

St Michaels CE Middle School Admissions Policy 2016-2017

Part 1 – General Information

1.1 Introduction

This document sets out the Policy of St Michaels CE VA Middle School with respect to Admissions. For the purposes of this policy, the Governing Body of St Michaels CE VA Middle School is using the Dorset Co-ordinated Scheme of Admissions.

Recognising its historic foundation, the school/academy will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the churches at parish and diocesan level.

The school aims to serve its 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. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the daily Christian act of worship and from Religious Education.

1.2

Every year the governing body will review and publish information concerning the school admission policy. This will confirm the maximum number of children to be admitted to the school as a whole, the Pupil Admissions Number (PAN) which is currently [140] and explain how places will be allocated until the PAN is reached at which point the governors will consider whether the resources available at the time will enable additional places to be made available. If not, the decision will be to refuse all applications that would lead to admission of a pupil above the PAN.

A non-statutory admission limit has been set for all other year groups. This may be increased or decreased from time to time according to the level of resource available at the school and the preferred year group/class organisation.

Part 2 – Aims

2.1

The overriding aim of this policy is that it should work for the benefit of all children and parents/guardians in our area. It should be simple to use and assist parents/guardians to take the best decisions on the preferred school for their children. It should contribute to improving standards for all pupils.

2.2

The school aims to provide a place for all children whose address is within the designated school catchment area. A map of the designated is available from the school office

Part 3 – Starting School in Year 5 in September 2016

- 3.1** The procedure for applying to start school must be coordinated by the home local authority (the local authority responsible for the area in which the child subject to the application lives). Before applying for a school place, applicants should refer to the 2016 Coordinated Admissions Scheme published by the home Local Authority and other information set out in section 1.4

- 3.2** The application form (referred to as 'the Common Application Form') is available from the home local authority. This must be completed and returned to this authority, to arrive no later than 23.59 hours on 15th January 2016.
- 3.3** The home Local Authority will forward details of any applications submitted for St Michael's CE Middle schools to Dorset County Council. Applications submitted before the 15th January 2016 deadline will be administered and available places provisionally allocated, before the consideration of any later application.
- 3.4** Decisions will be notified to applicants by the home local authority. A letter and/or email will be sent on behalf of the Governing Body, on 16th April 2016.

Part 4 - Waiting Lists

4.1

During the normal admissions round it is always necessary to complete a Local Authority Common Application form to apply for a school place. Registering interest with the school on a "waiting list" before the admissions round guarantees neither a place nor priority within the oversubscription Criteria. Offers of places will be made by the Local Authority on the school's behalf.

4.2

If the school is oversubscribed for children due to start in 2015-2016 a waiting list will be ***maintained***. The position on the list will be determined by applying the published over-subscription criteria and not by date of receipt. This will mean a position will change if a later application is received from someone with higher priority according to the over-subscription criteria. The existence of a waiting list does not remove the right of appeal against any refusal of a place from any unsuccessful applicant.

4.3

Names will only be removed from the list if a written request is received, or if the offer of a place that becomes available is declined. The waiting list will close at the end of the Autumn term in accordance with statutory requirements. At that time parents of pupils on existing lists must confirm in writing their wish to be placed on a newly constructed waiting (or continued interest) list which will remain open until Looked after children and previously looked after children as defined within this policy, children who are the subject of a direction by a local authority or who are allocated to a school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over any child on the waiting list.

Part 5 - Applications outside the normal admissions round

- 5.1** Applications for a place during the academic year, may be submitted at any time, but will not be administered more than six calendar weeks in advance of a place being required, except in particular circumstances applying for Crown Servant or Service family children. Applicants must complete the Local Authority In-Year application form and return this directly to Dorset County Council. This is available to download from the Dorset County Council website, or a copy can be provided upon request.
- 5.2** The Admissions Committee will consider applications during term time only and strictly in the order that they are received. Applications that arrive during a school holiday will be held and processed when school resumes. If the governors receive more than one application on the same day for the same year group, they may need to apply the published oversubscription criteria in order to determine a priority for admission where insufficient

places exist within the PAN or admission limit applying at that time (see Part 2 – Oversubscription Criteria).

- 5.3** The non-statutory admission limits (applying to years 1 – 6) indicate the number of places available in a particular year group at a particular time. The governors are permitted to adjust these limits whenever deemed necessary in order to reflect the level of resource available to support the year group concerned. If the Admissions Committee determines that the admission of a further child would impact on the efficient delivery of education or the efficient use of resources, the application will be refused.
- 5.4** Applicants will receive a written decision by first class letter post within 10 school days of receipt of the In-Year application form or receipt of any supplementary information where this is subsequently submitted to support an application and is deemed necessary in order to determine the admission decision. If an application is refused, the decision letter will set out the reasons for refusal and explain how to appeal against the Admission Authority's decision (see Part 5 of these arrangements).
- 5.5** Any offer of a place during the academic year, will remain open for six calendar weeks from the date of the decision letter. If the child concerned is not on roll and attending before this deadline, the Admissions Committee will consider withdrawing the offer of a place.
- 5.6** Subject to the information provided on the application form and the circumstances at the school, the Admissions Committee may decide to refer an application to Local Authority in order that the Fair Access Protocol may be applied. This would normally be where a child is deemed to require a higher level of support than can be provided at the school. The Fair Access Protocol enables the local authority to engage directly with a family in order to help identify a suitable educational placement as soon as possible.

Part 6 – Over-subscription generally

The admissions policy of St Michaels CE Middle School is, while there are adequate places, to offer a place to all applicants irrespective of gender, religion, ethnicity or country of origin, disability or academic ability.

This school participates in the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol.

6.1 Special Educational Needs - Education Health Plans

Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health Plan are admitted to school in accordance with a separate process administered by the Local Authority (LA) in whose area the family lives. The governors must always admit a child whose Statement or individual plan names St Michaels Church of England VA Middle School.

6.2

Where parents wish to be given preference on the grounds of their faith within their application for a place at this school they should send an accompanying letter from the relevant priest/pastor). This form must be completed and returned to the LEA together with all documentary evidence to be considered during the admissions process. Confirmation of status may be requested from the relevant priest/pastor.

Part 7 - Over-subscription Criteria

Where more applications have been received than places available or where to admit would conflict with the school fulfilling class size legislation, the following priorities shall apply in order:

7.1

Looked after children or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order¹. 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).

7.2 VULNERABLE CHILDREN

- i. children of families with confirmed refugee status
- ii. children with a medical condition or disability where written evidence is available from a senior clinical medical officer and the child's general practitioner or specialist showing that it would be detrimental to the child's health not to admit him/her to the school rather than any other. Details of this must accompany the initial application.
- iii. Children where either parent has a disability which would make travel to a different school difficult. Evidence from a registered health professional such as a doctor or social worker will be required. Details of this must accompany the initial application.

LIVING WITHIN THE SCHOOL'S DESIGNATED AREA AS DEFINED ABOVE:

7.3 SIBLINGS

A child is considered in this category if an older sibling is attending the school at the deadline date, **and will continue to do so when the sibling is admitted**, and where the child lives within the designated area at the same address as the older 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.

7.4 OTHER CHILDREN

Children resident within the designated area who do not qualify under one of the criteria above.

LIVING OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL'S DESIGNATED AREA AS DEFINED ABOVE:

7.5 SIBLINGS

A child is considered in this category if an older sibling is attending the school at the deadline date, **and will continue to do so when the sibling is admitted**, and where the child lives outside the designated area at the same address as the older 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.

7.6 PRACTISING CHRISTIANS

Those children from outside the designated area who are regular (*monthly for 12 months prior to application*) practising Christians, of whatever denomination, at a recognised

¹ An adoption order is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

A 'residence order' is as an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under section 8 of the Children Act 1989. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

church or religious group. (A recognised church or religious group is one that is a member of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (see ctbi.org.uk).

7.7 OTHER CHILDREN

Children resident outside the designated area who do not qualify under one of the criteria above.

7.8 Tie breaker

If the school is oversubscribed within any category above, the straight-line distance from the child's home address to the school will be used as the determining factor. Distances will be measured according to the Ordnance Survey eastings and northings for the child's home address and the school. Those living closer to the school will be given priority.

If two or more children with the same priority for admission, live an indistinguishable distance from the school, but cannot all be admitted, then the available places will be decided by the casting of lots by the Local Authority.

Parents must accept the offer by the date set out in the Local Authority Co-ordinated Primary School Admission Scheme. Parents will be asked to reply to the Local Authority. If they do not respond by this date it will be assumed that the place offered has been declined.

Once an offer of a school place has been made, it may only be lawfully withdrawn in very limited circumstances, which include an offer of place based upon a fraudulent or misleading application. Where an offer of place is withdrawn, the application will be considered afresh, and a right of appeal offered if an offer of place is refused.

Part 8 - Appeals Procedure

- 8.1** Applicants whose school place application has been turned down will have the legal right to appeal against the governors decision, providing a formal application for a school place was submitted and a decision letter received. Full details explaining the appeal process will be set out in the decision letter.
- 8.2** An appeal timetable is published on the school website by 28th February every year. This sets out the timeframe for the various stages in the appeal process and includes statutory dates by which appeals must be heard. The governors do not organise appeal hearings during school holiday periods and any appeal received when the school is closed will not be administered until school resumes.
- 8.3** The governors appeal form must always be completed and submitted to the School Office. An appeal form can be downloaded from the school website or obtained from the School Office.

Part 9 – Further General Information

9.1 Applications for children to enter a year group other than chronological age

The governors will consider applications on a case by case basis for retained or accelerated entry in cases where parents would like their child to be admitted to a year group either side of the chronological age year group. The reasons for the request must be fully explained in writing and included with the school place application form.

9.2 Multiple birth applications (for example twins)

In the case of multiple birth applications, the Published Admission Number or admission limit will be exceeded, or increased, at the point of allocation in order to ensure that multiple birth siblings can be allocated places at the same school (the sibling definition still applies).

9.3 Children from Overseas

The LEA will process admission applications for children living within the European Economic Area (EEA) or from United Kingdom (UK) citizens living abroad. All other applicants from overseas must hold an appropriate Home Office Visa at the time of application. All overseas applications will be considered according to the child's home address at the time of submission unless proof of the child's future UK address is provided with the application (see 6.7 Home Address). The only exceptions are children of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants (including Diplomats) returning to the UK with a confirmed posting within the area.

9.4 Parent

A parent in education law includes natural parents, whether they are married or not and a person other than the natural parent(s) who has parental responsibility or care of a child or young person. Having care of a child or young person means that person who looks after the child and with whom the child lives, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child.

9.5 Home Address

For the purposes of school admission, the governors' definition of a child's home address is considered to be where the child resides for the majority of their time with the person(s) who legally have care of the child. Documentary evidence of house ownership, or a minimum six-month rental agreement, may be required together with proof of the child's residency at the property concerned. Places will not be allocated on the basis of a future house move unless this can be confirmed through the exchange of contract or a signed formal lease agreement in place at the time of application. An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place.

9.6 Withdrawing an allocated place

The governors will expect parents to confirm by post or email within 21 school days, their acceptance of any place offered at the school. The child must then be attending school within six weeks of the date of the original offer letter. The governors reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a place if these conditions are not met and to reallocate the place to the highest ranked child on a waiting list, or to a new applicant where no waiting list exists. The governors may also withdraw the offer of a school place if the child's home address is subsequently found to be fraudulent.

9.7 Relevant Documents

Important information published by local authorities applies to some areas of school admissions procedure. If you are considering submitting an application for your child to start or transfer school, you are advised to refer to your local authority's website. Documents of particular importance include:

- The Local Authority Coordinated Admissions Scheme
- The Composite Prospectus 'Primary Admissions Guide for Parents' (this will include detailed information about how to apply for a child to start school for the very first time in the Reception year group)
- The Local Authority School Transport policy
- The Local Authority Fair Access Protocol (this document applies only for applications made in connection with a place required during the academic year)

Part 10 – Enquiries about these arrangements

These Admission Arrangements reflect the statutory requirements of the 2012 Department for Education School Admissions Code and the School Admissions Appeals Code www.education.gov.uk. The documents were compiled by the Governing Body (the Admissions Authority for the school) and published on the school website following a public consultation. The administrative practices described in these arrangements are designed to be fair and reasonable and the information provided is intended to explain clearly:

- How to apply for a place at St Michael's Church of England VA Middle School
- How the Admissions Authority administers admission applications
- How to appeal against a decision to refuse admission

Please contact the school office if you would like to discuss these admission arrangements or your particular circumstances in more detail:

St Michael's CE VA Middle School
Colehill Lane
Colehill
Wimborne
Dorset
BH21 7AB

Admissions contact: Mrs Nicki Wellman
Tel: 01202 883433
School website: www.stmichaelscolehill.dorset.sch.uk
School Office Email: office@stmichaelscolehill.dorset.sch.uk

Note: Subject to the above policy and the relevant appeals procedure, decisions regarding admissions will be the responsibility of the Governing Body.