



# ADMISSIONS POLICY

## St Hilary School

### 2023-2024

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## Introduction

The Leading Edge Academies Partnership (the 'Trust') is a team of school leaders that aim to be Leading Edge and pioneering in their approach to education and well-being. We are a growing family of like-minded schools that offer a values-based education to the communities we serve and welcome staff, workers, students, parents/carers and volunteers from all different ethnic groups and backgrounds.

The term 'Trust Community' includes all staff, trustees, governors, students, parents/carers, volunteers and visitors.

We are a values-based Trust, which means all actions are guided by our three 'Es' as follows:

- **Excellence** – 'Outstanding quality'
- **Evolution** – 'Continuous change'
- **Equity** – 'Fairness and social justice'

This policy is based on the value of 'Equity'

This policy is based on the value 'Equity', thereby ensuring all applicants are treated with fairness and sound justice.

## Policy Statement

St Hilary School and the Trust is the admission authority for the school.

The Trust will participate fully in the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol and the Local Authority's Co-ordinated Admissions Schemes. Details of these schemes are available on the Council's website ([www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions)) or on request from the Local Authority. Closing dates and other details about the application process will be stated in those Schemes.

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- [school Admissions Code 2021](#)
- [school Admission Appeals Code](#)

The school is required to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the [school Standards and Framework Act 1998](#).

As an school, the school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the [school Standards and Framework Act 1998](#).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## Values Statement

Students will be admitted to the school without reference to ability or aptitude using the procedures detailed in this document, which includes arrangements and criteria that will be applied in the event of oversubscription.

Learning is the central activity of the school and informs every decision that takes place. All staff, students, Trustees, Governors, parents and community partners are encouraged to participate as lifelong learners. We aim to develop a community of learners that work to enhance the quality of life of all. We oppose beliefs that limit individuals realising their potential as we are committed to raising aspirations for all. All changes should be informed by research and considered by all groups it will involve. We endeavour to promote a healthy lifestyle both within the curriculum and beyond. We enable students to access a flexible curriculum developed to meet the needs of individuals.

## Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at the school
- Set out the school's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

## Applying for a place

### Age of Admission

St Hilary School takes part in Cornwall Council's Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme, available at [www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions) with children being admitted as follows:

Children will be eligible for a full-time place in Reception during the school year which runs from 01 September 2023 to 31 August 2024, if they were born between 01 September 2018 and 31 August 2019.

In accordance with the Secretary of State, any parent wishing to defer admission or attend part time until their child is of compulsory school age may do so by expressing their wishes, in writing, to the Governing body. In certain cases the school and the parents may come to an agreement that it would be in the best interests of the child to delay full/part time entry to the school but this will not extend beyond the term in which the child reaches their 5th birthday or beyond the 2023/24 school year.

### Admissions Procedure

For 'Admissions Round' Applications:

Applications are made via the Common Application Form found in the booklet 'How to Apply for a Place in a Reception Class in a Cornish Primary school'. Choices made by the parent will be subject to an 'Equal Preference' scheme when reception places are allocated. The Governors will adhere to the timetable as outlined in the CSA Admissions Booklet. The Local Authority will rank the applications according to the over-subscription criteria on behalf of the governing body.

## Allocation of places

Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational Needs that names St Hilary School as their choice, will be admitted regardless of the number on roll in the year group.

Children in Care who are directed to the school by the Local Authority (or Secretary of State in the case of academies) will be admitted to the school regardless of the number on roll in the year group.

St Hilary School has an agreed Net Capacity of 245 students. The published admission number (PAN) for reception in 2023/24 will be 35. Places will be allocated up to this number. In the event that more applications are received than places available, the oversubscription criteria listed later in this document will be used to decide on allocations. If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be admitted.

## Admission of children outside their normal age group

Although most children will be admitted to the school with their own age group, from time to time parents seek places outside their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems or missed part of the year, often due to ill health.

While it would not normally be appropriate for a child to be placed in a year group that is not concurrent with their chronological age, the school will consider these requests carefully, and together with the local authority, will make a decision based on the particular circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. Guidance can also be found at [www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions) or on request from the school Admissions Team.

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed on page 5. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group to which a child should be admitted.

Parents who are refused a place at a school for which they have applied have the right of appeal to an independent admission appeal panel. However, they do not have a right of appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in their preferred age group.

## In-year admissions

Parents can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose EHC plans name the school will be admitted.

Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for, your child will be offered a place.

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by one of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed on page 6 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Applications for in-year admissions must be done through Cornwall Council's Admissions Portal:

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/schools-and-education/schools-and-colleges/school-admissions/ready-to-apply/>

## Waiting lists

If, after the offer of places has been made, the school is over-subscribed, all parents whose applications have been unsuccessful will be asked whether they wish to be placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be administered by school Trust in partnership with the LA for the duration of the year of application.

The waiting list will be based on the school's oversubscription criteria and a child's place on a waiting list is subject to change according to additional information received about applications or children being added to the list – so their place on the list might move up or down. No priority is given to the length of time that a child has been on the list. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational Needs and children in care or children that were previously in care will take precedence over those on the waiting list. Children admitted under the Fair Access Protocol will also be given priority over children on the waiting list.

## Oversubscription Criteria

In the event of there being more than 35 applications for places in Year Reception for the 2023/24 academic year or more applications than places for any year group during the school year, the following oversubscription criteria will be used to prioritise applications, after the admission of children whose Education, Health and Care Plan names the school:

### 1. Children in care and children who were previously in care

Highest priority will be given to children in care and children who were previously in care but immediately after being in care became subject to an adoption, child arrangement, or special guardianship order, including those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in care as a result of being adopted<sup>1</sup>.

### 2. Children of teaching staff (with QTS) in either or both of the following circumstances:

- a) where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or
- b) the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

### 3. Siblings at the school

Children who have a sibling attending the school at the time of application and who will still have a sibling attending the school at the proposed date of admission. Siblings includes step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address. This will include siblings living at the same address for at least part of the school week.

### 4. Children who live in the designated area

Children who live in the designated area of St Hilary School or whose parents can provide evidence that they will be living in the designated area of St Hilary School by the requested date of admission.

If there are more designated area children wanting places at the school than there are places available, criteria 4 to 6 below will be used to decide which of these children should have priority for admission. If there are still places available after all the designated area children have been allocated places, criteria 4 to 6 will be used to decide which of the remaining children should have priority for any spare places.

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<sup>1</sup> Subject to Parliamentary approval of the school Admissions Code 2021

## 5. Social and medical need

Children with an unequivocal professional recommendation from a doctor, school medical officer, educational psychologist, health visitor, education welfare officer or social worker that non-placement at [insert name of school] would cause harm to the child and that placement at [insert name of school] is essential. Such recommendations must be made in writing and must give full supporting reasons.

## 6. All other children

## Challenging behaviour

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. We may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the school Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, ie where section 87 of the [school Standards and Framework Act 1998](#) is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that is not the normal point of entry, only in such a case that we have good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour that may adversely affect the provision we can offer. In this case, we will refer these pupils to the Fair Access Protocol. We will not refuse admission on these grounds to looked after children, previously looked after children and children with EHC plans listing the school.

## Fair Access Protocol

We participate in [Cornwall Council's Fair Access Protocol](#). This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible.

## Tie break

In the case of two or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, the school will use the distance between the school and a child's home as a tie breaker to decide between applicants. Priority will be given to children who live closest to St Hilary School. Distance will be measured in a straight line from the child's home address to the school's front gates on School Lane. A child's home address will be considered to be where they are resident for the majority of nights in a normal school week.

### Final tie-breaker

Should the tie-breakers above still leave children with an equal claim because distances are exactly the same, random allocation will be used to decide between them. St Hilary School will use the Local Authority's Random Allocation Protocol, supervised by an independent person, which is available on request.

## Appeals

When a parent is refused a place at a school for which they have applied, they will have the right to appeal to an independent panel. The letter confirming the refusal will explain:

- the reason for the refusal;
- information about the right to appeal;
- the deadline for lodging an appeal; and
- contact details for making an appeal.

Parents will have 20 school days after they receive the notification to appeal the decision. Appeals must then be heard within 40 school days of this deadline. The 'Timetable' at the end of this Scheme indicates the timeline for appeals.

Parents can only appeal again for a place in the same school within the same academic year if the admission authority for that school has accepted a further application because there has been a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school (as determined by the admission authority) but has determined that the new application must also be refused.

Appeals are heard by an independent appeals panel arranged by the Local Authority on behalf of the school's Governing Body. Further details and a timeline can be found in the Local Authority's [Co-](#)

[ordinated Admissions Scheme](#). Applicants can only appeal again for a place at St Hilary School within the same academic year if the admission authority has accepted a further application because there has been a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent or carer, child or school (e.g. a change of address into a school's designated area), but has determined that the new application must also be refused.

You can find details of the appeals timetable on the following webpage:

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/schools-and-education/schools-and-colleges/school-admissions/appeal-a-school-place-decision/>

## **Monitoring arrangements**

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the governing board will publicly consult on these changes. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years.

## Notes and definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority.

**Previously looked after children** are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order, or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order
- This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

A child reaches **compulsory school age** on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

### Children in care and children who were previously in care

A 'child in care' may also be referred to as a 'looked after child' and 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).

A 'child arrangement 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. 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 child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society (see Section 23ZZA(8) of the Children Act 1989 (inserted by Section 4 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017)).

### Designated areas

Cornwall Council has divided Cornwall into geographical areas. Each of these areas is served by a specific primary school, or in some cases, groups of schools. These areas are called 'designated areas' (you may also have heard these areas referred to as 'catchment' areas). The designated area used in St Hilary School's oversubscription criteria will be as defined by Cornwall Council. NB: not all schools prioritise on the basis of designated area or use Cornwall Council's defined area, however, entitlement to home to school transport will still be based on these areas. Your designated school will not always be the one nearest to your home address. Maps are available for all designated areas online at: [www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions) or by calling the school Admissions Team on 0300 1234 101 or emailing: [schooladmissions@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@cornwall.gov.uk)

If you are planning to move into the designated area of St Hilary School, your application for a place for your child will not be given the priority accorded to designated area pupils without firm evidence of your new address and moving date, such as a copy of a signed and dated tenancy agreement or confirmation that contracts have been exchanged.

### Social and medical need

Applicants will only be considered under this criterion for children with an unequivocal professional recommendation and the parent/carer can demonstrate that their only the preferred school can meet the exceptional medical or social needs of the child, supported by a recommendation from, for example, a doctor, school medical officer or educational psychologist. Such recommendations must be made in writing to the school Admissions Team and must give full supporting reasons. The admission authority will make the final decision on whether or not to accept an application under this criterion.

### Siblings

A sibling means brothers or sisters and is defined as a full, half, step, adopted or long-term fostered child living at the same address. In the case of siblings living at a different address the siblings must be blood relatives, in other words share at least one parent. We do not include 'cousins' within our definition of siblings.



Where applications are received on behalf of 'multiple birth siblings' (i.e. twins, triplets, etc.) or siblings whose dates of birth place them in the same chronological year group, every effort will be made to offer both or all the children places at St Hilary School, which may mean allocating places above the Published Admission Number (PAN) where that is possible. However, where this is not possible, parents will be invited to decide which of the children should be allocated the available place(s).

### **Distances**

Home to school distances used for tie-breaking will be measured by a straight-line measurement as determined by Capita One and supported by Cornwall Council's nominated Geographical Information System. Measurements will be between your home address (the centre of the main building of the property) and the main gate of the school (as determined by Cornwall Council).

Distances used to determine the nearest school with places available (ie where it is not possible to offer a place at a preferred school) and for establishing transport entitlements, will be measured by the nearest available route as determined by Cornwall Council's nominated Geographical Information System software.

### **Home address**

Each child can have only one registered address for the purposes of determining priority for admission and transport entitlement. This address should be the place where the child is normally resident at the point of application or evidence of the address from which a child will attend school, in the form of written confirmation of a house purchase or a formal tenancy agreement. If there is shared residence of the child or a query is raised regarding the validity of an address, the LA will consider the home address to be with the parent with primary day to day care and control of the child. Residency of a child may also be clarified through a Child Arrangement Order where it is shown who has care of the child. Evidence may be requested to show the address to which any Child Benefit is paid and at which the child is registered with a doctor's surgery.

It is expected that parents will submit only one application for each child. Any disputes in relation to the child's home address should be settled before applying, the admission authority will not become involved in any parental disputes. If agreement cannot be obtained before an application is made, then parents/carers may need to settle the matter through the courts. Where no agreement is reached or order obtained, Cornwall Council will determine the home address.

Applications for children of Service Families will be processed and places allocated based on the proposed address (with supporting evidence) or, if the family are not able to confirm a proposed address and a unit or quartering address is provided, an allocation will be made based on the unit or quartering address. Until a fixed address is available, the unit postal address or quartering area address will be used to determine allocation of a school place. For the purposes of measuring distances, the main entrance of the unit will be used.

The school reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place should it become apparent that such proof of residence is unsubstantiated. The parent retains the right to appeal against this decision following St Hilary School's appeal procedure.