

# ADMISSIONS POLICY



**Kindness, Respect, Collaboration, Resilience, Aspiration, Courage,  
Friendship**

This plan was written: December 2025

The plan is to be reviewed: December 2026

St James and St John is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School for children of 4-11 years of age. We welcome you to come and visit the school by contacting the school office on 01280 860272 / 812291 or emailing [office@stjamesjohn.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:office@stjamesjohn.bucks.sch.uk)

The school catchment area includes the villages of Chackmore, Stowe, Radclive, Dadford, Akeley, Lillingstone Lovell and Lillingstone Dayrell. However, legislation enables parents from out of the catchment to send their child to St James and St John Church of England School. This is dependent on availability of places.

Transport is provided by the local authority for those children living in catchment.

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at St James and St John Church of England Primary School
- Set out the school's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

### Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- [School Admissions Code 2021](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

The school is required to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#).

### Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority.

A child reaches **compulsory school age** on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

### How to apply

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the application form provided by your home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools are in).

If you live in Buckinghamshire, you can put up to 6 schools on your application.

You can apply online from 5<sup>th</sup> November 2025 to 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026 via <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools-index/school-admissions/apply-for-a-primary-school-place/>

The deadline to submit your online application is 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026 (for Reception and Junior places).

National Primary Allocation Offer Day is 16<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

If you applied online, Buckinghamshire Council will email you on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2026 to tell you the school your child has been offered. If you applied online, you can view or confirm your offer online.

Please contact Buckinghamshire Council for any late applications.

## **Allocation of places**

### **Admission number**

St James and St John Church of England Primary School has an agreed admission number of 24 children for each year group at the Akeley infant site and 28 children in each year group at the junior site at Chackmore. We have two normal admission points of entry; Reception and Year 3.

### **Admission rules for Buckinghamshire community and voluntary-controlled primary schools**

Once children with an EHCP are admitted then the following rules are used:

1. Looked after children and previously looked after children. (*see Note 1*)
2. Children who have exceptional medical or social needs, which can only be met at that school, supported by written evidence from an appropriate professional person. (*See Note 2*)
3. Children of staff where either:
  - a. The member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or
  - b. The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. (*See Note 3*)
4. Children living within the catchment area of the school. (*See Note 4*)
5. *For the main point of entry:* Siblings of children who are attending the school or a 'linked primary' school in Year R – Year 5 at the time allocations are made, and are expected to be on the school roll or linked school roll at the time of the proposed admission, or who have already been offered a place to start in the current academic year at the school or a 'linked primary school'. (*See Note 5*)
6. *For immediate in year admission after the normal point of entry:* Siblings of children who are in Year R to Year 6 at the time of admission to the school. (*See Note 5*) Once the above rules have been applied then any further places will be offered in distance order; using the distance between the family's Normal Home Address (*See Notes 6 and 7*) and the school's nearest open entrance gate offering the closest first. We use a straight line distance. (*See Note 8*)

7. Where a school can take some, but not all, of the children who qualify under one of these rules, we will give priority to children by taking account of the next rule (or rules) in the numbered list to decide who has priority for places.

8. If it still not possible to decide between two applicants who are equidistant then an independently scrutinised [random allocation](#) will be made to allocate the final place. An explanation of the method of making [random allocations is on the council website](#) (*See also Note 9 below regarding twins and multiple births*)

## **Explanation of terms used in the admission rules**

### **Note 1: Definition of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children**

For admissions purposes a 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order including those who appear [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. 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 (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

This rule includes children who were previously looked after and immediately after being looked after became the subject of an adoption, child arrangement order or special guardianship order as set out below.

Child arrangements order: is an order setting the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under the Children and Families Act 2014

Special guardianship order: is an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians) under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989

### **Note 2: Exceptional Social and Medical process**

A panel comprising education professionals will consider the applications under this rule on receipt of written information from the parent indicating their reasons for the child attending a particular school. When making an application parents should send evidence from an independent professional person (this might be a doctor, health visitor, or Education Welfare Officer, for example) who knows about the child and supports the application to the school. It must clearly show why the school is the most suitable and any difficulties if alternate schools were offered.

The panel will consider which children can be considered under this rule prior to each admission round.

### **Note 3: Definition of school staff**

'School staff' includes

- i. teaching staff on a permanent or fixed term contract exceeding 11 months in duration, and
- ii. all other staff on permanent or fixed term contracts exceeding 11 months in duration for posts of in excess of 15 hours per week.

'Demonstrable skill shortage' is a post which the school has had difficulty in filling. An example might be where the school has taken part in a recruitment drive to fill the post either across the country or worldwide and/or where the post was not filled at the first attempt.

### **Note 4: Primary School Catchment Areas**

The primary school catchments can be viewed via the 'Find my child a school place' mapping service at:

<https://services.buckscc.gov.uk/school-admissions/schools>

### **Note 5: Definition of sibling**

A sibling is a brother or sister. For admission purposes we mean one of two or more individuals who have one or more parent in common, or any other child (including an adopted or fostered child) who lives at the same address and for whom the parent also has parental responsibility or, (in the case of a fostered child) delegated authority.

We will only consider a pupil in a primary school as a 'sibling' if he or she is attending, in the specified year groups, the school or a linked primary school at the time the allocations are made or, for in-year admissions the time of admission), or has been formally offered a place at the school in the operation of the Coordinated Primary Admissions Scheme. In all cases they are expected to still be at the school at the time of proposed admission.

### **Note 6: Definition of parent**

This is as defined in law (the Education Act 1996) as either:

- Any person who has parental responsibility (defined in Children Act 1989) for the child or young person; or
- Any person who has care of the child or young person

## **Note 7: Definition of normal home address (more detail is available in the guide)**

This is the child's home address. This must be where the parent or legal carer of the child and the child live together unless it is proved that the child is resident elsewhere with someone who has legal care and control of the child. The address should be a residential property which can be permanently occupied 52 weeks of the year without any restrictions on occupation and not subjected to any planning or contractual restrictions on the duration of occupancy and is your child's only or main residence that is owned, leased or rented by the child's parent(s) or person with legal care and control of the child.

If the residence is not split equally between the Parent(s)/Carer(s), then the relevant address used will be the address at which we are satisfied that the child spends the majority of the school week.

Where there is an equal split or there is any doubt about residence, we will make a judgment about which address to use for the purposes of allocation. In making this judgment we will take into account the following:

- any legal documentation confirming residence
- the pattern of the residence
- the period of time over which the current arrangement has been in place
- confirmation from the previous school of the contact details and home address provided to them by the parents
- which parent is in receipt of child benefit
- where the child is registered with their GP
- any other evidence the parents may supply to verify the position

## **Note 8: Definition of home to school distance**

The **straight line distance definition:** is 'the distance from the address point of the pupil's normal home address, as set out by Ordnance Survey, to the nearest open school gate available for pupils to use'.

As part of the computer system we use for school admissions there is a program that measures the 'straight-line' distance from the nearest open school gates to the child's normal home address.

The point we measure to at the child's normal address is determined by the Ordnance Survey ADDRESS-BASE which is an Ordnance Survey data product that provides a National Grid coordinate and a unique reference for each postal address in Great Britain that is on the Royal Mail's Post Office Address File (PAF®).

The PAF contains postal address data and includes premises such as buildings or permanent mobile and park homes, plus other features such as temporary buildings and houseboats.

Where Service families or families of other Crown Servants, who often move within the UK and from abroad are posted to the area, school places can be allocated in advance of the family move if an official government letter declaring a relocation date and an intended address is provided. A unit postal address or quartering area address will be sufficient if there is not a confirmed new home address. Where Service families are returning to live in a property they already own, evidence of ownership will be needed.

This evidence should be provided by 30 January (Secondary allocation) 13 February (Primary allocation) to be included in the first allocation round.

### **Note 9 Multiple births – twins, triplets etc**

In cases where there is one remaining place and the next child on the waiting list is one of a twin, triplet or other multiple birth group then both twins (or all the siblings in the case of multiple births) will be admitted and whilst that child is in the class they will be an excepted pupil under the Schools Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012 which permit Key Stage 1 class sizes to exceed 30 following the admission of a twin for as long as necessary until a child leaves the class at which point the class size will remain at the lower figure.

### **Children below compulsory school age**

Where children below compulsory school age are offered a place at the school, they will be entitled to attend the school full-time in the September following their fourth birthday.

Parents may defer their child's entry to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age of five, and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year the offer was made for.

Where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. If a place is taken up part-time, then parents cannot take the remainder of the 32.5 hours that are unused at another provider.

St James and St John Church of England Primary School operate a staggered intake into Reception, over the first two weeks, to allow staff to conduct home visits and children to build up to a full day at school. We choose to do this under the Admissions Code, however each parent still has a right to a full-time place at the start of the autumn term following their child's 4th birthday. Parents may therefore choose to either access their child's full-time place from the start of the term or to take part in a staggered intake.

Parents can apply to delay entry to school for summer born children, so that they start school a year later than they are due to, into the Reception class. Parents seeking a delayed entry for their child should contact the Admissions Team at Buckinghamshire Council in the first instance who will advise about the process.

Prior to September 2025 children are invited to spend a morning at the school to become familiar with the teachers, the environment and the other children who will start school at

the same time. This is intended to make transfer from home to school as smooth and comfortable as possible.

### **Challenging behaviour**

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. We may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, i.e. where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that isn't the normal point of entry, only in such a case that we have good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour that may adversely affect the provision we can offer. In this case, we will refer these pupils to the Fair Access Protocol. We will not refuse admission on these grounds to looked after children, previously looked after children and children with EHC plans listing the school.

### **Fair Access Protocol**

We participate in Buckinghamshire Council's Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible.

### **In-year admissions**

Parents can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose EHC plans name the school will be admitted.

Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for, your child will be offered a place.

Applications for in-year admissions should be submitted online at <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools-index/school-admissions/change-schools-in-year/submit-an-application/>

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to a continued interest list. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by one of the pupils on the continued interest list in accordance with the admission rules. The continued interest list does not carry over to the next academic year. You must complete another in-year application form if you want to remain on the list and would like to be considered for a school place for a new academic year. Buckinghamshire Council will not contact you to tell you to make a new application.

### **Appeals**

If your child's application for a place at St James and St John Church of England Primary School is unsuccessful, you have the right to make an appeal to an independent appeal panel. If you wish to appeal, you must appeal online on <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools-index/school-admissions/school-appeals/appeal-a-primary-school-decision/>

Buckinghamshire Council will usually only refuse a child a place if St James and St John Church of England Primary School has received more applications than we have places available.

You may decide to appeal because:

- your child has a particular interest in the subjects offered by the school
- your child has medical, social or educational reasons for wanting the place
- you have recently moved house