

Revised August 2021

Astbury St. Mary's Church of England Primary School

Admissions Policy for admission to school Sept 2022 – August 2023

The Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT) Board is the school's admissions authority but decisions about criteria and admission to school is delegated to the Local Governing Body. The Local Authority administers admissions into the reception year, and the school manages admissions into Y1 – Y6 based on this policy.

Our school is a church school that serves a wide community from many parts of Congleton and surrounding area including those in the Astbury Parish, those within the Cheshire East Local Authority as well as those over the border into Staffordshire, so this is reflected in our policy.

The school is comprised of four classes: a reception class working with Pre-School, a Year one / Year two class, a Year three / Year four class and a Year five / Year six class. In order that class sizes do not exceed the space available, it is necessary to limit the number of admissions in each cohort of the school to 15. The planned admission number for reception is thus 15. This arrangement follows consultation between CDAT, the local governing body, the Diocesan board of education, local authorities and other admissions authorities in the area. The local governing body will not place any restrictions on admissions to the reception class unless the number of children for whom admission is sought exceeds this number. By law, no infant class may contain more than 30 children.

For children starting in Astbury Acorns Pre-school, the school process your admission enquires via the School office so please contact the office directly; telephone 01260 272528 or email admin@astbury.cheshire.sch.uk. The Preschool is accessible to all children aged three and four. The School is registered to accept 15 hours of free child-care for 3yr olds.

The Local Governing Body operates a system under which they consider all preferences equally, and for children entering the reception year the Local Authority then allocates places according to the policy. The School allocate places for admission to children in Y1 – Y6. In the event that there are more applicants than places, the Local Governing Body will allocate places using the following criteria, which are listed in order of priority:

- 1. Looked after children and previously looked after children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.** See note (a)
- 2. Children with special medical or social circumstances where these needs can only be met at this school.** See note (b)
- 3. Children who have a brother or sister in school, who will still be attending school the following year.** See note (c)
- 4. Children resident in the ecclesiastical parish of Astbury.** A map showing the parish is available from school and on the website. See note (d)
- 5. Children who live nearest to the school.** See note (e)

Notes

- a) A 'looked after child' 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 at the time of making an application to a school, or (c) have been in state care outside England. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order).
- b) Professional supporting evidence from e.g. a doctor, psychologist, social worker, is essential if admission is to be made under the criterion for special medical or social circumstances, and such evidence must set out the particular reasons why the school is question is the most suitable school and the difficulties which would be caused if the child had to attend another school.
- c) The term brother or sister includes step, half, foster or adopted brothers and sisters living at the same address and full brothers and sisters living apart.
- d) The address used on the school's admission form must be the current one at the time of application. If this address changes subsequently, the parents should notify the school. Where the parents live at different addresses, the current address of the child at the time of application will be the one used. This will normally be the one where the child wakes up for the majority of Monday to Friday mornings. Parents may be asked to show evidence of the claim that is being made for the address, e.g. utility bills showing the child's address is as the one claimed. Where there is dispute about the correct address to use, the governors reserve the right to make enquiries of any relevant third parties, e.g. the child's GP. For children of UK service personnel and other Crown servants returning to the area, proof of the posting is all that is required.
- e) Where the above criteria are not adequate to distinguish between requests for admission which cannot all be accepted without exceeding the admission limit, priority will be decided on the basis of the distance from the school to home; those living nearest being given priority. The measurement used to allocate places is the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) which measures straight line distances in miles from the school's coordinate point to the point of residence's coordinate point. In the event of a tie break a random paper draw will be undertaken by an independent body.

Children with Education Health Care Plans (EHCP)

Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the governing bodies of all maintained schools to admit a child with a Statement of Special Educational Need or ECHP that names their school.

How and when to apply – for admission into the reception year

Applications for admission to the school should be made on the common application form enclosed with the Local Authority's brochure.

Applications may also be made online by using both the common application form. It is not normally possible to change the order of your preferences for schools after the closing date.

Letters informing parents whether or not their child has been allocated a place will be sent out by the Local Authority (see <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/admissions/admissions.aspx> for specific dates). Parents of children not admitted will be informed of the reason and offered an alternative place by the Authority.

Waiting list

Where we have more applications than places, the admissions criteria will be used. Children who are not admitted will have their name placed on a waiting list. The names on the waiting list will be in the order resulting from the application of the admission criteria. The waiting list will be held up until the end of the autumn term.

Appeals

Where the governors are unable to offer a place because the school is oversubscribed, parents have the right to appeal to an independent admission appeal panel, set up under the School Standards and Framework Act,

1998, as amended by the Education Act 2002. Parents should notify the clerk to the governors, Jill Barton bartonjill08@gmail.com within 20 days of receiving the letter refusing a place. Parents have a statutory minimum of 20 school days in which to appeal a decision not to offer a place.

Late applications for admission

Where there are extenuating circumstances for an application being received after the last date for applications, and if it is before the Local Governing Body have established their list of pupils to be admitted, then it will be considered alongside all the others.

Otherwise, applications which are received after the last date will be considered after all the others and placed on the waiting list in order according to the criteria.

Non-routine admissions / In year admissions

It sometimes happens that a child needs to change school other than at the 'normal' time: such admissions are known as non-routine / in year admissions. Parents wishing their child to attend this school may arrange to visit the school. Parents should contact the school where they will be asked to complete an application form and will be offered a place by the Local Governing Body if one is available. The Local Authority (LA) will be informed of the offer of a place once it has been accepted. If there is no place available in our school then the admissions committee will inform the applicant in writing, together with the LA and information about how to appeal against the refusal will be provided.

Please note that you cannot re-apply for a place at a school within the same school year unless there has been relevant, significant and material change in the family circumstances.

Fraudulent applications

Where the Governing Body discovers that a child has been awarded a place as the result of an intentionally misleading application from a parent (e.g. a false claim to residence in the catchment area, or of involvement in a place of worship) which effectively denies a place to a child with a stronger claim, then the governing body is required to withdraw the offer of the place. The application will be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.

Deferred admission

Children are eligible for a reception place from the beginning of the school year in which they become 5 years old. However, they do not become of compulsory school age until the start of the term after their fifth birthday. After a place has been allocated and accepted, parents can request that the school place be deferred until later in the school year and, if they do this, the place will be held for the child. They cannot, however, defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the school year for which the original application was accepted. Parents can also request that their child attends on a part-time basis until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Summer-born children

Parents of summer-born children (those born between 1st April and 31st August) who wish to delay entry until the following year must speak to the school and Local Authority as soon as possible as this would involve either an in-year application for year 1, or a new application for reception in the following year. An application form should be filled in for the current admission process at the same time as any request to defer entry or 'back class' to reception in the following year. The decision will be made considering information from the parents and head teacher and should be in the best interests of the child. Parents will be informed of the outcome before the Primary National Offer Day.

If the request is agreed, the application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. If the request is refused, the parent must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or to refuse it and make an in-year application for admission to year one for the September following the child's fifth birthday.

Parents should be aware that agreement by the school to allow a child to enter reception the following year does not guarantee a place in the class. Parents must apply to the school again the following year, and the application will be considered in the normal manner following the over-subscription criteria.

Twins/multiple births

Where there are applications from multiple births, the governors may admit above the PAN.

Fair Access Protocol

The school participates in Cheshire East Local Authority Fair Access Protocol.

This information is published by the Local Governors of Astbury St Mary's Church of England Primary School in accordance with legal guidelines from the Diocese of Chester and the Local Authority.

Admissions criteria may change from one year to the next.