

DIOCESE OF
ST ALBANS
MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

Trust
Admissions Policy
Northhill CE Academy
2025 - 2026

Policy type	Statutory Trust Policy with local context
Reviewed	Annually
Author/Responsible Officer	Headteacher/DSAMAT Admissions Advisor
Board to be ratified	Director Board
Approved by	Jenny Jenkins
Date of ratification	14th December 2023
Date of next review	Autumn 2024 for 2026/2027

This policy is a mandatory policy for all DSAMAT Academies and must be implemented without any amendments



Our mission, vision and values

The Trust has a clear **mission** at its core, ensuring that all pupils are enabled to flourish, rooted in God's Love - academically, socially, spiritually, physically and mentally. This is central to our work, and rooted in our Christian foundation (John 10 v 10). Our commitment to mutual flourishing within the school community is built upon our shared belief in Church of England principles. In our Trust, just as in the wider Church of England community, 'flourish' refers to prospering, thriving and growing – not shrinking out and dying. It means prayerfully encouraging all within our schools so that they might prove fruitful, successful and contented in the longer term. We seek to provide space generously for all to flourish in life and all of its structures. Equal treatment for all pupils, staff and the wider community is a core part of enabling this long term, holistic flourishing.

We have a clear **vision** about creating successful schools for the benefit of their communities. We expect any school in the Trust to continuously improve, and those graded by OFSTED as RI/Serious Weaknesses/Special Measures to make rapid progress and be able to secure an OFSTED grading of at least "Good" within 3 years post-conversion. All schools provide rich and diverse curricula which evolve to meet the needs of their children and local communities, as well as delivering educational excellence to enable them to continue to flourish in later life.

The way we work and deliver against our mission is critical to our Trust. We have shared, agreed **values** of:

Hope; Nurture; Equality; Respect; Collaboration

The Trust's vision is underpinned by a Christian values framework which is adopted by all schools. It provides clear expectations for all Trust employees on how we wish our values to impact on all areas of school life. It draws on, and is informed by, the National Church of England Vision for Education and the Diocesan Board of Education Vision.

Each school within the Trust has a personalised vision for education, developed locally to reflect the individual character and needs of the school community. This vision is underpinned by the Trust's wider vision, and agreed with the Trust, but it is owned and driven by the headteacher and their LGB.

Our community

The Trust are dedicated to delivering education that serves local communities. Our schools are inclusive, welcoming those from all and no faiths, from all abilities and backgrounds. We believe in providing a high-quality education, underpinned by Christian values, which enables every child to flourish.

Underpinning all of the Trust's work is a belief in educational excellence. The Trust serves all stakeholders by providing schools with the highest levels of academic rigour and pastoral care.

Our schools are places where children and young people develop and thrive intellectually, socially, culturally and spiritually. All of the Trust's schools teach a broad and balanced curriculum within

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national guidelines focusing on core skills. This is designed to ensure that all pupils reach their academic potential and seek to enrich their experience along the way. Pupils will be enabled to succeed in an atmosphere of high expectation, aspiring to educational excellence with a firm foundation of values.

This policy forms part of our Trust governance and ensures that we are held to the highest standards as we carry out our duties.

Statement of Intent

Northill CE Academy is part of the Diocese of St Albans Multi-Academy Trust (DSAMAT) family. At Northill CE Academy, we welcome all pupils, and places at the school are offered in an open and fair way.

The number of places available is determined by the capacity of the school and is called the 'published admissions number'. The Published Admission Number for the school is 15.

The table below sets out who the admission authority is and other responsible bodies in our school.

Type of school	Who is the admission authority?	Who deals with complaints about arrangements?	Who is responsible for arranging/providing for an appeal against refusal of a place at the school?
Academy	Academy Trust	Schools Adjudicator	Academy Trust

For the remainder of this document, the Diocese of St Albans Multi Academy Trust will be referred to as DSAMAT.

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1. Introduction and General Principles

- a. Northhill CE Academy is a member of the Diocese of St Albans Multi-Academy Trust. The school serves the village of Northhill and surrounding area. It provides an education, for children aged 4 – 11, within the setting of a Christian community for all children regardless of faith, gender or race.
- b. The Diocese of St Albans Multi-Academy Trust is responsible for the admission of pupils to Northhill CE Academy and admits 15 pupils to the Reception class each September. This published admission number (PAN) has been agreed by the Trust and applies to the year 2025.
- c. The school does not have any specific units or facilities for pupils with particular special needs and there are no specific facilities for pupils with physical disabilities. The school is however on a fairly level site, and the majority of accommodation is on one floor. All classrooms may be entered without steps. As far as possible, the school will ensure that pupils with disabilities have access to the same opportunities as other pupils. As a Church school we welcome applications for children of all faiths and of none. As an inclusive school, children with any special education needs will be treated as fairly as all other applications for admission.
- d. The Local Authority (LA) operates an agreed co-ordinated admissions scheme in line with government legislation. The LA will manage the process on behalf of the school according to the scheme published each year. The Trust, as the Admission Authority, will allocate the available places in line with this policy.

2. Application process

- 2.1 Information for Central Bedfordshire residents on completing the 'on line' application by the closing date of 15th January 2025 and notification dates of admission decisions are published in the Local Authority school admissions booklet, which is also available from their website: [Central Bedfordshire Admissions Process](#). Parents living outside the Central Bedfordshire Council area must make an application via their home local authority.
- 2.2 All applications **must** be made on the **home** Local Authority Common Application Form (CAF). The closing date for admission application forms to be received by the home LA is as advertised by that authority
- 2.3 The school operates mixed-age classes and is required to abide by the maximum limits for infant classes (5, 6 and 7 year olds), i.e. 30 pupils per classteacher.
- 2.4 The school provides for the full-time admission of all successful applicants who have reached their 4th birthday by the beginning of September 2025. However, please note the following:
 - (a) Parents offered a place may defer the date of their child's admission until later in the year, or until the child reaches compulsory school age. Summer born children (born 1st April to 31st August) may only have admission deferred until the start of the summer term.

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- (b) If parents so wish, a child may attend on a part-time basis until the child reaches compulsory school age.
- 2.5 If parents do not wish their summer-born child to start school before the child reaches compulsory school age, then they would normally need to make an in-year application for a place in Year 1.
- 2.6 However, where the parents of a summer-born child believe that their child will not be ready to start reception in September 2025, and wish to delay their child's admission to school until September 2026, they may make an application to the Trust in writing for their child to be educated out of year group, that is, in the reception Year rather than Y1. Parents should discuss this with the school as soon as possible and are advised to make their written request at the same time as making an application for admission to the school for a Reception place for September 2025 as part of the normal admissions round. The Trust will decide the application on the basis of the individual circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child (please also see paragraph 7 below).
- 2.7 If the request for out of year group education application is agreed, then the application for a Reception place for September 2025 can be withdrawn and a new application must be made in the following year's admissions round for a place in the reception class in September 2026. There is no guarantee that a place will be available in that year group.
- 2.8 If the request is refused, parents may decide whether or not to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group or refuse it and make an in-year application for admission into Year 1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday. Parents do not have the right of appeal against a decision not to admit their child to a year group outside their normal year group.
- 2.9 The Trust will admit a pupil with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) which names the school. These children will be admitted before any oversubscription criteria are applied.
- 2.10 When there are more applications than there are places available, the Trust will admit pupils according to the following criteria in order of priority.
- (a) All 'looked after' children (LAC) or children who were previously 'looked after' (PLAC) including those children who appear to the Trust to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (IAPLAC) (see definitions)
 - (b) Children living in the Ecclesiastical Parish of Northill, (including Ickwell, Thorncote Green, Hatch and Budna) with siblings at the school. (Parish boundaries can be checked at www.achurchnearyou.com and see definition of 'sibling' below).
 - (c) Other children living in the Ecclesiastical Parish of Northill.
 - (d) Other Children with siblings at the School at the time of admission (see definitions)

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- (e) Children living outside the area defined in category (b) above, one or more of whose parents/guardians have, at the time of application, and for a period of six months previously, attended Christian public worship at least once in each calendar month. Written evidence of attendance from the parish priest, minister or other suitable person should be provided, by completing the relevant section on the application form. 'Christian' means public worship at a church which is a member of Churches Together in England or The Evangelical Alliance.
- (f) Any other children

3. Notes

- a) If applying these criteria results in there being more children with an equal right to admission to the school than the number of available places, the tie break will be the distance the pupil lives from the school, measured in a straight line, using the Local Authority's computerised mapping system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. The local authority will measure the distance from the address point of the pupil's home to a point on the school site agreed with the Trust, namely the main door of the school. The Trust will not give priority within each criterion to children who meet other criteria. In the event of (a) two or more children living at the same address point (e.g. children resident in a block of flats) or (b) two addresses measuring the same distance from the school, the ultimate tie-breaker will be random selection, using the Synergy Admissions database to allocate the place.
- b) Pupils who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that name the school will be admitted to the school, even if the school is full.
- c) Where a place is offered to one twin or multiple birth child the other twin or multiple birth sibling(s) will also be admitted, even if the school is full and, if necessary, over PAN and/or as exceptions to the infant class size rule.
- d) Pupils identified for admission through the 'Fair Access Protocol' will also be admitted even if the school is full and above any children on the continuing interest list (and over PAN, if necessary).

Definitions

'Looked after' children

The Children's Act 1989 defines a child who is 'looked after' as a child or young person who is accommodated by the local authority (Section 20) or a child or young person who is the subject of a full care order (Section 31) or interim care order (Section 38). Previously looked after children will be prioritized under category 2.10(a) if they were looked after immediately before being adopted or becoming subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order. 'Adopted' refers to an adoption order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. A 'child arrangements

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order' is an order setting out the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. 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)

In state care outside of England means in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

Sibling

A sibling is defined as a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or fostered brother or sister where care has been arranged by a local authority, or the child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case, the applicant should be living at the same address as the sibling. Where the applicant lives at more than one address, the sibling must live at the same address for the majority of the school week. The sibling must be on the roll of the school at the time of application and be likely to remain in the school at the proposed date of admission.

Church closures

If, during the six-month period of attendance at public worship required by 2.10(e) above, the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of 2.13(e) will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

Home Address

The address given on the application form must be the child's permanent home address at the closing date for applications.

If a child lives at more than one address because childcare arrangements are shared, the Trust will consider the address for admission purposes to be the one where the child sleeps for most of the school week (Sunday to Thursday), unless the application is supported by a copy of a Court Order stating that a different address must be used for school admission applications.

If a child lives at two different addresses equally, the application must include a copy of any Court Order which states the address to be used for school admission purposes. Where there is no such Court Order in place, parents should make a single joint application naming one address. If a joint application is not submitted, a range of evidence will be requested to enable the Trust to determine the principal parental address for school admission purposes.

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Please note that applications submitted by separated parents will be subject to the same address verification checks as all other applications.

4. In-Year Admissions

- 4.1 Children will be admitted at other ages where there are vacancies. Requests for admission into other year groups should be made to the Central Bedfordshire Admission Team [Applying for a school place during the academic year](#). In considering any applications for in-year admissions the Trust will take account of the Infant Class Size Limit and of projected figures for future amalgamations of the year groups. Where there are more applications than places available the Trust will apply the oversubscription criteria set out in 2.10 above to determine which child(ren) should be allocated a place.

5. Waiting List

- 5.1 All children who are unsuccessful with their applications will be placed on a waiting list. Applications will be ranked according to the oversubscription criteria in 2.10 above and a child's place in the list can change as other children join or leave it. Waiting lists for all year groups will be maintained until the end of the summer term of the academic year of intended entry.

6. Appeals Process

- 1.1 Parents who have not been allocated a place for their child have a right to appeal to an independent panel and will receive information about the appeals process with the refusal email or letter from the local authority. [Central Bedfordshire Admission Appeals](#)

7. Applications for education out of year group

The Trust's policy is for children, in general, to be educated in their normal age group, with the curriculum differentiated as necessary to meet their individual needs. However if parents wish their child to be educated in a different group they must make a request in writing to the Trust, and submit supporting evidence. The Trust will make its decision in the best interests of the child, based on the individual circumstances of each case, including the view of the child's parents and of the headteacher, the child's social, academic and emotional development, medical evidence (where relevant) and whether or not the child has previously been educated out of year group. If the request is agreed there is no guarantee that a place will be available in the desired year group and if the request is denied there is no right of appeal from the Trust's decision. Please see paragraphs 2.5 to 2.8 of this policy for applications for delayed entry to Reception of summer-born children.

8. Monitoring and Review

- 8.1 The Trust has delegated to the Local Governing Board the responsibility for reviewing the implementation and effectiveness of this policy in discussion with the DSAMAT Admissions Officer. The Trust will approve all major changes to this policy. The policy will be promoted and published throughout the Trust.

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8.2 The policy will be reviewed annually.