



Admissions Policy St. Helen's Primary School

Approved	21.11.24
Committee	Standards Committee
Next Review	December 2025

Notes applicable to all sections: Reference to parents includes either both or a sole parent. Where only one parent satisfies a criterion the application will be treated as if it is met by both parents. The term 'parents' includes legal guardians.

Introduction

St. Helen's Primary School serves a catchment area comprising the parishes of Bluntisham and Colne. Provided there are places, we are pleased to welcome any children whose parents choose to send them to St. Helen's, irrespective of where they live.

Prospective parents are invited to make an appointment to visit our school and discuss their plans with the Head Teacher. Please note a visit is not an interview and will not affect any decision regarding the availability of a place.

Aims of the Policy

Through this policy we aim to set out clear procedures for admissions to the school so that the system is seen to be fair by prospective parents and all others involved. We have paid particular note of the status of our school as a Foundation School which means that the Governing Body is the admission authority for the school. The Governing Body therefore set and apply the admission policy and all decisions regarding the admission of children into the school.

Published Admission Number

Each school has an *admission number* which is the intake capacity for the school.

St. Helen's admission number is 30.

We cannot admit above our Published Admission Number (PAN) unless a parent has won a place through appeal or there are very exceptional circumstances. It is not an option for us to admit over the PAN in one year to compensate for a low number in another year.

Admission Procedure for Reception Children

St. Helen's Primary School subscribes to the LA policy that all children should have an equal chance of starting school at the beginning of the academic year in which they have their fifth birthday. This means children can start at St. Helen's in the September following their 4th birthday.

Legally a parent must ensure their child begins full-time education from the beginning of the term after his/her fifth birthday. Provided you have made an application and the school is not oversubscribed, you will be offered a place for your child in Reception from the September following their 4th birthday.

On receipt of the offer of a school place you can choose to take up this place immediately, take up this place on a part-time basis until the beginning of the term after their 5th birthday, or defer your child's admission to the school until the beginning of the term after their 5th birthday, when they must legally start school.

Please note that should your child be born after 1st April, and you decide to defer your child's admission to the school until the following September, your child will be admitted to the school according to their date of birth. This means that they would be admitted into Year 1, not Reception.

We advise all parents to discuss the admission of their child with the school at which they have been allocated a place following receipt of the offer letter.

The application process for admissions into Reception is co-ordinated by Cambridgeshire Local Authority, which acts on behalf of the governing body to offer places at the school. Parents complete only one form – the Application Form for the county in which they reside – available online or through the LA Admissions Team. Further information is available as follows:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/schools-&-learning/apply-for-a-school-place/>

Email: admissions@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Telephone: 0345 045 1370

Admission Arrangements for Older Children (In year admissions)

Pupils may be admitted to our school at any time provided there are places available in the relevant year group. To apply for a place after the start of the school year, parents should contact the LA Admissions Team for an application form; contact details above.

The application form must be returned to the LA Admissions Team who will then contact parents preferred schools to determine the availability of a school place. The Admissions Team will then write to confirm the details of the school at which a place is to be offered and, where appropriate, a suitable start date.

Where the Admissions Team is unable to meet any preferences expressed, a place will be offered at the next nearest alternative school with places available.

Reserve Lists

When an application is refused, the child's details are automatically placed on a reserve list for the year group, ranked according to the oversubscription criteria. The LA Admissions Team holds a reserve list on behalf of the school until the end of the autumn term in the initial year of intake.

Where in-year applications are received, children's details will be held on the reserve list, held by the LA Admissions Team on behalf of the school, for a period of one term following the term for which the place was refused.

Parents will be contacted immediately if a place becomes available for their child, but should be aware that their child's place on a reserve list may change if an application is subsequently received that meets a higher criterion than their own.

Criteria for Allocation of School Places

Priority for allocating places in the school is as follows:

1. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan which names the school take priority over all other applicants and will be admitted irrespective of whether there are places available in the year group. Those children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that does not name the school will be referred to Statutory Assessment and Resources (STAR) Team to determine an appropriate place.
2. Children in Care, children who appear to the Admission Authority to have been in state care (i.e. in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation or any other provider whose sole/main purpose is to benefit society) outside of England but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted only.
3. Children living in the catchment area who have a sibling at the school at the time of admission;
4. Children living in the catchment area;
5. Children living outside the catchment area who have a sibling at the school at the time of admission;
6. Children living outside the catchment area

Please note:

1. *A sibling is defined as children, usually brothers or sisters, aged between 4 and 16, who live together in the same family unit.*

2. *Should the Published Admission Number be reached half way through a criterion, priority will go to children living nearest the school. The distance, for admissions purposes, is measured using the straight line distance from the centre point of the home to the centre point of the school as determined by the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG). These distances are produced by the LA Admissions team for the school. For families who live outside the area covered by the Cambridgeshire mapping system, distances are determined using a combination of local maps and on-line resources.*
3. *The home address is defined as the address of the adult with parental responsibility with whom the child normally lives and which applies at the time of application. Future addresses will be accepted only if the move is intended to take place within 6 weeks of the application and upon confirmation of tenancy or exchange of contracts.*

Informing Parents of the Decision

Letters will be issued by the LA. If it is not possible to accept a child the letter will inform parents of their right to appeal against the decision.

Once an offer of a place has been made it may only be withdrawn in very limited circumstances. This may include the offer being made on the basis of fraudulent information being supplied by the parent, such as a false claim to one of the specified criteria.

Appeals

If a place is not available, parents have the right of appeal. Such appeals will be heard by an Independent Appeals Panel formed in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code. Unsuccessful applicants who wish to appeal should contact the LA Admissions Team for further information regarding this process.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.