

St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School

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Chair of Governors Fr. Mark North

ADMISSIONS POLICY 2025-2026

Application Process:

Applications will be handled in accordance with the co-ordinated admissions scheme published by Essex County Council in the Primary Education in Essex CC booklet.

Admission Number:

The governing body intends to admit **75** children to Reception in **September 2025**, whose 5th birthday falls between 1st September 2025 and 31st August 2026 (i.e. children who were born between 1st September 2020 and 31st August 2021).

Appeal Process:

Parent(s)/Carer(s) who are refused admission can appeal to an independent panel. Details available from Essex CC.

Admission Criteria (September 2023 onwards)

In the event of over subscription places will be allocated according to the following criteria in the order given:

1. Looked after children.
- 2.* Children whose parent(s)/carer(s) are regularly at the heart of the worship at St Thomas of Canterbury, Brentwood, or St George the Martyr, Brentwood (attendance of at least twice each month for at least the past two years).
- 3.* Children whose parent(s)/carer(s) are regularly at the heart of worship of another Anglican Church or another Christian Church# (attendance of at least twice each month for at least the past two years).
- 4.* Children whose parent(s)/carer(s) are committed to the worship (attendance of at least twice each month for at least the past year) at St Thomas of Canterbury, Brentwood, or St George the Martyr, Brentwood.
- 5.* Children whose parent(s)/carer(s) are committed to the worship (attendance of at least twice each month for at least the past year) at another Christian Church#.
6. Children who have a brother or sister attending St Thomas of Canterbury CEVA Primary School at the time of admission.
- 7.* Children whose parent(s)/carer(s) (i) wish their child to attend a Church of England School and (ii) are committed to the worship (attendance of at least twice each month for at least the past year) of any other world faith (represented on the Interfaith Network).
8. Children who do not fall into any of the above categories.

#'Christian Church' means any church which is designated under the Ecumenical Relations Measure nationally by the Archbishop of Canterbury and York or locally by the diocesan bishop, or is a member of Churches Together in England (CTE), or the Evangelical Alliance or a partner church of Affinity.

In the event of over subscription within any of the above criteria, priority will be given in the first instance to children who have a sibling attending St Thomas of Canterbury CEVA Primary School at the time of admission and in the second instance will be determined by straight line distance from home to school, those living closest being given the highest priority.

* To be considered under these categories, **Part 2** of the Supplementary Information Form **must** be completed and signed by the Priest or Minister. This must be submitted to the **Primary School** by the statutory national closing date. If you have recently joined a new church; attendance at a former church may be taken into account and should also be included on further copies of the Supplementary Information Form. In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church [or, in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship] has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these [admissions] arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church [or in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship] or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

Part 2 **To be completed by your Priest/Minister**

| |
|-------------------------|
| Name of Priest/Minister |
| Place of worship |
| Address |
| Telephone number |

Note to Priest / Minister

The Governors would be most grateful for your help as we are seeking information about the church background of this family.

Would you please confirm their commitment and any involvement by answering the questions set out below and adding any other comments you may consider appropriate, but you should bear in mind the reference cannot be treated "in confidence".

It is the parent(s)/Carer(s)' responsibility to return the completed form to the school.

Parental involvement in the life and work of the place of worship

How long has the family been known to you?

| Are the Parent(s) / Carer(s): | Tick one box |
|---|---------------------|
| At the heart of the worship (twice monthly attendance for at least two years) | |
| Committed to the worship (twice monthly attendance for at least one year) | |
| Known to you (less than twice monthly attendance) | |

NOTE: In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church [or, in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship] has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these [admissions] arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church [or in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship] or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

To be completed by Priest/Minister

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Signature | |
| Office held | |
| Date | |
| Church stamp | |

Please make and use further copies of this form, if required, to evidence further Church attendance.

Adopted Local Authority Definitions

Looked After Children

A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order will be given first priority in oversubscription criteria, ahead of all other applicants, in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021. This also includes those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. 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 (as defined in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

Children with statements of special educational needs or Education, Health and Care Plans

Children with statements of special educational needs or an EHCP that name the school on the statement are required to be admitted to a school regardless of their place in the priority order.

Age of Admission

As required by law, all Essex infant and primary schools provide for the full-time admission of all children offered a place in the Foundation year group from the September following their fourth birthday. Therefore, if a parent wants a full-time place for their child from September (at the school at which a place has been offered) then they are entitled to that full-time place.

Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in the school year. The law does not require a child to start school until the start of the term following their fifth birthday. Compulsory school age is reached at that point.

Where entry is deferred, the school will hold the place for that child and not offer it to another child. The parent would not, however, be able to defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the academic year for which the original application was accepted.

Parents can also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. Any parents interested in taking up a part-time place initially should contact the individual school(s) for further details as to what this would entail.

Where parents choose to defer entry, a school may reasonably expect that the child would start at the beginning of a new school term/half term.

Where a parent of a 'summer-born' child (1 April – 31 August) wishes their child to start school in the autumn term following their fifth birthday, they will need to apply for a place at the correct time for the normal admission round for the following academic year. Supporting evidence from relevant professionals working with the child and family stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age-appropriate cohort should be submitted. The Admissions Committee will decide whether the application for a Foundation place will be accepted or whether it will be treated as an application for a Year 1 place, the child's normal age-appropriate cohort. If the application for a Reception Foundation place is not accepted, this does not constitute a refusal of the place and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal.

Distance tie breaker

All straight line distances are calculated electronically by the LA using data provided by Ordnance Survey (OS). The data plots the co-ordinates of each property and provides the address-point between which straight line distance is measured and reported to three decimal places. In the unlikely event of two applicants with an identical distance competing for a single place at a school the place will be offered to one applicant on the basis of lots drawn by a member of the Governing Body, acting on behalf of the School Admissions Authority, not involved in admissions.

Siblings

For applications made in the normal admission round a relevant sibling is a child who has a brother, sister, adopted brother or sister or stepbrother or stepsister living in the same family unit in the same family household and address who attends the preferred school or partner school in any year group excluding the final year. Biological siblings who attend the preferred school in any year group excluding the final year will also be treated as siblings irrespective of place of residence. Children residing in the same household as part of an extended family, such as cousins, will not be treated as siblings. For mid-year applications a sibling is a child who has a brother, sister, adopted brother or sister or stepbrother or stepsister living in the same family unit in the same family household and address as a child who attends or has been offered a place at the preferred school or partner school at the time of application and determination and with a reasonable expectation that the sibling will be attending at the time of admission.

Mid-Year Application Process

Applications for school places outside the normal admissions round (mid-year) should be made directly to the school, using the mid-year application form available on our website (www.stthomaspri.org) and the school office. Mid-year applications (sometimes called in-year applications) are any application for a school place made to a year group, apart from September admissions to Reception. For applications into existing year groups, a place will be offered when the number of pupils in the relevant year group is below the admission number for that year group. Please note: If a mid-year application is received during a school holiday period, we will respond as soon as possible when the school reopens.

Waiting List

The School Admissions Code states that in the event of over subscription all admission authorities must maintain a waiting list for at least the autumn term. We maintain a continuous waiting list. Unless applicants specifically tell us to remove them from the waiting list we will keep their applications on file (in the order of the admissions criteria) and inform them when places become available. This is our common practice for all year groups.