

St Luke's Church of England Aided Primary School Governors Appeal Statement 2022-23

THE GOVERNORS' STATEMENT

The school has an agreed admission limit for the academic year 2022/23 for all year groups of 60 students.

The school exists as a two-form entry primary school. The school will admit pupils up to the published admission number (PAN), which is 60 pupils. Section 1 of the School Standards & Framework Act 1998 (as amended by the Education Act 2002) and the Education (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 1998 limit the size of an infant class during an **ordinary teaching session to 30 pupils per schoolteacher**.

The teaching and learning spaces at St Luke's were calculated, using Department for Education Guidelines, to accommodate up to 30 pupils in each teaching area.

Accommodation for Worship	Designated areas are already full to capacity with whole school community worship being an essential factor of the spiritual and community life at St.Luke's.
Dining Room-----	We currently operate a very tight schedule in order to move all pupils through lunch within the designated lunch session. In response to the higher degree of attention and personal support required by pupils in Reception, the dinner session - including setting up and clearing away, is already stretched over two hours. The younger children have a time dedicated to themselves, allowing us to provide a higher staff ratio before the older children enter the hall. From September 2014 this has also required the care, space and time for the infant age children accessing the statutory meal offer. Increasing the number of children needing this support would have an impact the overall time taken and the level of supervision --available. The resulting increase of time taken would have an impact on the teaching and learning in the school, as it would further restrict the usage of the multi-use hall space for curriculum and extra-curriculum activities.
Supervision of pupils and access to outdoors-----	In order to ensure safeguarding of all, it is essential that pupils in reception are supervised in the area in which they choose to work. The majority of pupil assessment at this Key Stage involves careful observation of pupils and current budget for staffing and pupil numbers allows for this to be carried out with a staff: pupil ratio, which we consider acceptable, safe and meaningful. An increase in pupil numbers would restrict this method of working and would have a detrimental impact on our ability to deliver and assess the progress of pupils in the Early Years Curriculum comprehensively.
Playground Area-----	There is a restricted amount of hard standing playground shared by Key Stages 1 and 2 and an increase in the numbers of pupils to our Reception class, over the PAN, would have a net effect in future years of an increase in the number of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 sharing this space. This would have implications for pupil safety and would limit children's space for movement, which will have an impact on their physical and mental well-being.
Class Sizes -----	Staff and parents would undoubtedly be justified in stating that to increase classes beyond our PAN would be prejudicial to the educational opportunities of those students already admitted to the school.
Covid-19 -----	Our classrooms are designed to accommodate 30 pupils. To exceed our PAN would work against measures put in place through our risk assessments which continue to strive to reduce overcrowding. Also, the pupils and staff already admitted to the school will need long term academic and well-being support, which will be provided through a challenging broad and balanced curriculum and this will be most effective where our current staff: pupil ratios can be maintained.

In the light of the above, governors cannot prejudice the entitlement of existing students by exceeding the standard number for admission.

Evidence that has been considered

- The Governors have offered places to the 60 families who, on the evidence presented at the time the application was given consideration, best satisfied the agreed criteria.
- Families are encouraged to submit all relevant documents or information for full consideration by the Governors at the time the application is made. By the time the formal appeals are heard, there could be no substantive reason why any new evidence should come forward at that stage; after all, we cannot withdraw the offer of a place to accommodate an application where further evidence is presented at a very late stage.

St Luke's Church of England Aided Primary School

Governors Appeal Statement 2022-23

- To admit additional students would prejudice the education, welfare and safety of all of them
- We go to considerable lengths to ensure that families genuinely interested in a place obtain **maximum** information about the school from the start - e.g. via an Open Door Policy and open invitation for all interested families to visit the school, 'visit the school' sessions during Autumn Term – virtually or in person, the School Website, Admissions Criteria published by Local Authority.
- A member of the senior leadership team or Pupil Officer speaks to parents visiting the school and parents attending Nursery about the application procedure, emphasising the need to submit correct documentation on time and correctly completed. It is also stressed that Nursery places are determined by a separate Admissions Policy and do not provide grounds for allocating a school place.

The School must be able to exercise a role as a caring Christian school community

St Luke's is very proud of its high standards coupled with its distinctive, caring Christian ethos. It is only possible to maintain this because the staff is providing a level of commitment far beyond what could be considered as reasonable. Whilst over-subscription for places at St Luke's is a very pleasing position to be in the Governors foresee that requests for appeals may be made every year and therefore do not wish to create a precedent by admitting more than the PAN. The school makes good use of the resources available and pupils have a comfortable and safe environment in which to learn. In order to maintain these standards we urge that no appeal is successful.

In conclusion, the Governors take the view that we have done all that we can. Given that we are oversubscribed, no matter how the applications are considered, some families will be disappointed, including many who fulfil the criteria to a reasonable extent. We ask the Appeal Panel to defend the pastoral needs and educational chances of the children already admitted to the school, and reject all appeals.

Mrs Valerie Davis

Chair of Governors

On behalf of St Luke's Church of England Aided Primary School Governing Body

Appendix

The Legal Position

Parents have the right, by law, to express a preference as to the school at which they wish their child to be educated. When that preference is St Luke's Church of England Aided Primary School, the Governing Body of the School is pleased to offer a place provided that:-

- Compliance with the preference would not prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources, or
- Compliance with the preference would be compatible with arrangements made between the Governors and the Local Authority [L.A.] in respect of the admission of students to the School.

The Agreement Between The Governors and the Local Authority

The admission limit for St Luke's is fixed by agreement between the LA and the School Governors. The limit for new admissions into Year R is 60.

How Students Are Selected In The Case Of Oversubscription

Whilst the Governors are pleased that so many parents should wish to send their children to the school, sadly there are not enough places available. Having agreed an Admission Limit of 60 places, the Governors do not seek to exceed this number, unless directed by the Education Appeal Panel to do so.

In December 2021, parents received guidance as to how to access the booklet entitled "Arrangements for Starting School In Wolverhampton September 2022". Under the heading 'Policy to be followed on deciding Admissions' the following criteria for selecting students to be admitted to the School were set out:-

When parents request an admission place for their child at St Luke's they are encouraged to visit to meet the Head teacher/Member of Senior Leadership Team and view the school in action. Parents are encouraged to read the 'LA

St Luke's Church of England Aided Primary School

Governors Appeal Statement 2022-23

Starting School in Wolverhampton' booklet which is published in electronic format on the City Council website and is available as a hard copy to parents on request without charge.

As an Aided school, the Governors of St Luke's are responsible for the Admission Policy, in line with Diocesan recommendations and in consultation with the LA.

The School's Admission Number to each year group (PAN) is 60. If the number of requests exceeds the school's admission limit, places will be allocated according to the following order of priority:

Where there are less applicants than the PAN, all children will be admitted. In the event the school is oversubscribed, the admission authority will apply the following oversubscription criteria in order of priority

A child with an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) which names the school will be admitted. Remaining places are allocated as detailed below.

1. Looked After Children and all previously Looked After Children. A 'Looked After Child' is a child who is in (a) in the care of the local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of the social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time the application is made to 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).

2 Children whose parent/carer is a member of staff employed at the school for two or more years at the point at which the application for admission to the school is made, or where the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. To support applications made under this criterion section 3 of SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM FOR APPLICATION FOR A PLACE AT ST LUKE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL WOLVERHAMPTON should be completed.

3. Children with a sibling already attending the school at the time a school place is sought. For admission purposes, a sibling is a child who resides permanently at the same address as the child for whom a place is being requested, and is one of the following:-

- brother/sister
- half-brother/sister (i.e. share one common parent)
- or stepbrother/sister (i.e. related by a parent's marriage/civil partnership)
- any other child of the parent/carer, where it can be demonstrated that s/he is residing permanently at the same address (e.g. under the terms of a residence order) in the same family unit as the sibling.

A sibling connection will not be accepted if the original place was obtained by using fraudulent or false information.

4. Those parents/carers showing strong support from the leader of EITHER a local Christian church recognised by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and/or the Evangelical Alliance,

OR a local place of worship belonging to one of the other major world religions (including Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism and Buddhism). This must be affirmed by the parent's/carer's faith leader on the Supporting Information Form, and should demonstrate their commitment to the life, work and witness of the particular faith. If a faith leader believes the family to demonstrate exceptional commitment to the life, work and witness of their particular faith they should state this, with justification. This will be measured by;

- i. Comment/evidence regarding frequency of visits to the place of worship or involvement in the worshipping activities of the place of worship – must be indicated as additional information on Supplementary Information Form
- ii. number of years the parent/carers have been worshipping at present and previous place of worship - must be indicated as additional information on Supplementary Information Form, Religious Reasons

Supporting Evidence

A Supporting Evidence form, which is available from school, the school website or LA website, will be provided for parents/carers and their faith leader to complete. Their faith leader should demonstrate the family's current, strong religious connections. Information should be supplied on the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM APPLICATION FOR A PLACE AT ST LUKE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND VOLUNTARY AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL WOLVERHAMPTON ACADEMIC YEAR 2022- 2023**

St Luke's Church of England Aided Primary School

Governors Appeal Statement 2022-23

In order to be accepted by the Governors all sections of this form should be completed and signed by both parent/carer and their Vicar/Minister/Faith Leader. It should be validated with the faith organisations stamp or headed paperwork and returned directly to the Head Teacher.

Supplementary Information Forms will be graded from A to C by a representative group from the Governing Body. Grade A applications will then be ranked above grade B applications; tie breaker criteria will apply within each group

A. Significant strength of support from the parent/carers faith leader which demonstrates the parent/carers commitment to the life, work and witness of their particular faith

B. Minimal strength of support from the parent/carers faith leader which demonstrates the parent/carers commitment to the life, work and witness of their particular faith C. No evidence/incomplete form: these will be ranked within category 5.

5. Any other children not falling into the above criteria 1 to 4.

'Tie – Breaker' If there is an insufficient number of places to accommodate all children then ranking will be applied within all categories': Children living closest to the school, measured by the shortest walking distance. This is determined as the shortest distance from their home (or the main entrance to any communal building) to the front door of the school, using a commercial package that supplies National Grid map references to 1 metre or greater claimed accuracy. In the event of applicants living an equal distance or in a block of flats, available places will be offered randomly selected by drawing lots.

Children with a statement of Special Educational Needs that names the school must be admitted. This will reduce the number of places available to other applicants.

We understand that parent/carers would like to keep twins, triples and other children of multiple births together. In the event that there is an insufficient number of places to allocate to twins, triplets, etc. all children will be allocated together.

(See the Admissions Policy for further clarification and information regarding application)

Applications received after the closing date and repeat applications will be processed in accordance with the "The Inter-LA coordination of Primary Admissions at the normal year of entry 2022/2023".

Parents will be notified of the outcome on or as soon as possible after – National Primary Notification Day, and given the opportunity to have their child's name placed on a waiting list for their preferred Wolverhampton school or schools, which will be held until the end of the Autumn Term.

If a child is refused a place because of over-subscription, parents are informed in writing of how to access the LA and School's procedures in respect of their right of appeal and waiting lists.

Nursery Admissions

The school has a separate policy for Nursery Admissions which is based on older siblings already on full-time role and then birth date order. It should be noted that attending the school Nursery does not give any guarantee or preference for a place in Reception year or give sibling rights to any older child/ren applying for place in the school.

Applications other than the normal intake to reception class

An application should be made to the local authority who will provide an In-Year Transfer form for completion. The local authority will then consult with the governors who will rank the application in line with the above criteria. Interested families are invited to contact the school in order to provide supporting information in support of their application.

Appealing against a decision to admit

If you wish to appeal against a decision you should contact the school directly and request an appeal pack. The appeal will be heard by an Independent Appeals Panel.

This document is reviewed annually during the Summer Term.