Holy Trinity Church of England (VA) Primary School

Believe • Achieve • Inspire •

Admissions Policy and Guidance Notes 2026/2027

SCHOOL VISION

At Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School our Christian vision shapes all we do.

"I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live.' Ecclesiastes 3:12.

Our vision is to be an inspirational place of learning where:

- we facilitate opportunities so every child can flourish in a place where they feel safe, **happy and confident**.
- staff **well-being** and professional development is valued and supported in order to fulfil their roles, inspire others and experience personal **fulfilment**.
- the school provides facilities that enables an **optimum learning environment**.
- the **school plays a central role within our community** and enjoys strong **links with the church, local companies and other schools.**
- we create a culture of vigilance to safeguard all children.

A full consultation on this policy was last carried out between October and November 2024.

Holy Trinity Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School. It has a distinctive Christian ethos which is at the centre of school life:

"Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the church at parish and diocesan level. The school aims to serve the community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils." (Instrument of Government 2015)

We welcome applications from all members of our community without reference to ability or aptitude, and irrespective of whether they are of the Christian faith, another faith or no faith, but we expect parents to respect the Christian ethos of our school.

Our Voluntary Aided status means that the admissions authority is the governing board, acting through its Admissions Committee, and not the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM). The governors have made every effort to ensure that these arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code 2021 and all relevant legislation, including that on infant class sizes and equal opportunities.

The admissions criteria are subject to a consultation process with relevant parents and other groups with an interest in the local area, including The Oxford Diocesan Board of Education.

Admission arrangements to the Reception Year in September 2026

At Holy Trinity CE Primary School, pupils are normally admitted at the beginning of the school year (1 September – 31 August) in which they reach their fifth birthday. Parents whose children were born between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022 may apply for them to be admitted to the Reception Year in September 2026. There are 30 places (the published admission number) available.

Parents (see guidance note 2) of a child whose fifth birthday falls between 1 September 2026 and 31 March 2027 may defer entry until their child reaches compulsory school age (the term beginning in January or April after his or her fifth birthday). The school will hold the deferred place for the child (provided it is taken up during the school year 2026/2027), although, in the majority of cases, we find that children benefit from starting at the beginning of the school year, rather than part way through it.

For children whose fifth birthday falls between 1 April 2027 and 31 August 2027 (summer-born children who do not reach compulsory school age until September 2027), parents can defer the date that their child is admitted to school. Parents should refer to DfE Guidance on requesting a delayed school start for children born in the summer: Summer born children: advice for parents. Parents who do not wish their child to start school in school year 2026/2027, but to be admitted to the Reception Year in September 2027, should proceed as follows. They should apply at the usual time for a place in September 2026 together with a written request that the child is admitted outside his or her normal age group to the Reception year in September 2027. NB parents would need to provide supporting reasons for seeking a place outside the normal age group and should discuss the position with the head teacher as early as possible. The school will consider the request carefully and if it is agreed, this should be clear before the national offer day (April 16th 2026) and their application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before any place is offered. They should then reapply in the normal way by 15th January 2027 for a Reception place in September 2027. If their request is refused, the parents must decide whether to wait for any other offer of a place in September 2026 (NB it will still be subject to the over-subscription criteria below) or to withdraw their application and apply in the second half of the summer term 2027 for a Year 1 place in September 2027. Parents should be aware that the Year 1 group may have no vacancies and it could be full with children transferring from the 2026/2027 Reception Year group.

Until the child reaches compulsory school age, s/he may attend part-time. If parents wish to exercise this right, they should discuss detailed arrangements with the Headteacher.

The school is part of the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead (RBWM) coordinated admissions scheme. In order to apply to the school, it is necessary to complete the Common Application Form of the local authority (LA) in which the parents live at the time of application, which may not be RBWM. Applications must be submitted on these forms to the home LA no later than **15th January 2026**.

The Governing Board, acting through its Admissions Committee, will decide on the allocation of places for admissions for the school year starting September 2026. All applications received by the LA deadline (mid January 2026) will be considered in the first round of allocations. Late applications submitted after the closing date will be considered during the second round of allocations in May 2026. Decisions will be advised in accordance with the coordinated admissions scheme. Offers will only be made in writing. These will ask applicants to confirm in writing their acceptance in accordance with the coordinated admissions scheme.

The Admissions Committee is required by law to consider only the information supplied on the Common Application Form (CAF). It is very important that you take great care to ensure the details you provide are complete and correct before submitting them.

If a place is not available, the home local authority (LA) will issue a letter of refusal to the parents advising them of the right to appeal. In addition, the home LA will refer the parents to Holy Trinity CE Primary School. If a parent wishes to appeal, they should do so directly to the school. The appeals are heard by an independent, external panel. The local authority will automatically add children to the waiting list for higher preferred schools which they have been unable to offer. If parents are happy with their offer on National Offer Day, it is important that they let the Local Authority know so that children can be removed from waiting lists for higher preferred schools as they will automatically withdraw the original offer if a vacancy becomes available at a higher preference.

Applications received after 15th January 2026 will normally only be considered **after** all those received on or before the cut-off date. Offers and refusals of places will be made on National Offer Day in line with the provisions made under the School Admissions Code 2021.

A response will be provided in accordance with the coordinated admissions scheme. Should a place not be available the parents will be asked if they wish to place their child's name on the waiting list.

Over Subscription Criteria:

Children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan naming Holy Trinity CE Primary School, Sunningdale will always be offered places. (See guidance note 7)

If there are fewer applications than places available, all children will be offered places. In the event of there being a greater number of applications for places than there are available, then the Governing Board, through its Admissions Committee, will admit children in the following criterion order:

1. **Looked after children and children who were previously looked after**, including those who appear to have been in state care outside England, but ceased to be so because, immediately after being looked after, they became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order. (See guidance note 3). This includes those children 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.

2. **Families who have exceptional medical or social needs** that make it essential that their child attends Holy Trinity CE Primary School, Sunningdale rather than any other. These needs must be fully supported by written evidence from an independent professional person involved with the family. (See guidance note 4)

3. **Children resident in the ecclesiastical parish of Sunningdale** (see map below) **with a sibling** (see guidance note 5) **on the roll of Holy Trinity School at the time of application** or whose parent has accepted an offer of a place at the school and who is expected still to be in attendance at the time of entry to the school.

4. **Children resident** in the ecclesiastical parish of Sunningdale.

5. **Children resident outside the ecclesiastical parish of Sunningdale, who have a sibling on the roll of Holy Trinity School at the time of application** or whose parent has accepted an offer of a place at the school and who is expected still to be in attendance at the time of entry to the school.

6. Other children.

Places will be allocated first to those in criterion 1, next, to those in criterion 2, and so on. Beyond this, if there is insufficient space within any one criterion then the places will be allocated to those who live nearest to the school.

The distance will be measured in a straight line from the address point of the child's house as determined by Ordnance Survey, to the address point of the school using the local authority's (LAs) GIS (Geographical Information System). In the case of two properties being of equal distance from the school a random application process will be administered (see guidance note 6).

All Other Admissions

Admission to the school during the school year depends on whether or not there are places available. All year groups at the school have 30 places. Applications should be made directly to the school by completing an In-Year application available on the school website or a hard copy can be provided on request.

If there is a vacancy, and there is no child on the relevant waiting list with a higher priority (according to the over-subscription criteria 1-6 found above), a place will be offered.

In-year admissions or admissions at the beginning of school years other than Reception may be made at any time. The Governing Board will only consider applications up to half a term [using the three-term year] in advance of the desired date for entry. For example, for entry in January, the application will not be considered until after the October half term break. Please note that the school does not have a normal point of entry to Year 3 – applications for entry at the beginning of Year 3 are treated as indicated in this section.

Parents will be notified of the result of their application in writing within 15 school days. The school will aim, however, to do so within 10 school days.

Admission outside normal age group

Requests from parents for places outside a normal age group will be considered carefully e.g. for those who have missed education due to ill health. A parent of a summer-born child who wishes their child to start in the autumn term following their 5th birthday (i.e. in the Reception Year rather than Year 1) should refer to: DfE Guidance: Making a Request for admission out of the normal age group. Each case will be considered on its own merits and circumstances. However, such admissions will not normally be agreed without a consensus that to do so would be in the child's interests. It is recommended that parents discuss their wishes with the head teacher at the earliest opportunity. The governing board may ask relevant professionals for their opinion on the case. It should be noted that if a place in the requested age group is refused, but one in the normal age group is offered then there is no right of appeal.

Applications for earlier admission, i.e. for children below the age at which they are entitled to start school, will be considered. These requests are almost never agreed, due to the loss of social, emotional and physical maturation caused by beginning education early.

Waiting Lists

The school maintains waiting lists for those children who are not offered a place, and whose parents ask for the child's name to be added to the waiting list. The list will be re-ranked in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria each time that a name is added to or removed from the list. No account is taken of length of time on a waiting list. The school periodically seeks confirmation that parents wish a child to be kept on the waiting list.

Multiple births

In cases where there is one place available, and the next child on the list is a twin, triplet etc. we would admit both twins (and all the children in the case of other multiple births) even if this meant exceeding the agreed admission number for the year group.

Fair Access

Holy Trinity CE Primary School participates in RBWM's Fair Access Protocol. Children qualifying for entry to our school under the Fair Access Protocol will be offered a place even if there are no places available in the relevant year group and also take priority for admission over any child on the waiting list.

Appeals

There are established arrangements for appeals against non-admission. Details are available from the school, including the date by which an appeal should be submitted. In the event of an unsuccessful appeal against non-admission to the school, the school does not consider any further application in the same school year (1 September – 31 August), unless there has been a material change in circumstances, for example a change of address which results in a move from outside the catchment area to inside it.

Admissions in September 2024

For entry to the Reception Year starting 1st September 2024 – the school received 88 applications. 30 places were offered.

In 2024/2025 the applications equivalent to these criteria were:

Children with statements or EHC plans naming the school – n/a

Criterion 1: 3

Criterion 2: 0

Criterion 3: 12

Criterion 4: 14

Criterion 5: 2

Criterion 6: 57

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Notes

1. **Residency** means the child's home address. This must be where the parent or legal carer of the child lives with the child unless it is proved that the child is resident elsewhere with someone else who has legal care and control of the child. The address should be a residential property that is owned, leased or rented by the child's parent/s or person with legal care of the child.

To avoid doubt, where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week or month, the address where the child lives will be determined having regard to a joint declaration from the parents stating the exact pattern of residence. If the residence is not split equally, then the relevant address used will be that 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 the judgement about which address to use for the purpose of determining whether or not to offer a place. We will take into account, for example, 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 any previous school of the contact details and home address supplied to it by the parents
- where the child is registered with his/her GP
- any other evidence the parents may supply to verify the position.

Proof of residence may be requested by asking for evidence in the form of a recent bill. This could be, for example, the most recent council tax bill, utility bill no more than three months old, a current TV licence, buildings and contents insurance, mortgage statement or rent book which shows the address concerned.

Parents who are unable to provide this evidence should contact the school to discuss what evidence might be acceptable. If it becomes clear or if there is any doubt that the parents and child are not living at the address given on the application form, the school may seek further evidence. The school works closely with the LA to ensure that places are not obtained at the school on the basis of false addresses, and, in cases of doubt, will take steps to verify the information provided. If a place at the school is offered, and it later becomes clear that the offer was made on fraudulent or misleading information (e.g. a false claim to living in the catchment area), and the school has denied a place to a child with a stronger claim, the school will withdraw the offer of a place.

We regard a child's home address to be where he or she sleeps for the majority of the school week. We may ask to see official documentation, such as a child benefit book or medical card if there are reasons why a child does not live at his or her parent's address. For example, if he or she is resident with a grandparent, this needs to be made clear on the application form. If such arrangements are not declared or a relative's address is used on the application, we may consider that a false declaration has been made and withdraw the offer of a place. Childcare arrangements are not sufficient reason for listing another address.

Residency would also include temporary residency to cover arrangements for children in foster homes or other similar care circumstances which the Admissions Committee considers to be genuine exceptions.

Applicants moving into the catchment area will be requested to provide by the application date* evidence from a solicitor that there is a legally binding agreement to buy the house or a formal tenancy agreement, backed up as soon as possible by evidence from the Electoral Register or a utilities bill as above. Parents of pupils without this evidence intending to move into a catchment area after the application date* cannot have a place reserved for them.

Armed Forces personnel and Crown Servants returning from overseas postings are exempt from the residency evidence required detailed previously in this policy but will require an official government letter which declares a relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering address. If you are returning from elsewhere, to live in a home that you own we require evidence to show that you have returned. We will also ask for evidence that any previous house owned has been sold or is being sold or let. We would not accept an address where the one given is that of a second home with the main address being elsewhere. If there are two or more homes, we will check which is the main home, and may refuse to base the allocation of a place on an address which might be considered only temporary. Nor would we accept an address where the child was resident other than with a parent or carer unless this was part of a fostering or formal care arrangement. We would not normally accept an address where only part of a family had moved, unless connected with a divorce or permanent separation arrangement, in which case we would require proof.

2. **Definition of parent**: A parent is defined in law (The Education Act 1996) as either
   a) any person who has 'parental responsibility' (defined in the Children Act 1989) for the child or young person; or
   b) any person who has legal care of the child or young person.

3. By a **'looked-after child'** we mean one in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services function. An adoption order is one made under the Adoption Act 1976 (section 12) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Section 46). A 'child arrangements order' is one settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live (Children Act 1989, Section 8, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014, Section 14). A 'special guardianship order' is one appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian/s (Children Act 1989, Section 14A). Applications under this criterion must be accompanied by evidence to show that the child is looked after or was previously looked after (e.g. a copy of the adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order).

4. When applying under criterion 2 (exceptional medical or social needs) the governing board will consider an application in this category only where the child, or his or her parent or guardian, can demonstrate a **wholly exceptional medical or social requirement** for attendance at Holy Trinity CE school, Sunningdale.

To apply under this criterion, the parent or guardian must send a covering letter to support the application. It must clearly demonstrate why Holy Trinity CE School, Sunningdale is significantly more suitable than any other school for their child, and the difficulties likely to be caused by not attending it. Such difficulties must be so exceptional as to be extremely rare in the population. The reasons may be associated with the child or with the family.

Supporting evidence must be included from a suitably qualified, independent, professional person associated with the child or the family, such as a consultant, a general practitioner, psychiatrist or a senior social worker. Evidence from members of the family, friends or a child minder will not normally be acceptable. All evidence must be on headed writing paper. Any evidence must be provided at the expense of the parent. The school reserves the right to ask for further evidence or clarification where necessary and may seek the advice of appropriate educational professionals where necessary.

Such difficulties as childcare arrangements or the need to drop off/collect children at more than one school are unlikely to be acceptable without accompanying wholly exceptional medical or social reasons.

Applications lacking external objective evidence will be rejected under this category. Any rejected application will then be considered under the next highest appropriate category to the child. Applicants are strongly advised to name other schools within the permitted number of preferences.

Applicants seeking to rely on these grounds must provide the necessary evidence by the closing date for applications. This will allow time for the relevant authority to obtain additional evidence if necessary. It may not be possible to consider applications under this criterion after the closing date, even where a family has subsequently moved into the area.

All parents will have the usual right of appeal to an independent appeal panel after allocations of places have been published.

5. **Definition of sibling:** Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling. It is helpful if parents make it clear on the application form where the sibling has a different family name. Where there is more than one sibling at the school, only the youngest should be listed on the application form.

6. **Random Selection** - In the case of two properties being of equal distance from the school a random application process will be administered. This process will be undertaken by someone who is independent of the school e.g. a vicar from a nearby parish.

- Names of applicants will be recorded on individual pieces of A4 white paper. The papers will be folded and put into a box.

- The box will be closed and shaken.

- The Independent Supervisor will remove one piece of paper at a time and the name recorded in the minutes in order of withdrawal.

- The Chair of the Committee, as an observer, and the Independent Supervisor will sign the minutes.

7. A child would only be given an Education Health and Care Plan naming Holy Trinity CE School, Sunningdale after consultation with the child's local authority.

8. Fraudulent applications will be treated as such and offers of places may be withdrawn.

For further information or to request a hard copy of this document, in the first instance, please contact the School Secretary, on 01344 620716 or via email: holytrinitysunn@holytrinityprimary.org

Parents seeking further information about the coordinated admissions arrangements for the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead should consult the Education Admissions Office on 01628 683870 or by email at rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk

*Dates and process of application will be in accordance with the coordinated admission scheme – the details of which will be as published in the RBWM's admissions arrangements.

Map of Catchment Area

Link to map on RBWM website – see under Primary section:

https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/community-information/information-and-advice/schools-and-education/school-admissions/school-designated-areas

This policy was adopted by Holy Trinity CE Primary School and agreed and ratified by the Full Governing Board.

Approved by……..on behalf of the School Governing Board.

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Signature:……..

Date:……..