

## **Saint John the Baptist Church of England (Aided) Primary School, Spalding**

### **Background**

This admission policy was drafted by the Governing Body in September 2016. It was made available for consultation from 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016 to 16<sup>th</sup> December 2016, as part of the Lincolnshire County Council admission arrangements consultation. The Governing Body's response to that consultation can be found in Appendix A. Following consultation the final policy as written below was agreed at the Governor meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2016. This policy is effective for admissions to the school from September 2018.

### **Admission Policy**

The Governors are responsible for the admission of children and reserve the right to refuse to admit a child. Parents have the right to appeal in such circumstances. Appeals should be made in writing to the Clerk of the Governors, who will direct the local authority to appoint an Independent Appeals Panel to consider the appeal against refusal for admission.

### **Children 4 to 5 years old**

St John the Baptist C.E. Primary School has one planned intake which provides for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Allocation of places will take account of the Published Admission Number (PAN) which is 60. All children will be considered equally.

Where we have offered a child a place at our school:

- a) that child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday;
- b) 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 the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made, whichever is the sooner;
- c) where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

Parents interested in deferring admission or arranging part-time attendance must contact the school to discuss this.

Early registration of children is no guarantee of a place. Arrangements for applications for places in Reception at St John the Baptist C.E. (Aided) Primary School will be made in accordance with Lincolnshire County Council's co-ordinated admission arrangements; parents resident in Lincolnshire can apply online at

[www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/schooladmissions)

They can also apply by telephone, or ask for a hard copy application form, by telephoning 01522 782030. Parents resident in other areas must apply through their home local authority. St John the Baptist C.E. Primary School will use the Lincolnshire County Council's timetable published online for these applications and the relevant Local Authority will make the offers of places on their behalf as required by the School Admissions Code.

## **Oversubscription Criteria For All Admissions**

In accordance with legislation the allocation of places for children with the following will take place first:

A child with Statement of Special Educational Needs (Education Act 1996) or Education Health and Care Plan (Children and Families Act 2014). Remaining places will be allocated in accordance with this policy.

Where there are more applications than places available the Governors will admit children according to the following ranked criteria:

- 1 Looked after children and all previously looked after children. 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).

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) at the time of making an application to a school.

This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).

Child arrangements orders are defined in s.8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by s.12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.

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).

- 2 Brothers and sisters of children who currently attend the school and who will still be on the school roll at the time of admission.

Brother or sister is:

A full brother or sister, whether or not resident in the same household. Another child normally living for the majority of term time in the same household where an adult in the household has parental responsibility as defined by the Children Act 1989. Or any child in the household where an adult in the household is defined as a parent for the purposes of Section 576 of the Education Act 1996.

- 3 Church attendance at the parish church of St John the Baptist, Spalding

Preference will be given where the family of the child can demonstrate that they are a regular member of the worshipping church community at St John the Baptist Church, Spalding, as defined by their attendance at a regular church service at least once a month for the preceding 18 months prior to this application for a school place. As part of the admission process all applications indicating that they believe they meet this criteria will be sent a St John the Baptist clergy form found in Appendix B. A reference from the vicar, using the prescribed clergy form,

must be received by the deadline given when sent in order for the church attendance to be verified and included in the admissions process. The clergy form in Appendix B is part of this admission policy.

“Family” is defined by the school as either a parent - mother, father, or person who has legal responsibility for the child as defined by the Children’s Act 1989 and / or the grandparents or step grandparents of the child.

Where a family are new to the area the admission authority will accept confirmation of being a regular member of the worshipping church community of another church by the family in the area in which they lived as long as the church denomination attended is part of the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland group of churches. Being a regular member of the church will be defined by their attendance at a regular church service at least once a month for the preceding 18 months prior to this application for a school place. As part of the admission process all applications indicating that they believe they meet this criteria will be sent a clergy form found in Appendix C. A reference from the vicar, using the prescribed clergy form, must be received by the deadline given when sent in order for the church attendance to be verified and included in the admissions process. The clergy form in Appendix C is part of this admission policy.

- 4 Children who live nearest to Saint John the Baptist School measured using straight line distance, as calculated by Lincolnshire County Council school admission team from the Post Office Address Point of the home to the Post office Address Point of the school.

The child’s home address is the address where they live for the majority of the school term time with a parent who has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act 1989. Or any child in the household where an adult in the household is defined as a parent for the purposes of Section 576 of the Education Act 1996. This could include a person who is not a parent but who has responsibility for her or him. It could include a child’s guardians but will not usually include other relatives such as grandparents, aunts, uncles etc. unless they have all the rights, duties, powers and responsibilities and authority, which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and their property.

Where your child lives normally during the school week with more than one parent at different addresses, the home address for the purposes of school admissions will be that of the parent who lives closest, as measured by driving distance.

If you have more than one home, we will take as the home address the address where you and your child normally live for the majority of the school term time.

### **Final Tiebreaker**

If two or more children are tied for the last place a lottery will be drawn by an independent person, not employed by the school or working in Children’s Service Directorate at the local authority.

Parents not offered a place have the right to appeal through the independent appeal process. This is indicated to them at the time of offer.

## **Other Information**

### **Children of UK service personnel**

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area, or crown servants returning to live in the area from overseas, the Governors will:

- Allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address to use when considering the application against the school's oversubscription criteria.
- Accept a Unit postal address or quartering area address for admissions purposes for a service child.

The Governors will not refuse a service child a place because the family does not currently live in the area.

### **Twins and other siblings from a multiple birth**

In these cases all the children will be considered together as one application. If one or more can be admitted within the published admission number the school will go above its admission number as necessary to admit all the children, unless this would make the class too large. The government's school admissions code makes an exception to the infant class limit in this situation.

### **Brothers and sisters in the same year group**

Where there is only one place available in the school the children will be considered together as one application. The school will go above its admission number as necessary to admit all the children, except in cases where infant class regulations prevent this from happening. If this happens we can only legally offer one place because the government's school admissions code makes no exception to the infant class size limit for siblings in the same year group. We will only be able to offer the parent a place for one child.

### **Reserve lists**

For entry into the Reception intake year a reserve list, sometimes known as a waiting list, is kept for applications which have been refused. This list will be used if the number of children falls below the published admission number and a school place becomes available. If you listed the school on the common application form your child's name will automatically be placed on our reserve list, unless you have been offered a higher preference school. This list will be kept until 31 August by the School Admission Team. The list will then be kept by the school until the end of the academic year.

If a family move into the area they may be placed higher on the reserve list because the governors take account of where you are in relation to the oversubscription criteria and not the length of time you have been on the list.

In addition the school keeps reserve lists for all oversubscribed year groups. Each year group list is kept from September until July. In July the school will write to each parent with a child on the reserve list and ask if they wish to remain on the list by completing a request form. Should no form be received by the school by 31<sup>st</sup> August then the child will be removed from the reserve list. All mid-year admissions are offered the opportunity in their letter from the local authority to have their name added to the reserve list for that academic year and they will be added should they approach the school.

Places that become available will be offered to the child ranked first on the reserve list. The criteria laid down in the school's admission policy will be used to rank those on the reserve list.

### Fraudulent or misleading applications

As an admission authority we have the right to investigate any concerns we may have about your application and to withdraw the offer of a place if we consider there is evidence that you have made a fraudulent claim or provided misleading information, for example a false address was given which denied a place to a child with a stronger claim.

We reserve the right to check any address and other information provided so we can apply the oversubscription criteria accurately and fairly.

### Admission of children outside their 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.

Parents wishing to make these requests must contact their home local authority for guidance on the procedure to follow.

It is important for parents to note that they will have the opportunity and responsibility to provide whatever evidence they wish to support their request.

St John the Baptist C.E. (Aided) Primary School will make decisions 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 available information 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;
- any evidence that the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- the views of the head teacher

### Mid-year admissions

The governors will accept admissions into other year groups if there are places. Application should be made via the Local Authority Mid-Year Admission process. If there are more applications than places then the oversubscription criteria will be used to decide who should be offered the place. If there are no places then you will be told of the independent appeal system.

In Reception and Key Stage 1 mid-year admission numbers are kept at the school Published Admission Number (PAN) of 60. In Key Stage 2, the Admission Authority will offer mid-year places if a year group is below 64 and if there are not more than 20% of children in that year who are identified as having special educational needs. This policy to offer over PAN is to alleviate the pressure on school places in the local area.

### Fair Access Protocols

Local Authorities are required to have Fair Access Protocols in order to make sure that unplaced children who live in the home local authority, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a

suitable school as quickly as possible. This includes admitting children above the published admissions number to schools that are already full.

Governors consideration of Lincoln Diocese Board of Education's recommendation

The Governors consideration and rationale for not adopting fully the current LDBE recommendation on faith oversubscription criteria is detailed in Appendix D

**DATE**

**14<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

## **Appendix A**

### **Governing Body's Response to Consultation**

In response to representation from the Local Authority the admission authority removed a proposal from the draft policy which required additional information from applicants wishing to gain preference using religious criteria.

It had been the intention of the admission authority to add a second religious criteria which would have required the applicant to demonstrate that they were a committed member of the church being attended. This would have been through demonstration of attendance of additional church activities such as prayer or bible study groups. The Local Authority felt that to add such criteria might breach section 14 of the Code by being "unfair", as certain groups of people might be more or less able to be engaged with the Church beyond attendance at Worship.

After careful consideration the admission authority decided to re-draft the policy so that it continued to reflect previous policies that require a simple confirmation of church attendance on a monthly basis over a determined period of time.

No other responses to the consultation were received.

## Appendix B – Clergy Form



# St. John the Baptist C.E. Primary School Clergy Form

**This form should be completed by the parent, confirmed by the vicar of St John the Baptist Church, Spalding and returned to the school BEFORE the closing date given in the letter accompanying the form.**

Name of the person making the application \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the child who is subject to the application \_\_\_\_\_

Your relationship to the child who is subject to the application \_\_\_\_\_

### **Attendance at St John the Baptist Church, Spalding**

Have you worshipped at this church for 18 months, immediately preceding the date of this application?

Yes / No *(Please delete)*

Do you attend this church's worship at least once a month?

Yes / No *(Please delete)*

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### **Clergy Response**

**I can confirm that I have checked that \_\_\_\_\_ has attended St John the Baptist Church for a period of at least 18 months and that this has been on at least a monthly basis.**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Vicar of St John the Baptist Church

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix C – Clergy Form (for another church if you have recently moved)**



**St. John the Baptist C.E. Primary School  
Other Church - Clergy Form**

**This form should be completed by the parent, confirmed by the vicar or minister of the Church previously attended and returned to the school BEFORE the closing date given in the letter accompanying the form.**

Name of the person making the application \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the child who is subject to the application \_\_\_\_\_

Your relationship to the child who is subject to the application \_\_\_\_\_

**Attendance at [.....] (name of Church)**

Have you worshipped at this church for 18 months, immediately preceding the date of this application?

Yes / No (Please delete)

Do you attend this church's worship at least once a month?

Yes / No (Please delete)

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**Clergy Response**

**I can confirm that I have checked that \_\_\_\_\_ has  
attended \_\_\_\_\_ Church for a period of at least  
18 months and that this has been on at least a monthly basis.**

**I can also confirm that \_\_\_\_\_ Church is a member of  
Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Vicar/ Minister of ..... Church

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

### **Governors response to LDBE recommendation that Faith criteria be removed from schools oversubscription criteria**

"The Governing Body of St John the Baptist Church of England C.E. (Aided) Primary School has paid due regard to the recommendation of the Lincoln Diocese Board of Education to remove a church criteria from our school admission policy. The Governing Body recognise the good reasons for this recommendation and have given a great deal of consideration to this. However, having considered all points of view the Governing Body have decided to keep a Faith criteria, but much changed, as part of the policy for the school. This decision was taken and minuted at a special meeting of the Full Governing Body held on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

The Governing Body are committed to ensuring that our school serves the local community. However, that community is not purely geographical, as the church community of St John the Baptist Parish Church also makes a significant contribution to the school's community base. The school has shared a site with the church since 1875 and together they have grown and developed. The school views the Church as an important and vital resource and this is reciprocated by the Church. The recent extensive reordering of the Church took place very much minded by the use the school could make of the building in the future and how the Church and School could interact more fully and easily with one another. As such the Church and school are seen as being on a unified campus with a unified community.

As a town school the make up of the church community is not particularly "parish / geographically based" and because of this many members of the church community would not meet other criteria for admission to the school. It seems wholly wrong to Governors that our admission policy should not support the community link between church and school and that children of families who are part of the church community may not have been able to become part of the school community that the church serves.

That said, the Governing Body recognise the potential for a church criteria to be abused by those seeking a place in an oversubscribed school. To deter abuse of the policy the Governing Body have made changes to the church criteria within the admission policy;

- Only worshippers of St John the Baptist Church, Spalding will be eligible. Taking away the criteria of the wider church in Spalding reinforces the main reason for keeping the church criteria - which is the promotion of the joint community of St John's church and school.
- The criteria for church attendance has been extended from 12 to 18 months.

Governors would have wished to include further criteria relating to a parent demonstrating a wider involvement in the church community, but in consultation this was queried as possibly being contrary to the Admissions Code, and after consideration governors reverted to an attendance only church criteria.

The Governing Body believe that they have outlined good reasons for keeping a church criteria and that they have paid due regard to the LDBE recommendation by strengthening that criteria in order to deter abuse of the church admission criteria.