



## **CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME FOR** **ST HELENS PRIMARY SCHOOLS** **ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026**

Applications for all publicly funded primary schools in St Helens Local Authority (LA) (except special schools) shall be determined in accordance with the provisions set out in Part 1 and processed in accordance with the timetable set out in Part 2 of this scheme. The scheme shall apply to all Community and Voluntary Controlled schools for whom St Helens LA is the admitting authority, and the following Voluntary Aided and Academy schools:

- Birchley St Mary's Catholic Primary
- Blackbrook St Mary's Catholic Primary
- Corpus Christi Catholic Primary
- Haydock English Martyrs Catholic Primary
- Holy Cross Catholic Primary
- Holy Spirit Catholic Primary
- Nutgrove Methodist Aided Community Primary
- Parish Church of England Primary
- Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School
- Rainford C.E. Primary
- Rectory Church of England Primary
- St. Aidan's CE Community Primary
- St. Anne's Catholic Primary
- St. Austin's Catholic Primary
- St. Bartholomew's Catholic Primary
- St. James' Church of England Primary
- St. John Vianney Catholic Primary
- St. Julie's Catholic Primary
- St. Mary's Catholic Infants', Newton-le-Willows
- St. Mary's Catholic Junior, Newton-le-Willows
- St. Peter and St Paul Catholic Primary
- St. Peter's Church of England Primary
- St. Teresa's Catholic Primary
- St. Theresa's Catholic Primary
- St. Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary (Windleshaw)
- The District CofE Primary School
- The Three Saints Academy (St. Ann's CE)
- The Three Saints Academy (St. Mary and St Thomas' CE)

As required by the School Admissions Code this is an equal preference inter-authority scheme. St Helens co-ordinates with: Halton, Knowsley, Lancashire, Liverpool, Sefton, Warrington and Wigan local authorities. Where necessary, information will be exchanged with other local authorities.

## **PART 1: THE SCHEME**

### **Applying for a Reception Year Place**

1. A common application form and the primary education information for parents' booklet will be available online via St Helens Council's website no later than 12 September 2024. **Parents will also be able to apply for a school place online.**
2. The form will invite parents of St Helens children to express three preferences for schools both in and outside St Helens LA. They will also be asked to rank their preferences and, if they wish, the reason for these. Parents can return paper forms to any primary school in St Helens or directly to the Local Authority. A tear off slip will be attached to the bottom of the application form and be given to the parent as proof of receipt. For those parents who submit an online application an email receipt will be provided. **The closing date for applications will be 15 January 2025.**
3. Parents living outside St Helens LA can view a copy of the primary booklet on St Helens Council's website. They will, however, be advised to complete their home local authority's common application form.

### **Supplementary Information**

1. St Helens schools do not use supplementary information forms, therefore, parents who apply for voluntary aided/faith academy schools and wish their application to be considered against the priority faith criteria are asked to complete some faith questions on St Helens common application form. Non-St Helens residents should submit the relevant documentary evidence to St Helens School Admissions Team in addition to completing their home local authority's common application form.
2. If a St Helens parent is expressing a preference for a school in another local authority, they will be advised to contact that authority in order to determine whether supplementary information is required. Where a school receives a supplementary form from a St Helens resident it should not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent has also completed a common application form and the school is nominated on it.

### **Late Applications**

1. It is important that parents return their form by the **15 January 2025** closing date.
2. Late applications received after the closing date but received in time to be included in the initial allocation will be considered. However, as the exact date of allocation cannot be predicted, parents have no guarantee that any application received after the closing date will be included.
3. Parents who apply after 15 January 2025 but before 16 April 2025 and their applications could not be included in the initial allocation will only be offered their preference if the school has less applications than available places. They will receive a decision letter by 30 April 2025 and be advised of their right of appeal if any preference has been refused.
4. For applications received after 16 April 2025, parents will normally be notified within ten working days of the school that has been allocated to their child and advised of their right of appeal if any preference has been refused.

## Change of Preference

The Local Authority will not accept a change of preference after the closing date without proof of an exceptional change in circumstances e.g., house move to another area, or an older sibling has transferred schools.

Where there is no evidence of an exceptional change in circumstances the change of preference will be considered as a late application.

## Determining Offers

St Helens LA is the admissions authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. In the Voluntary Aided sector, the Governing Body of the school is the admissions authority.

All first, second and third preferences will be treated as equal regardless of parents' ranking. This means that each preference will be considered by the relevant admission authority against their oversubscription criteria without consideration of the ranking.

### **In order to determine offers:**

1. The Local Authority will exchange applications with other local authorities if St Helens residents have expressed a preference for a primary school in their area by **10 February 2025**.
2. The Local Authority will provide admission authority schools with details of applications by **17 February 2025**. Admission committees must arrange meetings during **Monday 17 February to Friday 28 February 2025**.
3. If an admission authority school receives more applications than available places the Admissions Committee will apply its oversubscription criteria and rank applications accordingly. The Admissions Committee will send the ranked list to the Local Authority by **Friday 7 March 2025**.
4. The Local Authority will consider all preferences for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. If there are more applications than available places, the Local Authority will apply its oversubscription criteria and rank applications accordingly.

## Co-ordinating the Offer of a Single Place

1. The Local Authority will inform other local authorities of initial offers to be made to their residents and request details of initial offers they will be making to St Helens residents by **24 March 2025**.
2. During the period up to **31 March 2025** the Local Authority will continue to liaise with neighbouring local authorities to resolve multiple offers and a single offer will be made using the ranking of schools given on the preference form.
3. Where the applicant is a St Helens resident and the Authority is unable to comply with any of the preferences stated on the form and, if applicable, is informed that another admission authority is unable to offer a place at the parents preferred school, then the next nearest appropriate school with available places will be allocated. If the applicant resides outside St Helens the Local Authority will offer no alternative school.
4. All schools in the St. Helens area will be informed by **11 April 2025** of offers being made to parents on **16 April 2025**.

## **Notifying Parents of Decisions**

On **16 April 2025** emails and letters offering places in St Helens primary schools and schools in other local authorities will be sent by St Helens Local Authority to St Helens residents. Where a higher ranked preference has been refused the offer letter will also include advice about waiting lists and right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

## **Waiting Lists**

The Local Authority will operate a waiting list for every primary school (including the voluntary aided and academy schools) that is oversubscribed from the time that places are initially allocated until the end of the autumn 2025 term, after which parents will have to make an in-year application if they wish their child's name to be kept on the relevant school waiting list. The waiting list will be kept in criteria (not date) order.

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.

**Children who are the subject of a direction by the local authority to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with the Authority's Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those on the waiting list.**

## **Applying for a place at St Mary's Catholic Junior School**

In autumn 2024, all parents with a child in year 2 at St Mary's Catholic Infant School will receive an application form, any other parents who wish to be considered for a place at St Mary's Catholic Junior need to contact the School or the Admissions Section of the Local Authority for an application form. The allocation process will be the same as that for reception year.

## **Appeals**

Parents will be informed about their right of appeal and how appeals can be made in the offer letter.

## **In-Year Applications**

All other applications submitted outside of the normal admissions round (four weeks after the start of the academic year) will be processed under the Local Authority's In-Year Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme.

**PART 2: TIMETABLE OF PRIMARY CO-ORDINATED SCHEME**

