St Mary's CE Primary School

'Trust in the Lord and Flourish' (Proverbs 11:28)

Admissions Policy for entry in 2025-2026

Approved by Full Governing Body on: 13th March 2024

Date of next review: This policy is updated annually.

Updated 8 February 2024

Shropshire Council is the admission authority for St Mary's CE Primary School.

For admissions to the Reception Year, applications must be made via the Shropshire Council online portal(Synergy - Homepage (shropshire.gov.uk) by 15th January in the academic year prior to which your child is due to start school. All applications received by this date will be considered and parents will be informed by Shropshire Council on 16th April (or next working day) if they have been allocated a place for their child. Please see the Parents Guide to Education booklet on the website www.shropshire.gov.uk/schooladmissions and also for details of the admissions arrangements.

St Mary's CE Primary School has a published admissions number (PAN) of 30.

Admissions Criteria:

The school will admit any pupils with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) that names the school. Priority will then be given to those children who meet the criteria in the order set out below:

1. 'Looked after children' or children who were previously 'looked after' but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order[1] including those who appear [to the admission authority (Shropshire Council) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.[1]

2. Very exceptionally, priority may be given to a child who has a particular health reason requiring them to attend a specific school. This will only be allowed if parents/carers provide written evidence from a medical professional that in the view of the authority confirms that attending that particular school (and no other) is **essential** to the medical well-being of the child. The authority reserves the right to contact medical professionals to ascertain the relevance of the medical condition.

3. Children living inside the designated catchment area will have priority of admission. If there are not enough places for all the children in the catchment area, then the following criteria for admission will apply in order:

   3a. Priority will be given to children living within the catchment area who will have an older sibling on roll at the school on the day they are due to start school.

   3b. After that, priority will be given to other children who live within the catchment area.

4. If there are spaces still available after the above criteria have been applied, children living outside the designated catchment area will be offered places according to the following criteria:

4a. Children who will have an older sibling at the school on the day they are due to start school.
4b. All other children.

Each category will be rank ordered according to the distance from home to school as a straight-line measurement.

Notes

[1] 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).
[1] An adoption order is an order under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders).
[1] A 'child arrangements order' is 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 as amended by Section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014.
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).

A sibling connection is defined as a brother or sister, stepbrother or stepsister, half-brother, or half-sister, living at the same address as part of the same family unit and of compulsory school age (i.e., 5 – 16 years). Fostered and adopted siblings are also included. Older siblings must be attending the school on the date the younger sibling is due to start there. However, cousins or other relatives who assume residence in a home in order to establish an 'in catchment area' address will not be given priority under the sibling criterion.

For admissions purposes all distances are measured as a straight-line distance on a computerised mapping system between the home address and the nearest entrance gate of the relevant school by pinpointing their eastings and northings. The shortest distance being given highest priority. Where two addresses are within the same block of flats, the lowest number of flat nearest the ground floor will be deemed to be the nearest in distance.

For phased transfers (the start of Reception) application for places for children moving into Shropshire Council's area from another English local authority's area can only be considered when formal confirmation (e.g., signed tenancy agreement when no property is owned, or exchange of contracts) of the address has been received.

All applicants are required to give correct information about the genuine residential address of the child. Where any information regarding a home address is found to be fraudulent or misleading a school place may be withdrawn even if the child has been admitted to the school. Where changes of address occur after application, an offer of a place may also be withdrawn if

it is made on the basis of residence at a former address and the applicant has not advised the Admissions Team of a change of circumstances.

In the event that two applications are exactly the same after all other criteria have been taken into account a tie breaker will be used. This will be by random allocation and overseen by an independent party not connected with the admissions process.

If unsuccessful on allocation day, Shropshire Council's Admissions Team will offer a review when the waiting list will be formed from those parents who advise the Admissions Team that they wish to pursue a place at the school. At the end of the review period, parents who have still not been successful in securing a place have the right to appeal against the decision. Parents may remain on the waiting list from the review period onwards.

Shropshire Council's Admissions Team will continue to maintain waiting lists for unsuccessful applicants in Reception Year. If any vacancies arise, places will be offered to applicants on the waiting list in strict accordance with normal published oversubscription criteria.

Mid-term or In-Year applications

Mid-term applications will be dealt with using the same admissions criteria given above. Applications must be made via the Shropshire Council online portal (Synergy - Homepage (shropshire.gov.uk) If there is a space in the relevant year group a place will be offered. A formal letter from Shropshire Council's Admissions Team will be sent to the parent advising them of the offer and the need to contact school directly to arrange a start date.

If there are no vacancies in the year group, Shropshire Council's Admission Team will speak to the Headteacher to consider whether additional places can be offered. A decision must be notified to parents within 15 days of making the application.

If a place cannot be offered, parents will receive a formal letter and information on how to appeal against the decision from Shropshire Council's School Admissions Team.

Shropshire Council will maintain a waiting list for unsuccessful applicants. If any vacancies arise, places will be offered to applicants included on the waiting list in strict accordance with normal published oversubscription criteria. If a place can be offered the applicant will be expected to take up the place within 6 school weeks or by the start of the next half term, whichever is the earliest date, with the exception of Reception children who have deferred entry until later in the same academic year. If an offer of a place is refused, the name will be removed from the waiting list.

Appeals

All applicants refused a place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission

Appeals Code. Appellants should contact Shropshire Council School Admissions Team for information on how to appeal. Information on the timetable for the appeals process is on the website www.shropshire.gov.uk/schooladmissions Parents must be given at least 10 school days from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful to lodge an appeal.

When can my child start school?

Children can attend primary education from the September following their 4th birthday. The law requires that children attend school from the prescribed day[4] following their 5th birthday. Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the school year, or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that year. They can also request that their child attends part-time until they reach compulsory school age. However, the offer of a place cannot be held over until the next academic year.

NB: Children become of compulsory school age on the first prescribed day following their 5th birthday: 31 August, 31 December or 31 March (or on that day if any of these dates are the child's birthday).

Deferred Transfers

Children born from 1 April to 31 August – known as summer born children – do not need to start school until the September after their fifth birthday, a year after they could first have started school. **Most summer born children start at age 4 with no issues**.

Parents of summer born children have two options if they feel their child is not ready to start Reception with their natural cohort. These are outlined below:

Option 1 - Delayed Start

If a parent of a summer born child does start school aged 4, they can, if they wish, agree with the allocated school a pattern of part time attendance or a deferred start until later in that school year for your child. You can discuss this with the school. This will require the parent to apply on-time (by 15 January) using the application process provided by Shropshire Council. Once places are allocated on the 16 April the parent can contact the Headteacher to discuss the delayed start.

Option 2 - Defer for a full year

If a parent decides their summer born child will start school aged 5 and wants their child to start school in reception (not Year 1), they need to make a request to the school's admission authority. This is called requesting admission out of the normal age group – because children born from 1 September in one year to 31 August the following year are normally educated together in one year group.

The parent will need to submit a form requesting a formal deferral and nursery provision (in the case of Reception deferrals) and primary schools (in the case of Secondary deferrals) will need to complete forms and assessments and

submit to The School Admissions Team for processing. **Deferral requests ideally need to be submitted no later than the deadlines for the respective transfer groups (15 January for Reception).** We do appreciate that in extenuating circumstances, submitting such a request before the closing date does present a challenge. Should this occur, the team will do their best to process prior to the end of the academic year, though there is no guarantee of this.

If parents do not make a request for admission out of the normal age group your child will start school in year 1. Parents should consider the potential impact of missing the reception year. The admission authority makes the decision in the child's best interests. The government believes it is usually not in a child's best interests to miss the teaching that takes place during the reception year, and that it should be rare for a child to start school in Year 1.

It is important to advise a parent that, should their summer born child defer for a year, they will reach school leaving age at the end of year 10, rather than year 11. The school will not ask them to leave, but they will no longer be required by law to attend school and the school may not be able to enforce their attendance. Children usually take their GCSEs in year 11.

Children with special educational needs or a disability

Having special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) does not necessarily mean a child should delay starting school. It may be better for them to start school before compulsory school age so they can access the support available there.

All teachers are trained to support all children to succeed, including those with SEND. Every mainstream school must have a special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) – a qualified teacher with an additional SEND qualification.

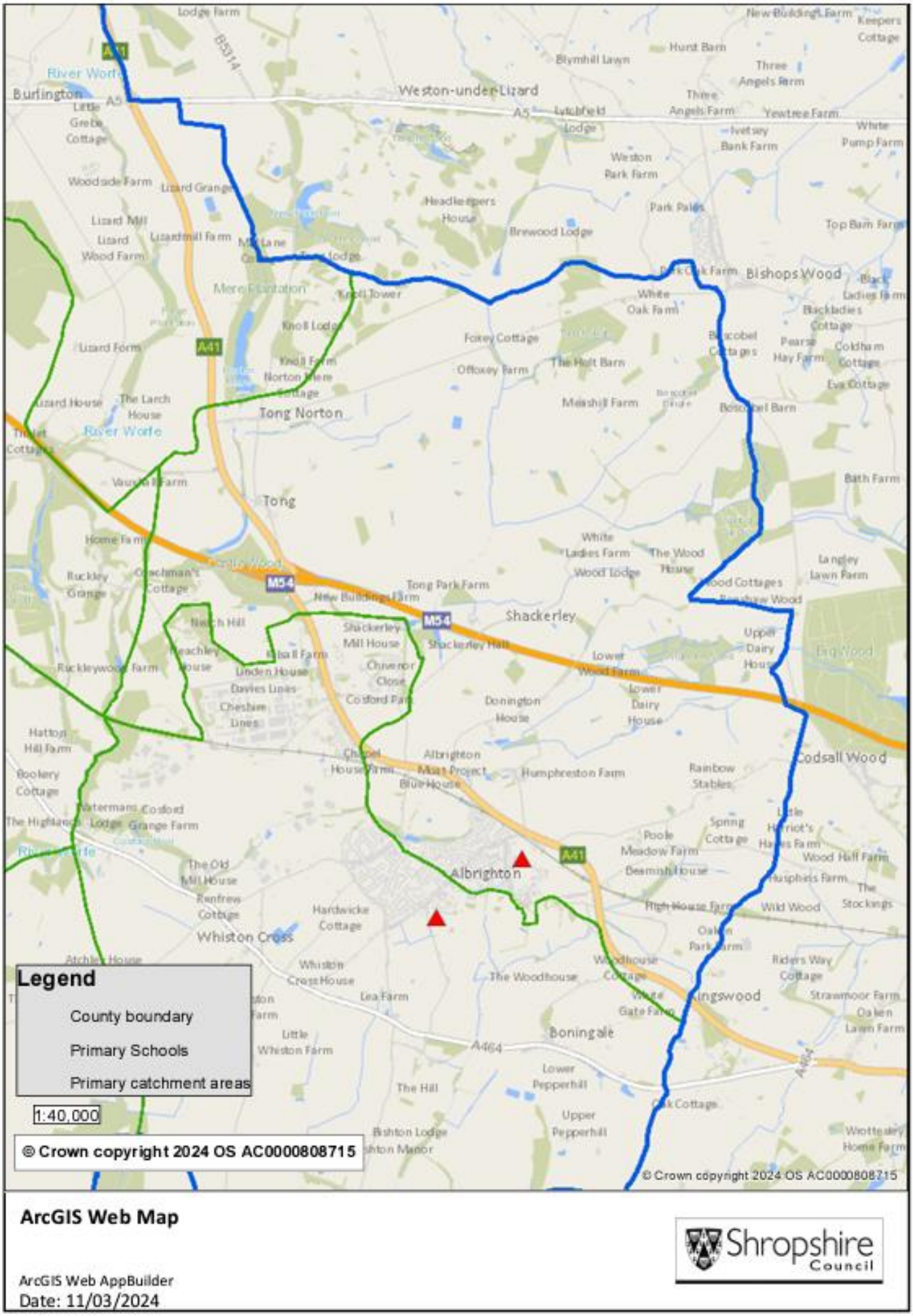
If a parent is worried about their child starting school because of their SEND, they can speak to their health visitor or to staff at the school they would like their child to go to, for example the headteacher or SENCo. The parent can also speak to the local Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support service.

If a child is going through an EHC needs assessment, and the parent intends to request admission to reception aged 5, they will need to discuss this with the Local Authority.

For clarification on the admissions arrangements or anything outlined in the above policy, please contact The School Admissions Team:

Email: school-admissions@shropshire.gov.uk
Post: c/o School Admissions Team, Learning & Skills, The Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND

Catchment Area Map



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