



Admissions Policy for Academic Year 2026-2027

Inspiring Learning, Nurturing Wholeness

Author: St Paul's School Local Committee

Status & Review Cycle: Statutory Annual

St Paul's School is a church school, within an academy, The Good Shepherd Trust (GST). We work together within a caring Christian environment to promote a love of learning by developing children's sense of curiosity, excitement and wonder. We work together to support the intellectual, creative, emotional, social, spiritual and physical development of us all. We ask all parents applying for a place here to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community. This does not affect the right of parents who are not of the faith of this school to apply for and be considered for a place here.

As a former church school, and now part of the GST, St Paul's School is its own admission authority. This policy is subject to the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Primary Schools in Surrey. In accordance with this we operate an Equal Preference System.

Parents applying for a place at St. Paul's School under criteria 3 (staff member criteria), 6 or 7 (faith criteria) are required to complete and submit a **Supplementary Information Form** (attached below in the Appendix and available from the school office, school website or from the Local Authority (LA)). If this form is not submitted to the school by the closing date for applications, the application will be ranked using the information on the application form alone.

Published Admission Numbers (PAN) for Year R

The Published Admission Number for entry into the Reception class is 60.

Parents have the right to defer entry to Reception until the beginning of the term after their child's fifth birthday but not beyond the beginning of the final term in the academic year for which the application is made. A child may also take up the place part-time until compulsory school age is reached.

Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

The Governing Body is required to admit to the school a child whose EHCP names our school.

Over Subscription Criteria

Should there be more applications than places then governors will apply the following criteria in order when offering places.

1. Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children. (See note a)
2. Exceptional Circumstances. (See note b)

3. Children of permanent members of staff 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 the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
4. Siblings of children who will still be in attendance at the school on the date of admission. (See note e)
5. Children whose home address is in the ecclesiastical parish of St Paul's Church, Dorking. (See note f and h)
6. Children who with their parent(s) are regular worshippers at St Paul's Church Dorking but are not resident within the parish. (See note c and g)
7. Children who with their parent(s) are regular worshippers at another Christian church (i.e. a member of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (click here) and/or the Evangelical Alliance (click here)) but are not resident within the parish. (See note c and g)
8. Children who live outside the parish whose parents wish them to attend this church school.

In the case of over subscription in any category applications within each priority criteria will be ranked by distance from the school. (See Tie-Breaker note)

Contact details for further information: St Paul's Primary School. Tel. 01306 883547

E-Mail: info@stpauls-dorking.surrey.sch.uk Surrey LA: Tel 0300 200 1004

Web: www.stpaulsschool-dorking.co.uk Web: www.surreycc.gov.uk

Notes and Definition of Terms

a) 'Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children' are:

- children who are in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 e.g. fostered or living in a children's home, at the time an application for a school is made; and
- children who have previously been in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 and who have left that care through adoption, a child arrangements order (in accordance with Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 and as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014) or special guardianship order (in accordance with Section 14A of the Children Act 1989). This also includes those children who appear (to the Admission Authority) to have been in state care outside England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

A letter from the Children's Services Department confirming the child's status must be submitted at the time of application.

b) '**Exceptional Circumstances**' – a child who has a serious medical, physical or psychological condition or if there are sensitive family circumstances which make it essential that the child attends St Paul's school rather than any other. Appropriate documentary evidence from a consultant doctor or from the relevant support services **must be submitted at the time of application**. Governors will assess such evidence and/or consult a specialist if required.

NB All schools support children with the more common medical conditions such as asthma, nut allergies and stress-related symptoms.

c) '**Parent**' – a natural, adoptive, step or foster parent or other legal guardian.

- d) **‘Applicant(s)’** – parent(s) applying for a place for a child at St Paul’s School.
- e) **‘Sibling’** – a brother/sister, half-brother/half-sister, step-brother/step-sister or adoptive brother/adoptive sister or foster children, living in the family unit at the same address in each case.
- f) **‘Home address’** – the child’s permanent address, or in cases of shared custody, where he/she lives for the majority of the school week. The child’s home address excludes any business or childminder’s address and must be the child’s normal place of residence. In the case of formal equal shared custody it will be up to the parent/carers to agree which address to use. In other cases it is where the child spends most of the time.

The address will apply at the closing date of application, unless a change of address for good reason has been accepted by the Local Authority.

The address to be used for waiting lists, after the initial allocation, will be the child’s current address.

Any offer of a place on the basis of address is conditional upon the child living at the appropriate address on the relevant date.

- g) **Faith criteria** – “worship”
 - i. Applicants who are ‘regular worshippers’ would be those who regularly attend church services, worshipping in a Christian church at least twice a month for a minimum of one year immediately before the date of application. Worship is either at St Paul’s Church Dorking (over subscription criterion 5) or at another recognized Christian Church (eg. a member of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and/or the Evangelical Alliance) (over subscription criterion 6). An applicant who has moved into the area during the one year period preceding the date of application must provide evidence of the same pattern of attendance at a previous church or churches during the period in question.
 - ii. To accommodate difficult patterns of work and family relationships account will be taken of week-day worship.
 - iii. ‘Regular worshipper’ means the child for whom application is made AND one or both parents.

- h) **Ecclesiastical parish** – A map showing the ecclesiastical boundaries of the parish of St Paul’s Dorking is available in the school office for reference purposes, however eligibility for Criterion 4 (living within the parish of St Paul’s Church, Dorking) will be determined by reference to the Church of England website www.achurchnearyou.com.

Tie-Breaker - Should the school be over-subscribed within any criterion, a place will be allocated to the child living nearest to the school (usually referred to as a ‘distance tie-breaker’). The distance is measured in a straight line from the address point of the pupil’s home as set by Ordnance Survey, to the nearest school gate available for pupils to use. This is calculated using Surrey’s Geographical Information System. Where two or more children share the same address point or live equidistant from the school, lots will be drawn by an independent person to determine which child should be given priority.

Multiple Births If the final place to be offered is to a child from a multiple birth, the remaining consecutively ranked child/children will also be offered places, even though this will exceed the PAN. No further places will be offered however until the PAN falls back to below 60.

Other information

Closing date for applications

The LA closing date for all applicants to Surrey schools is **15th January 2026**. Further information can be found on the Surrey website - www.surreycc.gov.uk/admissions - or by phoning the school.

Late Applications

Applications received after the closing date will be considered in accordance with Surrey's coordinated admissions scheme. If places are not available they will then be ranked accordingly on the waiting list.

Waiting list

The waiting list is maintained in the same order as the over-subscription criteria. Parents are asked to inform the school if they wish to be placed on a waiting list which will be retained until the end of the 2026-27 academic year.

Summer Born Children/Out of chronological year group requests

For children born between 1st April and 31st August 2022, parents may choose to delay admission to school until the term after their child turns five (when statutory school age is reached). A child would normally start school in Year 1 the following year, missing out on Reception altogether. However, a parent may request that their child is admitted to Reception instead, meaning that the child would be educated outside their correct year group. In this instance parents should discuss their wishes with the Head Teacher, stating clearly why they feel admission to a different year group would be appropriate, including supporting documentary evidence if they wish. Parents applying for their child to enter the school in later years may also choose to seek places outside their child's correct year group, but in all cases this should be discussed with the Head Teacher. Governors will then make a decision as to which year group (YR or Y1) the child should enter in the following year, based on the particular circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child. The Head Teacher's views will be taken into account and reasons for the decision shared in writing with parents. However, please note that the school cannot 'reserve' a place either in Reception or Year 1 for the following year, when a fresh application must be made.

In year applications

Applications can be made via the Local Authority using the Centrally Managed Application (CMA) Form, available on Surrey County Council's website. The same over subscription criteria as above apply.

Withdrawal of offers

The Governors reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a place where the parent has made a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application that effectively denied a place to another child.

Appeal

Should a place not be offered, parents have the right of appeal to an independent Appeal Panel. Appeals should be directed to www.surreycc.gov.uk/learning/schools/school-admission-appeal or via Angela Bridgman at Surrey County Council, angela.bridgman@surreycc.gov.uk or telephone 0208 541 9029.

This policy was reviewed following the required 7-year consultation in January 2023 and a further public consultation between December 2023 and January 2024

Appendix – St Paul's C of E Primary School, Supplementary Information form: