



NURSERY ADMISSIONS POLICY 2025 - 2026

St Paul's Catholic Primary School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. At a Catholic school, Catholic doctrine and practice permeate every aspect of the school's activity. It is essential that the Catholic character of the school's education be fully supported by all families in the school. All applicants are therefore expected to give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school.

St Paul's Catholic School offers morning sessions (15 hours free childcare) or whole day sessions (30 hours free childcare or privately paid directly to the school) in its Nursery. The Governing Body has sole responsibility for admissions to this school and intends to admit one intake of 21 children in the school year which begins in September 2025. We admit children into our nursery from the term after they are 3. Please see guidelines below:

Date child turns 3	Date child can start St Paul's nursery from
1 st September – 31 st December	January
1 st January – 31 st March	April (after the Easter break)
1 st April – 31 st August	September

The school offers breakfast and after school club provision (7:15am – 8:45am and 3:15pm – 5:45pm). Further details can be obtained by contacting Orchid Kids Club. Tel No: 07533732595 or orchidkidsclub2018@gmail.com

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic applicants in accordance with the Trust Deed of the Diocese of Westminster. Applications will be ranked using the criteria listed below.

In this policy *applicant* refers to the person making an application on behalf of a child; *candidate* refers to the child on whose behalf the application is being made.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority.

1. Catholic looked after and previously looked after children including those looked after overseas. (see notes 2&3)
2. A baptised Catholic child with who has a sibling at the school at the time of admission (see notes 3, 4 and 7).
3. Other baptised Catholic children (see note 3).
4. Other 'looked after' children and previously 'looked after' children who have been adopted

or made subject to child arrangement orders or special guardianship orders including those overseas (see note 2).

5. Non-Catholic children who have a brother or sister attending the school at the time of admission.
6. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 4&5)
7. Any child, attending St Paul's Nursery that is eligible for Early Years Pupil or Service Premium Funding.
8. Christians of other denominations whose application is supported either by a certificate of baptism or a letter from their minister confirming membership of the faith community.
9. Any other children.

Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.

- (i) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can most appropriately be met at this school, the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made. (see note 8)
- (ii) The attendance of a brother or sister at the school at the time of enrolment will increase the priority of an application within each category so that the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made after children in (i) above (see note 6).

EXCEPTIONAL NEED

The Governing Body will give top priority, after the appropriate category of looked-after children, to an application where compelling evidence is provided at the time of application, from an appropriate professional such as a doctor, priest or social worker, of an exceptional social, medical, pastoral or other need of the child, which can only be met at this school.

MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS

Where the final place is offered to a child who has other siblings applying for a place in the same school year, these siblings will also be admitted.

TIE BREAK

Where the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the sub-categories listed above would still lead to oversubscription, the places up to the admission number will be offered to children who reach their 3rd birthday between 1st September 2024 and 31st August 2025 first based in order of those living nearest to the school as measured in a straight line from the applicant's home to the school. We will then offer to other children in order of those living nearest to the school as measured in a straight line from the applicant's home to the school. The measurement will be conducted by Hertfordshire County Council.

FAIR ACCESS

The school is committed to taking its fair share of children who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as set out in locally agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal admissions round, the Governing Body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is

requested under any local protocol that has been agreed by both the local authority and the Governing Body for the current school year. The Governing Body has this power even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE for 2025 – 2026

In order to make an application, you **must** complete an Application Form and Supplementary Information Form (SIF). These can be downloaded from the school's website (<http://stpauls.herts.dbprimary.com>) or via the school office. Whilst the Supplementary Information Form is not compulsory, the information on the SIF enables the Governing Body to assess your application fully against the School's criteria in the event of oversubscription. Please return both forms (in person or by post) to the school, together with all other relevant paperwork required for your application by **Friday 7th February 2025**. The Governing Body of the school will consider applications received after this date.

The school will write to you with the outcome of your application two weeks after the closing date. Parents/carers should accept or decline the place by 7th March 2025.

LATE APPLICATIONS

Applications will be considered after the closing date of 7th February 2025.

RIGHT OF APPEAL

If you are unsuccessful you may ask us for the reasons for the refusal of a place. These reasons will be related to the oversubscription criteria listed in the policy and you will have the right of appeal to an independent panel. Should you wish to appeal please contact the school as soon as possible for an appeal form on which you must list your reasons for making an appeal. Appeals must be submitted to the school in writing.

WAITING LIST

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out in the policy and not in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Names will be removed from the list on 31st August in the year that they enter reception, unless applicants request in writing to remain on the list.

PUPILS WITH AN EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLAN (EHCP)

The admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will be considered by the governing body. If your child has an EHC plan you must submit evidence of this.

CHANGE OF DETAILS

If any of the details on either of your forms changes between the date of application and the receipt of the letter of offer or refusal, you **must** inform the School immediately. If misleading information is given or allowed to remain on either of your forms, the Governing Body reserves the right to withdraw the place, even if the child has already started at the School.

IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS

Applications for In-Year admissions are made directly to the school. If a place is available and there is no waiting list the child will be admitted. If there is a waiting list, then applications will be ranked by the Governing Body in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. If a place cannot be offered at this time then you may ask us for the reasons and you will be informed of your right of appeal. You will be offered the opportunity of being placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained by the Governing Body in the order of the oversubscription criteria and not

in the order in which the applications are received. Names are removed from the list on the 31st August in the year that they enter reception. When a place becomes available the Governing Body will re-rank the list and make an offer to the person at the top of the list.

Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

1. An Education, Health and Care Plan is a plan made by the local authority under section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014, specifying the special educational provision required for a child.

2. *Children previously looked after abroad and subsequently adopted will be prioritised if the child's previously looked status and adoption is confirmed by Hertfordshire's "Virtual School". The child's previously looked status will be decided in accordance with the definition outlined in The Children & Social Work Act 2017:*
 - i. *to have been in state care in a place outside England and Wales because he or she would not otherwise have been cared for adequately, and*
 - ii. *to have ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted.*

A child is in "state care" if he or she is in the care of, or accommodated by –

 - (a) a public authority,*
 - (b) a religious organisation, or*
 - (c) any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society*

3. "Catholic" means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of baptism in a Catholic Church or a certificate of reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy, it includes a looked after child living with a family where at least one of the parents is Catholic.

For a child to be treated as Catholic, evidence of Catholic baptism or reception into the Church will be required. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism should contact their Parish Priest [who, after consulting with the Diocese, will decide how the question of baptism is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church].

4. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.

5. "Children of other Christian denominations" means children who belong to other churches and ecclesial communities which, acknowledge God's revelation in Christ, confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures, and, in obedience to God's will and in the power of the Holy Spirit commit themselves: to seek a deepening of their communion with Christ and with one another in the Church, which is his body; and to fulfil their mission to proclaim the Gospel by common witness and service in the world to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. An ecclesial community which on principle has

no credal statements in its tradition, is included if it manifests faith in Christ as witnessed to in the Scriptures and is committed to working in the spirit of the above.

All members of Churches Together in England and CYTŪN (Welsh Churches) are deemed to be included in the above definition, as are all other churches and ecclesial communities that are in membership of any local Churches Together Group (by whatever title) on the above basis.

6. 'brother or sister' includes:

(i) all natural brothers and sisters, half brothers and sisters, adopted brothers and sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address, and

(ii) the child of a parent's partner where that child lives for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same address as the applicant.

7. A 'parent' means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for a child and any person who has care of a child.

8. To demonstrate an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the governing body will require compelling written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.

9. Any other children, the address provided must be the child's current permanent address at the time of application.

- "At the time of application" means the closing date for applications.
- "Permanent" means that the child has lived at that address for at least a year.

Where a family has not lived at an address for a year, they must be able to demonstrate that they own the property or have a tenancy agreement for a minimum of 12 months* and the child must be resident in the property at the time of application.

The application can only be processed using one address. If a child lives at more than one address (for example due to a separation) the address used will be the one where the child lives for the majority of the school week. If a child lives at two addresses equally, parents/carers should make a single joint application naming one address.

If the child's living arrangements change after you apply and they now spend the majority of the school week living at a different address, you must provide evidence of the new permanent address.

We may ask for proof of your address at any time. If, following an initial investigation and/or any investigation by with the Shared Anti-Fraud Service, the county council concludes that, a fraudulent address has been used, correspondence confirming this decision will be sent to the applicant. We will explain the decision-making process and the action that will be taken with the application. We will also confirm which address will be used as the child's permanent home address for admission allocation purposes.

If we receive more than one application with different address details and **parents don't agree**, parents/carers should provide court documentation to evidence the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes. If two applications are received, with different addresses, neither will be processed until the address issue is reconciled.

If two different applications are received for the same child from the same address but contain different preferences, parents/carers will be invited to submit a joint application or provide court documentation to evidence the preferences that should be used for the admission process. Until the preference issue is reconciled neither application will be processed.

If duplicate applications are made to different LAs for the same child, those LAs will liaise and share information. The child's home LA will determine if the application will be processed.

For the transfer application rounds, if the initial differing applications (one or both) were received "on-time", an amended joint application will also be considered "on-time" if received before the "late deadline". If the amended joint application is received after the late date, it will be treated as "late". The final late deadline for the 2025/26 transfer application process is 2 December 2024 for secondary and upper applications and 3 February 2025 for primary, junior and middle applications. If these dates change, amendments will be published on the HCC admissions web pages at the start of the 2025/26 application process in September 2024.

* If, because of the nature of the agreement, it is not possible to provide a 12-month tenancy agreement, alternative proof of address will be requested.