions for preparing children for the next step.
- All new children are offered preliminary visits to see the setting, meet the staff, and familiarise themselves with the environment.
- Following that visit, parents and children are invited to stay for a 'taster lunch' when they can sample the school dinner menu and begin to familiarise themselves with the setting.
- The teaching methods employed across the school are similar and this allows for any easy transition between units for the children.

The foundation stage unit

The Foundation Stage Unit is open plan. The children share resources and an outside environment for learning. It is large, well equipped and it provides opportunities for children to mix and integrate together.

Collective worship is timetabled at a relevant level for all pupils, supporting children's holistic development and promoting key values and special events. On Fridays we offer a whole school collective worship in the form of a celebration assembly for children and parents.

Communication of information

Your child's information will be transferred from one setting to another and between relevant staff in school, in order to ensure best provision for your child.

Review

This policy is reviewed in line with changes to County procedures, or our Governors review schedule of policy documents, whichever is the sooner.