

Admissions Policy

Introduction

This document sets out the admission arrangements of St. Bede Academy. For the purposes of this policy, the Directors of the Trust is the admission authority.

Pupil Admission Number (PAN) Variation

St. Bede C of E Primary Academy has historically operated with a Pupil Admission Number (PAN) of 90 places per Reception year group. However, in line with demographic changes across Bolton—particularly falling birth rates both locally and nationally—the school has experienced a reduction in applications for Reception places in recent years.

To ensure effective organisation of teaching and learning, the following temporary variations to the PAN have been approved:

- For the September 2025 Reception intake, the PAN was temporarily reduced from 90 to 75 pupils. A cap of 75 places was also applied to Year 1 to enable a mixed Reception/Year 1 class structure where required.
- For the September 2026 Reception intake, a further temporary PAN variation has been approved, reducing the PAN from 90 to 60 pupils.

A formal consultation has taken place regarding the proposal for the 2027/28 Admissions Policy to reflect a permanent PAN of 60 pupils going forward. This consultation included parents, the wider community, Local Authority schools, and neighbouring Local Authorities.

These changes apply only to future Reception intakes. No current pupils or existing year groups will be affected by the temporary or proposed PAN variations.

School Vision

Learning, Caring, Growing Together.

Process

1. Applications for admission to the school should be made using the Local Authority Common Application Form by the national closing date of 15th January.
2. The Local Authority will inform parents of the offer of a place on behalf of the Directors of the Trust on the national offer date 16th April, or the next working day.
3. The St. Bede Academy has an admission number of 90 pupils for entry into Reception. The school will accordingly admit 90 each year if sufficient applications are received. All applicants will be admitted if 90 or fewer apply. The school will admit any pupils with an Education, Health and Care plan naming the school. Priority will then be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below.

Oversubscription Criteria

1. **Looked After Children, Previously Looked After Children and Internationally Adopted Looked After Children (LAC, PLAC and IAPLAC)**

A “Looked After Child” (LAC) is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

A "Previously Looked After Child" (PLAC) is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order immediately following having been looked after.

An "Internationally Adopted Previously Looked After Child (IAPLAC) is a child who appears (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.

Faith based

2. Regular attendance at public worship at St. Bede, Morris Green Church of England church.

Attendance will be established by information provided on the Supplementary Information Form completed by a member of the clergy or other designated church officer. For the purposes of these admission arrangements 'regular' means attendance at least six times in the twelve months immediately prior to the date of application.

3. Regular attendance at public worship in any Church of England church.

Attendance will be established by information provided on the Supplementary Information Form completed by a member of the clergy or other designated church officer. For the purposes of these admission arrangements 'regular' means attendance at least six times in the twelve months immediately prior to the date of application.

4. Attendance at public worship in any other Christian church.

For the purposes of these admission arrangements 'other Christian church' means a church which is Designated under the Ecumenical Relations Measure 2018, nationally by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, or locally by the diocesan bishop, or which is a member of Churches Together in England, or affiliated to the Evangelical Alliance or a Partner Church of Affinity. The list of nationally designated churches can be found at <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/Designated%20Churches.pdf>. A parent or parents wishing to apply against this criterion must complete a Supplementary Information Form. Attendance at public worship (or its specified equivalent for faith bodies which are not a Christian church where that is provided for in the admissions arrangements) will be established by information provided on the Supplementary Information Form, including verification by the relevant Minister/Faith Leader or their designated officer. For the purposes of these admission arrangements 'regular' means attendance at least six times in the twelve months immediately prior to the date of application.

5. Practising member of any religious faith.

Membership and practice of the faith will be established by information provided on the Supplementary Information Form completed by a designated faith leader of the relevant faith. For the purposes of these admission arrangements 'regular' means attendance at least six times in the twelve months immediately prior to the date of application.

In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church or, in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship, has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these admissions arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church, or in

relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship, or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

Siblings

6. Siblings of pupils attending the school during the academic year to which the child would be admitted. 'Sibling' means a natural brother or sister, a half brother or sister, a legally adopted brother or sister or half-brother or sister, a step brother or sister, or other child living in the same household who, in any of these cases, will be living with them at the same address at the date of their entry to the school.

Children of staff

7. Children of all staff will be considered where the parent has a permanent contract of employment. Their employment contract must have been in place for two or more years at the time of the closing date for application for admission.

Social and Medical need

8. Priority will be given in exceptional circumstances to a small number of children (or in some cases a close relative of the child) whose mental or physical impairment means they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend this school over any other.

Supporting evidence in the form of a letter from a doctor or social worker or other relevant qualified, independent professional, would be required. Medical, health, social and special access reasons will be applied in accordance with the school's legal obligations and does not guarantee that a child will be given priority as each decision will be made on the merits of the individual case.

Children from St. Bede & Baby Bede Nursery

9. Children who attend either St. Bede Nursery or Baby Bede Nursery.

All other children.

10. Distance to the child's normal home front door from the double gated entrance to the school, when walking, will be used as the final determining factor, nearer addresses having priority over more distant ones.

Tie-breaker

Proximity to the school. This will be measured by the shortest walking distance by road or maintained footpath or other public rights of way from the pupil's home, to the main entrance point of the school using a GIS computerised mapping system. In the event that two or more children live at the same distance from the school (as can happen with families living in blocks of flats), random allocation, where supervised drawing of lots by an independent responsible person of good standing will be used to decide which child(ren) will be allocated the remaining place(s) (in accordance with 1.34 and 1.35 of the School Admissions Code).

Late applications

Applications received after the closing date and before the Directors admission meeting will be placed last in the criteria in which they fall unless the Directors are satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which reasonably prevented the application from being submitted on time. Supporting evidence, including that provided by the required Supplementary Information Form, must also be supplied by the closing date for applications, unless it is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which reasonably prevented it being

submitted on time. In the absence of such supporting evidence, the allocation of places will be made on the basis of the application alone.

In-Year admissions

From time to time a place becomes available further up the school. The allocation of places is in accordance with the admissions criteria and if there is less than 90 in a year group. Preference will be given to children moving into the area from outside the Local Authority area who do not have a school place. Evidence will need to be provided that the child has recently moved in.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may request that their child is admitted to a year group outside their normal age range, for instance where the child is gifted or talented or where a child has suffered from particular social or medical issues impacting on their schooling. All such requests will be considered on their merits and either agreed or refused, on that basis. If a request is refused, the child will still be considered for admission to their normal age group.

The process for requesting such an admission is as follows: With the application, parents should request that the child is admitted to another year group (state which one), and the reasons for that request. Parents will submit any evidence in support of their case with the application, for instance from a medical practitioner, Headteacher etc. Some of the evidence a parent might submit could include:

- 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 school will consider each case on its merits, taking into account the individual circumstances of the request and the child's best interests. We will also ensure the parent is aware of whether the request for admission out of age group has been agreed before final offers are made, and the reason for any refusal. Requests for admission out of the normal year group will be considered alongside other applications made at the same time. An application from a child who would 'normally' be a Year 1 child for a Reception place will be considered alongside applications for Reception.

Waiting Lists

The school will operate a waiting list for each year group. Where in any year the school receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until the end of the first term after the beginning of the school year. This will be maintained by the admission authority and it will be open to any parent to ask for their child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application. Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. The waiting list will be reordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever anyone is added to or leaves it.

Appeals Procedure

All applicants refused a place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code. Appellants should

contact Head of Admissions at St. Bede C of E Primary Academy, Morris Green Lane, Bolton BL3 3LJ within 20 days of the date of the letter refusing your child a place at the school for information on how to appeal. Information on the timetable for the appeals process is on our website at stbedeacademy.org.

School age

A full-time school place in the Reception class is available for children from the September following their 4th birthday, etc.

Deferred entry for infants

Parents offered a place for their child have a right to defer entry, or to take a place up part-time, until the start of the term beginning immediately after their child has reached compulsory school age of 5. However, places cannot be deferred until the next academic year.

Address definition

The address is the place where the child is permanently resident with his or her parent or parents or legal guardians. Evidence may be requested to show the address, for example: to which any Child Benefit is paid or at which the child is registered with a medical GP together with recent utilities bill, council tax bill or tenancy agreement. This evidence will be used when reaching a decision on the child's home address for admissions purposes (including where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility for each part of the week). Parents should not assume that a place will automatically be allocated to their child.

Enquiries

Should be to Head of Admissions, St. Bede C of E Primary Academy, Morris Green Lane, Bolton BL3 3LJ.