

“Bee”long
“Bee”lieve
“Bee”have



Each bee plays a part in the hive

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.

1 Corinthians 12: 12-31



Stretton Sugwas Church of England Academy

Admission Policy

Academic Year 2026-2027



**Reviewed: February 2025
Mr Alex Davies**

Admission Arrangements for 2026-2027
Oversubscription Criteria for Stretton Sugwas Church of England Academy

Head Teacher – Mr Alex Davies
Chair of Directors – Mr Richard Griffiths
Age Range – 2-11 (including pre-school)
Pupil Admission Number – 30 per year group

The Board of Directors is responsible for determining and administering the policy relating to the admission of pupils to each school within Orchard Multi-Academy Trust. The writing of the policy is delegated to the Headteacher of each school, as each school may have specific admission arrangements in place. The Board of Directors works with the local Authority in order to ensure admissions are co-ordinated with the County.

At Stretton Sugwas Church of England Academy, we do not offer places based on church attendance. Although we are a school with a distinct Christian ethos, we believe that this is best shown in creating an inclusive environment, where people of **all** faiths are welcome and treated equally. Children with a Statement of Special Education Needs (or Education and Health Care Plan) which names a particular school will be allocated places, after which places are allocated according to an agreed set of criteria, in strict order of priority.

Priority 1- Looked after children and previously looked after children who have since been adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order, including 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. (see Footnote 1)

Priority 2 – Children living within the **defined catchment area*** of the academy with an **older sibling**** already attending; (see footnote 2)

Priority 3 - Children living within the **defined catchment area*** of the academy; (see Footnote 3)

Priority 4 - Sibling connection - Children who have an **older sibling**** at the academy not only at the time of application but also when the younger child is due to start; (see Footnote 4)

Priority 5 - Staff - Pupils whose parent/parents are employed by the Academy for two years or more or recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage; (see Footnote 5)

Priority 6 - Pre-School – Pupils who attend Stretton Sugwas Pre-School based onsite at the Academy for at least 1 academic year (start September 2025) prior to entering the Reception class. (see Footnote 6)

Please note

Those children attending the pre-school are not guaranteed a place at Stretton Sugwas Academy. Places will be ranked in accordance to the number of sessions that the child attends the pre-school. When children attend the same number of sessions, the distance from the academy, will be the deciding factor.

Priority 7 - Exceptional circumstances - Children with exceptional **medical, social or compassionate** grounds for admission and whose parents can show that entry to a particular school only is necessary for the wellbeing of their child. Parents are required to produce a medical certificate or other appropriate information preferably from an independent source. Applications on such grounds will not be considered by the Board of Directors unless this supporting information is attached to application forms received by January 2026; (see Footnote 7)

Priority 8 - Distance*** - Children who live **nearest** to the school by the shortest available walking route. (See Footnote 8)

Footnote 1: This is the 1st priority because Stretton Sugwas and the Council wishes to protect children who were or are in public care from further disadvantage that can arise from possible changes of school when the care placement changes.

Footnote 2: A sibling is defined as a brother or sister, half brother or half sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister or the child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case the child should be living at the same address. The sibling must be in the academy at the time of application and be likely to remain in the academy at the proposed date of admission.

Footnote 3: This is the 3rd priority to try to ensure that children are able to attend the academy within their local community.

Footnote 4: This is the 4th priority to recognise the importance to daily family life, including travel arrangements, of having brothers/sisters at the same school where possible. The rule is **not** intended to favour parents with a previous but no longer current family connection with the school.

Footnote 5: This is the 5th priority to recognise the importance of daily family life for the employees of the academy, including travel arrangements and wrap around/child care issues.

Footnote 6: This is the 6th priority to recognise the close links between pre-school and the Academy, and the high importance the Academy places on children being able to transition within its own educational setting.

Footnote 7: This is the 7th priority to be sensitive to exceptional needs that individual children and families may have.

Footnote 8: The 8th priority is a measurable, objective way of allocating the remaining places.

The Board of Directors will normally offer a place at the catchment area academy if parents apply for a place at the academy during the normal admission round. However, a place at the catchment area academy cannot always be guaranteed. If a pupil moves into the catchment area outside the normal admissions round (or after the allocation procedure has begun) it may be more difficult to offer a place at the catchment area academy if this would mean exceeding the admission number at the academy. In this case the Local authority will normally offer a place at the next nearest maintained school which caters for children of the same age and has places available. A map of the school's catchment area can be found on the school's website www.stretton-sugwas.com. It includes the parish of Stretton Sugwas, including the hamlet of Swainshill and parish of Breinton.

Copies of catchment area maps, if required are available from the LA, or can be viewed in schools. To find the catchment school for a postcode please visit <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schools-education/find-school>.

Children who have an Educational Health Care Plan are required to be admitted to the school which is named on the EHCP, even if the school is full. Admissions above the published admission number may also occur where the academy is admitting a twin or children from multiple births provided the admission would not cause a breach of Infant class size limits.

In Year Admissions

Requests for admissions to the academy into other year groups should be made on the In-Year application form and in accordance with the Local Authority's coordinated scheme for In-Year admissions. The form is available from the academy or Local Authority and can also be downloaded from the Local Authority website.

Admission appeals

If we do not offer a child a place at this academy, it is because to do so would prejudice the education of other children by allowing the numbers of children in the school to increase too much.

If parents wish to appeal against a decision to refuse entry, they can do so by applying to the LA. An independent appeals panel then meets to consider all appeals by parents who have been refused a place at our academy and who wish to appeal against this decision. An appeals panel's decision is binding for all parties concerned. If the appeals panel decides that we should admit a child to our school, then we will accept this and continue to do all

we can to provide the best education for all the children at our school. (Details of appeal arrangements are set out in the School Admissions Appeals Code, which came into force in February 2012)

* In order to determine the relevant catchment area, the home address of a child is defined as the only or main permanent residential address, at the closing date for applications, where the child usually resides and which is the usual address of the parent/carer with main responsibility for the child. If arrangements are such that a child resides at two addresses for equal amounts of time, then parents must decide which address to use for admissions purposes.

Where more than one parent submits an application for a child, or where there is a parent not in agreement with the preferences, the Local Authority may not be able to process any application until agreement over the preferences is reached. Failure to ensure agreement prior to submission, may result in a delay in any application being processed and in some instances, where agreement cannot be reached we may not be able to proceed until a legal resolution has been sought and the courts determine which parent can make the final decision on schooling

** A sibling connection refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or a child of the parents/carer's partner, and in every case the child should be living in the same family unit at the same address.

***Distance is measured by the shortest available walking route using a road and/or made up footpath using the nearest node on the transport network to the property point. The effect of this is to take you to the front door and not take into consideration other entrances (such as rear garden gates/ short cuts). This is particularly pertinent in a rural area like Herefordshire where rural properties can have multiple access points.

Implementation of Scheme

This scheme will apply to all parents/guardians wishing for their children to be admitted during the academic year 2026/2027. Herefordshire Council operate all Reception admissions. Details can be found at: <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schools-education/primary-school-admissions/3>

Number of Preferences and Closing Date

All parents will be invited to state three first preferences, in ranked order, on an online application, which will also apply to all voluntary aided and foundation schools and Academies. The National Closing date for primary school applications will be the 15 January 2026(or the nearest working day after).

Date of Admission

All children will be admitted from the beginning of September in the academic year in which they turn 5.

Option for Delayed Entry

Parents/carers may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented, the parents/carers may seek early entry.

Children born in the summer term (i.e. 1 April – 31 August) are not required to start school until a full year after the point at which they could first have been admitted into a reception class (the point at which other children in their age range are beginning year 1). Parents/carers have the option of **requesting** delayed entry where they hold back their child from joining the correct year group for their age so that they start school a year later than they are due to. Please note this is a request and can be refused.

Paragraph 2.17A of the Admissions Code requires that, in any circumstance where a parents/carers requests their child is admitted out of their normal age group, the admission authority must make a decision based on the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

The head teacher and the Board of Directors will take into account the parents/carers views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely in order to reach a decision as to whether or not it is appropriate for the individual child to delay or accelerate their entry into school and be taught permanently behind or ahead of their chronological age group. The reasons for the decision must be clearly set out. This process must be completed in advance of the closing date. In the event that the delayed entry is not approved, parents will need to make an application in time for the 2026 intake (by the 15 January 2026).

Please be aware that even if delayed or early entry is agreed, the normal admission arrangements apply and there is no guarantee of a place. You should therefore give careful consideration to requesting delayed or early entry.

Deferred Entry – for Summer Born Children

A child is not required to start school until they have reached compulsory school age which is the term following their 5th birthday. Parents/carers are not obliged to take up places for their children any earlier than the law requires. Schools cannot require children to start sooner than parents/carers wish.

Parents/carers therefore have the option of deferring their child's entry until later in the same academic school year.

Deferred entry to a school is where a parent decides to request that their child starts school later in the school year that follows their 4th birthday or when the child reaches compulsory school age (the term after the child's 5th birthday).

The effect is that the place is held for that child and is not available to be offered to another child.

Parents/carers would not however be able to defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday.

If you wish to defer taking up a place for your child, you are strongly advised to discuss the matter first with the school or with the Pupil Admissions Office, and you must apply by the closing date for applications (15 January 2026).

Allocation of Places

Places in reception classes for all maintained schools are allocated on the basis of applications received on or before 15 January 2026. Applications should be submitted to the Pupil Admissions Office. The date of 15 January 2026 applies for all admissions during the school year, including children who might be entitled to start school in January 2027 or April 2027.

The Primary National Offer Day for the 2026/2027 admission year will be: 16 April 2026 (or the nearest working day after)

Late Applications

Applications received after 15 January 2026 will be allocated to the preferred school on the understanding that admissions do not exceed the published admission number or conflict with the requirement not to exceed 30 pupils in a key stage one class. When considering the late application the council will have regard to the reason for the delay in applying together with the distance to the nearest alternative school.