

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S SCHOOL

Admission Policy for 2026-2027

Reviewed by the Education Committee, Autumn 2024

Determined by the Full Governing Body, Autumn 2024

To be reviewed Autumn 2025

1. ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2026-2027

The objective of this Admission Policy is to provide policy and implementation procedures for admissions which are clear, unambiguous and fair. The policy must also ensure that the Governing Body, as the admission authority for St Bartholomew's School, meets its statutory responsibilities in respect of arrangements for the admission of students to the school.

St Bartholomew's School is an Academy; as such, the School is required to comply with the Department for Education's School Admissions Code and the law relating to admissions, though the Secretary of State has the power to vary this requirement where there is demonstrable need. Therefore, this Policy will be applied in line with the Admissions Code in place at the time of application.

In common with other Local Authorities, West Berkshire operates a Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme: all applicants for places in Years 7 -11 at St Bartholomew's School should complete the Local Authority (LA) Application Form in the area where they live (their 'home' Authority, e.g., West Berkshire, Reading, Oxfordshire or Hampshire) and return it to that Local Authority by the nationwide closing date below. Any application forms sent erroneously directly to St Bartholomew's School will be forwarded to the applicant's home authority until the closing date. Late applications will be managed as explained below.

Further details of the Co-ordinated Admission Scheme are available on each Local Authority's website and in their published Guides to Secondary Admissions. Please note that the West Berkshire Scheme considers applications on an equal preference basis against the over-subscription criteria for each of up to four preferred schools; stated preferences are not a relevant consideration.

Students in Years 7 - 11 will be admitted without reference to ability or aptitude.

2. ADMISSION NUMBERS

The Governors will set the admission number with regard to the net capacity assessment for the school.

The approved admission number for each year group in Years 7 - 11 is 270.

125 “additional” places will be available in Year 12 (i.e. over and above students already attending the school who progress from Year 11 to Year 12).

3. TIMETABLE FOR YEAR 7 – 11 APPLICATIONS

The following timetable is set for applications to all West Berkshire secondary schools; any late applications will be managed as explained below:

31 October 2025	National closing date for applications
1 March 2026	National offers and refusals issued to parents
31 March 2026	Closing date for appeals

4. ADMISSION PROCEDURES FOR YEAR 7 -11 APPLICATIONS

For admission during the academic year 1 September 2026 – 31 August 2027:

Year Group	Date of Birth
7	1 September 2014 – 31 August 2015
8	1 September 2013 – 31 August 2014
9	1 September 2012 – 31 August 2013
10	1 September 2011 – 31 August 2012
11	1 September 2010 – 31 August 2011

- If the total number of applications is less than the approved admission number, all applicants will be allocated places.
- If, at any stage, more applications have been received than the approved admission number, then the criteria for allocating oversubscribed places listed below will be applied.
- A waiting list of applicants to whom the school cannot offer a place will be maintained. Applicants will be placed on this list in order of priority as determined by the extent to which the over-subscription criteria is met.
- If one or more places become available, due to non-acceptance of an offered place or withdrawal or permanent exclusion of a student, causing the number of offered places to fall below the approved admission number, the place(s) will be offered to the applicant(s) at the top of the waiting list at the time that the place(s) become available.
- In-year applications may be made at any time for entry to any year group in the school, but they will only be processed when the requested start date is within six weeks.
- For in-year applications, where an applicant offered a place does not, or cannot, take up the offered place within two weeks of the expected starting date, then the offer may

be withdrawn and the place offered to the next applicant on the waiting list. In such circumstances the applicant would have to re-apply for admission.

5. OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA FOR YEARS 7 - 11

In years 7 – 11, if a year group is oversubscribed, places will be allocated according to the admissions policy and oversubscription criteria in the following order of priority, taking account of all preferences for St Bartholomew’s School and the effects of the LA’s Co-ordinated Admission Scheme for Years 7 - 11:

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.

and:

Children who were previously in state care outside of England, and have ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. By children previously in state care outside of England, we mean children who have been looked after outside of England by a public authority, a religious organisation or another provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. The care may have been provided in orphanages or other settings. Evidence will be required to support an application and the admission authority will determine if the evidence provided is sufficient.

2. **Students living in the St Bartholomew’s School Catchment Area:** Children whose permanent home address is in St Bartholomew’s School’s designated catchment area (as shown in West Berkshire’s Parents’ Guide to Admissions). Our catchment area shares an outer boundary with the following partner primary/junior schools:
 - a. Enborne Church of England Primary School.
 - b. John Rankin Community Junior School.
 - c. St John and St Nicolas Schools Federation

Where necessary, priority will be given to siblings living in the St Bartholomew’s School catchment area.

The child’s permanent home address is where he or she lives with his or her legal parents/carers and are living at the closing date for applications in the normal admissions round (31 October, 2025)

Where parental responsibilities are shared and the child/children live at both parents’ addresses during the school week on a permanent arrangement, either address will be considered the permanent home address.

In order to establish where a child resides, additional information may be requested and could include:

- i. any legal documentation confirming residence
- ii. information on the actual pattern of residence

- iii. the length of time the residence arrangements have been in place
- iv. confirmation of past residence arrangements from previous schools
- v. Council Tax or other utility bills.

A home address is not an address where a child may occasionally stay or sleep such as that of a relative who is not a parent, or that of a childminder.

Where the boundaries for St Bartholomew's School catchment area have changed, a child resident in part of the former catchment area will still be considered as a catchment area student for St Bartholomew's School if they have a sibling who will be on the roll of St Bartholomew's School at the point of admission.

The child's normal permanent home address where he or she lives with his or her parents/carers is used to decide in which school's catchment area the child lives. Temporary addresses cannot be used to obtain school places, e.g., temporary addresses whilst retaining a previous permanent home will not be accepted. If parents/carers are in the process of moving from one address to another and want to use the new address for the school place allocations, evidence that they have moved and are already living in the new address will need to be provided before allocations begin. If such evidence is received by 1 January during a normal admissions round, the new address will be accepted for the forthcoming allocation. Confirmation received after 1 January will not normally be taken into account until immediately after the nationwide allocation date, once waiting lists have been adjusted accordingly. At all other times, changes of address will be considered immediately on receipt of evidence.

Any child offered a school place based on fraudulent or intentionally misleading information concerning a catchment area permanent home address will have their place withdrawn. This sanction may also be applied after the student has been admitted to St Bartholomew's School. A new application will be required, by which time preferred schools may be full.

Any parent with parental responsibility can submit an application but only one application per child can be submitted. If West Berkshire receive applications from both parents who do not live together or become aware that an application has been made in another Local Authority as well as West Berkshire, the following steps will be taken:

- West Berkshire will inform both parents that an application has been submitted by both parents and ask if either is happy to withdraw their application.
- If neither will withdraw their application, the application from the parent where the child lives during the school week will be accepted.
- If the child lives between both addresses during the school week, neither application will be accepted. West Berkshire will wait until the dispute is resolved by the parents and only one application is submitted. This may mean that it is not possible to consider the application as on time if it is received after allocation procedures have begun.

3. Siblings: Children who have sibling(s) living in the same family unit already on roll at the school and who will continue to attend the school during the following academic year, up to

and including Year 14.

'Sibling' is defined in these arrangements as a child with a brother or sister, including natural, step, foster and adopted siblings and the children of parent/carer's partner living in the same family unit. All children living at the same address in a family unit are therefore deemed to be siblings even if there is no actual relationship between them. Children who are siblings but living at different addresses to each other will be treated as siblings for the purpose of admissions criteria.

A child of a multiple birth will be admitted where the School has been named on a sibling's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

- 4. Children of Staff at the School:** Children of staff in either of the following circumstances as certified by the Headteacher:
1. where the member of staff has been employed at St Bartholomew's School for two or more continuous years on a permanent contract at the time at which the application for admission to the School is made, or
 2. the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

The member of staff must have parental responsibility for the child. A parent is defined in law (the Education Act 1996) as any person who has 'parental responsibility' (defined in the Children Act 1989) for the child or young person.

5. Strong Medical and/or Social Grounds

Definitions:

- a. 'Medical need' does not include mild medical conditions.
- b. 'Social need' does not include a parent's wish that a child attends the school because of a child's aptitude or because their friends attend the school or because of routine child-minding arrangements.

Applications for admission on the basis of strong medical and/or social grounds may be made where St Bartholomew's School is specifically recommended by an independent and relevant professional such as a doctor, social worker, health visitor, Education Welfare Officer, or other appropriate person who knows about the child.

Written evidence from the relevant professional must be provided at the time (or within 12 weeks before) at which the application for admission to the School is made by the person with parental responsibility who is making the application. This evidence, which will be assessed by the Governing Body, must confirm the child's medical and/or social need, and demonstrate the reasons why that need makes it essential that the child attends St Bartholomew's School rather than any other secondary school.

6. All other applicants who do not fall into one of the above categories.

Children with Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans naming the school will always be admitted at any time above any other child, including those on the waiting list. This is a legal requirement. As noted under 3, multiple birth siblings will also be admitted when one of the children has St Bartholomew's School listed on an EHCP.

Children of UK Service Personnel (UK Armed Forces): For families of Service personnel with a confirmed posting to our area, or Crown Servants returning from overseas to live in our area, St Bartholomew's School must:

- a) 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 when considering the application against our over-subscription criteria. This must include accepting a Unit postal address or quartering area address for a Service child. Admission authorities must not refuse a Service child a place because the family does not currently live in the area, or reserve blocks of places for these children;
- b) Ensure that arrangements in our area support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for Service children.

Children from Overseas: St Bartholomew's School must treat applications for children coming from overseas in accordance with UK legislation and Department for Education guidance.

In-Year Fair Access Protocol: In accordance with the West Berkshire In-Year Fair Access Protocol, and only as agreed by the West Berkshire Pupil Placement Panel (following consultation with the child's parents, all relevant professionals and schools concerned), hard to place children will be admitted above other children, including those on the waiting list (except Looked After children, previously Looked After children and children with Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans naming the school, as these children must be admitted).

Secretary of State's Power of Direction (Academies): Where a Local Authority considers that an Academy, such as St Bartholomew's School, will best meet the needs of any child, it can ask the Academy to admit that child but has no power to direct it to do so. The Local Authority and the Academy will usually come to an agreement, but if the Academy refuses to admit the child, the Local Authority can ask the Secretary of State to intervene. The Secretary of State has the power under an Academy's Funding Agreement to direct the Academy to admit a child, and can seek advice from the Adjudicator in reaching a decision (Section 25(3A), SSFA 1998).

Tie Breaker

Priority will be given within any of the above over-subscription criteria to the applicant whose permanent home address is nearest to St Bartholomew's School. Distances will be measured through the West Berkshire Admissions Geographical Information System, using the unique property identification points within the National Land and Property Gazetteer, taking a straight line between the home address and the school; travelling distances will not be taken into account. In cases where there are multiple births, if one child is admitted then all will be admitted. In cases where blocks of flats are concerned, priority will be given to the lowest flat number, eg 1,1a, 2, etc. In cases of two applicants living the same distance from school, both

will be offered places.

6. WAITING LISTS FOR YEARS 7 -11

Waiting lists will continue to be maintained for all Year Groups (Y7-Y11) where children are not offered a place at their first preference school. Placement will be determined by applying the over-subscription criteria. Waiting lists will remain until 1 September when parents will be asked to confirm in writing their wish to be placed on a newly constructed waiting list. Names will be removed from the lists if requested, or if the offer of a place that becomes available is not accepted. Positions on waiting lists may change because of new applications, e.g., from families moving into the area, etc., or revised applications in respect of a change of preferred schools, and precedence being given to Looked After children and previously Looked After children, and those allocated a place at the school in accordance with the In-Year Fair Access Protocol.

7. LATE APPLICATIONS FOR YEARS 7-11

The closing date for applications for Year 7-11 school places in the normal admission round is 31 October 2025. West Berkshire LA, acting on behalf of St Bartholomew’s School, will accept applications received after this date provided they are received **before allocation procedures begin** and treat them as on time applications. Allocation procedures normally begin on 1 January each year. The West Berkshire LA Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme timetable is published on the West Berkshire website.

8. IN-YEAR APPLICATIONS AFTER THE NORMAL ADMISSIONS ROUND (AFTER AUGUST 2025)

All applications received after the normal admissions round for Years 7 -11, (i.e. later than 1 August 2025) or for years other than the normal year of entry, will be treated in the same way as those received for the normal admissions round. Applications by West Berkshire residents should be submitted directly to West Berkshire Local Authority using the West Berkshire Local Authority’s common application form. Residents in other areas should use their ‘home’ Authority’s form and return it to that Authority. The process followed in the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme is set out in each Local Authority’s guidance. Where appropriate, the West Berkshire In-Year Fair Access Protocol will apply for applications made outside the normal admissions round.

9. ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES FOR SIXTH FORM

For Admission to the Sixth Form during the academic year 2026-27:

Year Group	Date of Birth
12	1 September 2009 – 31 August 2010
13	1 September 2008 – 31 August 2009

The requirement for entry to Level 3 courses is a minimum of five GCSEs at Grade 5 or above with at least one Grade 4 or above in English Language or Mathematics. For the purposes of these entry requirements, a Merit in a Level 2 BTEC qualification is a GCSE Grade 5 equivalent. Having met these general entry requirements, the scope of a student's subject choices will be determined by their performance in specific GCSE/BTEC qualifications. A-Level and Level 3 BTEC courses have their own subject-specific entry requirements. Details of these are on the individual subject course guides which will be available on the School's website by the date of the open evening.

If a student does not secure a Grade 4 in English Language and/ or Mathematics then they will be required to attend lessons and re-sit GCSE exams in these subjects.

Some flexibility may be applied to these entry requirements in circumstances where students have belatedly joined the English school system from overseas or where students have only been able to complete a limited portfolio of GCSEs because of ill health or other personal circumstances that have caused significant levels of absence.

- Students will be invited to attend an open evening and to complete an online form identifying their chosen subjects.
- There will be a fixed deadline for the submission of forms in December, with the date published on our website and in promotional material by the time that the open evening takes place. Late applications from external students will be considered where places become available in all the subjects requested.
- External applicants will be asked to upload their most recent school report alongside their application.
- St Bart's students intending to transfer from Year 11 to Year 12 and external applicants will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss their subject choices. This conversation will be informed by school reports to ensure that course choices are appropriate.
- Where students meet the subject-specific entry requirements, we make every effort to accommodate all students' first choice combination of subjects, but it is not always possible to do so. Where this happens, we will make contact with students in the Spring Term when timetable structures are confirmed and invite them to amend their choices. In some circumstances where course numbers are very low, a course may be withdrawn before it starts.
- Places will be offered in the Spring Term following the submission of applications. These offers will be contingent on students meeting the general entry requirements and the subject-specific requirements.
- Following GCSE results, we will ask students to make formal contact with the Sixth Form to confirm that they will definitely be taking up their place to study in St Bart's Sixth Form. Dates and times of these deadlines will be shared with all applicants. For students joining us from other schools, we ask that results are shared with us by the same deadline.
- In year applications will only be considered if places become available in all of the subjects requested at the time of the application. If transferring and wishing to continue to study the same subjects, consistency of exam board specifications may also be a factor.

10. APPEALS FOR ALL YEAR GROUPS

Applicants to whom the school cannot offer a place will be so informed and told the reason why admission was refused. Applicants must be advised of their right to appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel. Information on how to appeal will be available on the website and provided when an application to the Admissions Authority has been unsuccessful.

The 2022 School Admission Appeals Code (SAAC) explains that parents have the right to appeal against an Admission Authority's decision refusing their child admission to a school.

Sixth Form Appeals

Under the SAAC paragraph 8, children *and* their parents have the right to appeal against an Admission Authority's decision to refuse them admission to a school sixth form (Year 12 and Year 13).

Where the child and the parent appeal separately in respect of the same school, the Admission Authority must arrange the appeals so that they are heard together.

Appeals Timetable

Appeals must be lodged in writing by the dates set out in the Co-ordinated and In-Year Admissions Scheme for the normal admissions round or within 20 school working days from the date of the offer or refusal letter. Contact should be made with the Admissions Officer, by telephoning 01635 521255, or by email: admissions@stbarts.co.uk who will be able to supply an appeal form. Once received, the completed appeal will be processed independently of St Bartholomew's School.

11. ADMISSION OUTSIDE EXPECTED AGE GROUP

Requests from parents for school places outside an expected age group will be considered carefully, whether for more able students or for those who have experienced problems, e.g. having missed education due to ill health.

Each case will be considered on its own merits and circumstances. However, cases will not normally be agreed unless there is a consensus between the parents, schools concerned (both current and preferred) and any relevant professionals asked for their opinion on the case by St Bartholomew's School's Governors' Admissions Committee, that admitting the student to a Year Group outside their expected age group would be in the student's best interests. The Governors' Admissions Committee will review any agreed placements as the student completes each academic Key Stage. Those refused places outside the expected age group will be informed of their statutory right of appeal. This right does not apply if the student is offered a place in another Year Group at the School.