



St Thomas' Church of England Primary School Admissions Policy 2025-26

St Thomas' Church of England Primary School, Heaton Chapel is a Voluntary Aided Primary School. The Governing Body is the admission authority for the school, and the school is required to act in accordance with the School Admissions Code. The admissions process is co-ordinated by Stockport Council (the Local Authority) and the school liaises with the Local Authority on admissions issues. The following arrangements for admissions, which include the criteria used to determine the allocation of places when the school is oversubscribed, have been agreed following consultation with parents, Manchester Diocesan Board of Education, neighbouring admission authorities, other interested parties and Stockport Local Authority.

Admission arrangements

The school's published admission number (PAN) agreed for admission to the Reception Year is 90. If no more than 90 applications are received for admission to the Reception Year, all applicants will be offered places.

40 part time children may be admitted to the Nursery class. Please see the separate Nursery admissions policy for full details. A separate application must be made for any transfer from the Nursery class to the Reception Class in the Primary School.

Responsibility for admissions is delegated to the Governing Body Admissions Committee.

The school will admit all children having a statement of special educational needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in whose statement or EHCP the school is named.

Oversubscription criteria

When the number of applications received is greater than the number of remaining places (after the admission of any children with a statement of special educational needs or an EHCP naming the school), the decision on which children will be allocated places will be made using the following oversubscription criteria, which will be applied in the order of priority set out below:

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| 1 | Looked after children and previously looked after children. (See Note (a)) |
| 2 | Children whose exceptional medical or social circumstances mean that their needs can only be met at this school. (See Note (d)) |
| 3 | Children whose normal home address is within the Parish of St Thomas the Apostle, Heaton Chapel, and one of whose parent(s)/guardian(s) is in regular attendance at public worship at the Parish of St Thomas. (See Note (c)) |
| 4 | Children whose parents/guardians reside within the catchment area of St Thomas' CE VA Primary and are in regular attendance at public worship at the any of the churches within the school's catchment area belonging to the Heaton's Churches Partnership and/or members of the Evangelical Alliance. (See Note (f)) |
| 5 | Children whose normal home address is within the catchment area of St Thomas' CE VA Primary School who will have an older brother or sister attending the school at the time of their admission. (See Notes (b) and (e)) |
| 6 | Other children whose normal home address is within the catchment area of St Thomas' CE VA Primary School. (See Note (e)) |
| 7 | Children whose normal home address is outside the catchment area of St Thomas' CE VA Primary School who will have an older brother or sister attending the school at the time of their admission. (See Notes (b) and (e)) |
| 8 | Any other children |

Notes

- a) A "looked after child" is a child who is (a) in care of the 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. 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) 'Brother' or 'sister' includes full, step, half, foster and adopted brothers or sisters living at the same address and full brother or sister living apart.
- c) The normal home address of the child will be taken to be the home in which the child sleeps for the majority of the school week. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may be asked to show proof of address.

Regular attendance means a minimum of fortnightly attendance at church at public worship for at least the year prior to 1st September in the year before admission to the school. Evidence of regular attendance of the parent/guardian, or the child, at public worship must be provided by a member of the clergy or other designated church officer/faith leader. Applicants seeking admission under criteria 3 and 4 will need to complete and return the Supplementary Information Form available on request from the school.

A map of the Parish of St Thomas the Apostle, Heaton Chapel is available from the school office.
- d) Where admission is sought under exceptional medical or social circumstances criteria, professional supporting evidence, e.g. from a doctor, psychologist or social worker, is essential. Such evidence must set out the particular reasons why the school is the most suitable for the child and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school.
- e) A map showing the school catchment can be viewed at the School Office or via the Local Authority and is available to see on the school website.
- f) A list of local churches (those part of the Heaton's Churches' Partnership and/or members of the Evangelical Alliance) is available to see on request from the school.

Tie-breaker

Where there are more applicants for the available places within a category, the distance to the child's normal home front door from the main gate of the school in a straight line measured on a map will be used as the determining factor, nearer addresses having priority, using Stockport Local Authority's mapping system and definitions. The Local Authority undertakes this mapping on behalf of the Board of Governors. The 'normal' home address of the child will be taken to be the home in which the child sleeps for the majority of the school week. Parents may be asked to show proof of address. For children of Active UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants returning to the area proof of the posting is all that is required.

If the distance from home to school does not distinguish between two or more applicants with equal priority for the remaining place, random allocation will be used as the final tie-breaker. This will be supervised by someone independent of the school.

Children from multiple births

Where there are children of multiple births wishing to be admitted and the sibling (brother or sister) is offered the final place the governors may admit over the published admission number if it is possible to do so.

Infant class size

Under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the School Admissions Code, infant classes (those where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6 or 7 during the school year) **must not** contain more than 30 pupils with a single school teacher. Additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain

an 'excepted pupil' for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit. The excepted children are:

- a) Children admitted outside the normal admissions round with statements of special educational needs or Education, Health and Care Plan specifying a school
- b) Looked after children and previously looked after children admitted outside the normal admissions round
- c) Children admitted, after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the admission authority or local authority in the original application process
- d) Children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal
- e) Children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance
- f) Children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round
- g) Children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil
- h) Children with special educational needs who are normally taught in a special educational needs unit attached to the school, or registered at a special school, who attend some infant classes within the mainstream school.

Applying for places

Applications must be made on the local authority's application form. Details of all the applications made will be forwarded to the school by the local authority.

In addition to the local authority form, please complete and return the school's Supplementary Information Form (SIF) if you wish your child to be considered for entry under the faith-based criteria (criteria 3 and 4) above.)

Late applications for admission

Where the Local Authority accepts that there are extenuating circumstances for an application being received after the last date for applications, and it is before the governors 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 oversubscription criteria.

Fraudulent applications

Where the governing body discovers that a child has been awarded a place as a result of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application (for example, 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 under the School Admissions Code the governing body is able to withdraw the offer of the place. The application will be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.

Waiting list

Where we have more applications than places, the oversubscription criteria will be used to determine the allocation of places. Children who are not admitted will have their name placed on a waiting list. The names on this waiting list will be in the order resulting from the application of the admissions criteria. Since the date of application is not one of the admissions criteria, it cannot be a criterion for the order of names on the waiting list, and late applicants for the school will be slotted into the order according to the extent to which they meet the criteria. Thus it is possible for a child who moves into the area later to have a higher

priority than one who has been on the waiting list for some time. If a place becomes available within the admission number, the child whose name is at the top of the list will be offered a place. This is not dependent on whether an appeal has been submitted. This waiting list will operate until 31st December at the end of the Autumn term following admissions in September.

Appeals

Where the governors are unable to offer a place because the school is over-subscribed, parents will be informed of the reason why admission was refused and of their right to appeal to an independent admission appeal panel.

Parents wishing to appeal must set out their grounds for appeal in writing and must send the appeal to: Stockport Local Authority, Admissions Department.

Deferred Admissions

Children are entitled to a full time place in school in the September following their fourth birthday.

Once they have been offered a place in the Reception Year at the school, the child's parents can defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond beginning of the final term of the school year for which the original application was made.

Where parents wish, children may attend part time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age.

Admission outside the child's normal age group

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than Year 1.

Parents requesting admission out of the normal age group must put their request in writing, addressed to the Headteacher at the school, together with any supporting evidence that the parent wishes to be taken into account. The governing body will make decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; any information provided 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; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. The governing body will also take into account the views of the Headteacher. When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the governing body will set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

Where the governing body agrees to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to a relevant age group (i.e. the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school) the local authority and governing body must process the application as part of the main admissions round, unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible, and on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable.

Non-routine/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 or in-year admissions. Parents wishing their child to attend this school will be asked to apply to the Local Authority who manage admissions for the school. If the application is not accepted, the applicant will be informed in writing and information about how to appeal against the refusal of a place 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 a relevant, significant and material change in the family circumstances.