

ASTBURY ST MARY'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY 2026/27

Astbury St Mary's Primary School

'Walk in love as Christ loves you.' Ephesians 5:2

Approved by	Date	Review Schedule	Date of next review
Trust Board	2nd November 2026	Annually	Autumn Term 2027

The Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT) Board is the school's admissions authority but decisions about criteria and admission to school is delegated to the Local Governing Body. The Local Authority administers admissions into the reception year, and the school manages admissions into Y1 – Y6 based on this policy.

Our school is a church school that serves a wide community from many parts of Congleton and surrounding area including those in the Astbury Parish, those within the Cheshire East Local Authority as well as those over the border into Staffordshire, so this is reflected in our policy.

The school is comprised of four classes: a reception class working with Pre-School, a Year one / Year two class, a Year three / Year four class and a Year five / Year six class. In order that class sizes do not exceed the space available, it is necessary to limit the number of admissions in each cohort of the school to 15. The planned admission number for reception is thus 15. This arrangement follows consultation between CDAT, the local governing body, the Diocesan board of education, local authorities and other admissions authorities in the area. The local governing body will not place any restrictions on admissions to the reception class unless the number of children for whom admission is sought exceeds this number. By law, no infant class may contain more than 30 children.

For children starting in Astbury Acorns Pre-school, the School processes your admission enquiry via the School office so please contact the office directly; telephone 01260 272528 or email admin@astbury.cheshire.sch.uk. The Pre-School is accessible to all children aged three and four. The School is registered to accept 15 hours of free child-care for 3yr olds.

The Local Governing Body operates a system under which they consider all preferences equally, and for children entering the reception year the Local Authority then allocates places according to the policy. For in year admissions (Y1 – Y6), places are applied for at the Local Authority, who then send them to the School. The School then allocates places, if they are available, and informs parents and carers of the outcome of the application. In the event that there are more applicants than places, the Local Governing Body will allocate places using the following criteria, which are listed in order of priority:

1. **Looked after children and previously looked after children, including 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. See note (a)**

2. **Children with special medical or social circumstances where these needs can only be met at this school. See note (b)**

3. **Children who have a brother or sister in school, who will still be attending school the following year. See note (c)**

4. **Children resident in the ecclesiastical parish of Astbury**. A map showing

the parish is available from school, on the website and online:

https://www.achurchnearyou.com/search/?lat=53.1523732&lon=-2.2258103&place=ChIJDZx9vNdEekgR11yQBGc_6n8&&text=

See note (d)

5. **Children attending Astbury St Mary's CE Primary's Astbury Acorns Pre school in the Autumn term of the admission period preceding their year of entry to Reception.**

6. **Children with a parent or carer who work at the school**. See note (e)

7. **Children who live nearest to the school.** See note (f)

Notes

a) 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 at the time of making an application to a school, or (c) have been in state care outside England. 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).

b) Professional supporting evidence from e.g. a doctor, psychologist, social worker, is essential if admission is to be made under the criterion for special medical or social circumstances, and such evidence must set out the particular reasons why the school is question is the most suitable school and the difficulties which would be caused if the child had to attend another school.

c) The term brother or sister includes step, half, foster or adopted brothers and sisters living at the same address and full brothers and sisters living apart.

d) The address used on the school's admission form must be the current one at the time of application. If this address changes subsequently, the parents should notify the school. Where the parents live at different addresses, the current address of the child at the time of application will be the one used. This will normally be the one where the child wakes up for the majority of Monday to Friday mornings. Parents may be asked to show evidence of the claim that is being made for the address, e.g. utility bills showing the child's address is as the one claimed. Where there is dispute about the correct address to use, the governors reserve the right to make enquiries of any relevant third parties, e.g. the child's GP. For children of UK service personnel and other Crown servants returning to the area, proof of the posting is all that is required.

e) This criteria applies to all staff employed by the school.

f) Where the above criteria are not adequate to distinguish between requests for

admission which cannot all be accepted without exceeding the admission limit, priority will be decided on the basis of the distance from the school to home; those living nearest being given priority. The measurement used to allocate places is the

National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) which measures straight line distances in miles from the school's coordinate point to the point of residence's coordinate point. In the event of a tie break a random paper draw will be undertaken by an independent body.

Children with Education Health Care Plans (EHCP)

Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the governing bodies of all maintained schools to admit a child with a Statement of Special Educational Need or ECHP that names their school.

How and when to apply – for admission into the reception year

Applications for admission to the school should be made on the common application form enclosed with the Local Authority's brochure. Closing date for applications is 15th January.

Applications may also be made online by using both the common application form. It is not normally possible to change the order of your preferences for schools after the closing date.

Letters informing parents whether or not their child has been allocated a place will be sent out by the Local Authority on 16th April. Parents of children not admitted will be informed of the reason and offered an alternative place by the Authority.

Waiting List

Where we have more applications than places, the admissions criteria will be used. Children who are not admitted will have their name placed on a waiting list. The names on the waiting list will be in the order resulting from the application of the admission criteria. The waiting list will be held up until 31st December. This waiting list will operate until the end of the autumn term (31 December) of the year of admission.

Appeals

Where it is not possible to offer a place, parents have the right to appeal to an independent admission appeals panel. The Local Authority manages the appeals procedure on the behalf of the academy. Parents should follow the process as set out in their decision letter. Parents will have the opportunity to submit their case to the panel in writing and also to attend in order to present their case. You will normally receive 14 days' notice of the place and time of the hearing.

Late Applications for Admission

Where there are extenuating circumstances for an application being received after the last date for applications, and if it is before the Local Governing Body have established their list of pupils to be admitted, then it will be considered alongside all the others.

Otherwise, applications which are received after the last date will be considered after all the others and placed on the waiting list in order according to the criteria.

Non-routine Admissions / In-year Admissions

It sometimes happens that a child needs to change school other than at the 'normal' time: such admissions are known as non-routine / in year admissions. Parents wishing their child to attend this school may arrange to visit the school. Parents should contact the school where they will be asked to complete an application form at https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/admissions/admissions.aspx. Once completed, the Local Authority return the application to school and the child will be offered a place by the Local Governing Body if one is available. The Local Authority (LA) will be informed of the offer of a place once it has been accepted. If there is no place available in our school then the admissions committee will inform the applicant in writing, together with the LA and information about how to appeal against the refusal will be provided.

Please note that you cannot re-apply for a place at a school within the same school year unless there has been relevant, significant and material change in the family circumstances.

Fraudulent Applications

Where the Governing Body discovers that a child has been awarded a place as the result of an intentionally misleading application from a parent (e.g. a false claim to residence in the catchment area, or of involvement in a place of worship) which effectively denies a place to a child with a stronger claim, then the governing body is required to withdraw the offer of the place. The application will be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.

Deferred Admission

Children are eligible for a reception place from the beginning of the school year in which they become 5 years old. However they do not become of compulsory school age until the start of the term after their fifth birthday. After a place has been allocated and accepted parents may defer the school place until later in the school year and if they do this the place will be held for the child. They cannot however defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the summer term. Parents can also request that their child attends on a part time basis until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Children educated outside of their normal age group

Parents who wish to delay entry until the following year due to specific

circumstances, such as ill health, specific circumstances which mean they are not ready to start school or summer born children (those between 1st April and 31st August), must speak to the school and Local Authority as soon as possible as this this would involve either an in
year application for year 1 or a new application for reception in the following year. The decision as to which year group the child will enter will be made taking into account information from the parents and headteacher and should be in the best interests of the child. Information that parents could include in their request may include details of medical conditions or reports from professionals to support their request.

Parents of summer born children should be aware that agreement by the school to allow a child to enter reception in the following year does **not** guarantee a place in the class. Parents must apply to the school in the normal co-ordinated round and the application will be considered in the normal manner following the oversubscription criteria. Parents may also choose to apply in-year for admittance to year 1 and the child's normal age group.

Similarly if the parents of a gifted and talented child wish to apply for a place outside of their child's normal age group they should speak to the school and the Local Authority. Any application will be considered to ensure any decision is in the best interests of the child and parents informed of the outcome.

Twins/Multiple Births

Where there are applications from multiple births, the governors may admit above the PAN.

Fair Access Protocol

The school participates in Cheshire East Local Authority Fair Access Protocol.