

The Mortimer Federation of St John's and St Mary's

Mortimer St Mary's CE Junior School Admissions Policy 2025/2026			
Policy Number	Personnel	Date of Issue	January 2024
Status	Statutory	Review Date	September 2024
Last consultation	December 2023 / January 2024	Issue Number	5

THE MORTIMER FEDERATION OF ST. JOHN'S AND ST. MARY'S

MORTIMER ST MARY'S C of E JUNIOR SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY 2025/2026

ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS FOR SEPTEMBER 2025 – AUGUST 2026

As a Voluntary Aided School the Governing Board is responsible for deciding on admissions to the school, but works closely with the Local Authority (LA) which co-ordinates admissions to all schools in West Berkshire. Details of the LA arrangements are available from the school, via the internet on West Berkshire's website www.westberks.gov.uk/primaryadmissions or on the school website www.mortimerschools.org. This also explains how parents (see Note a) can express a preference for a school and give reasons for that preference. The school welcomes applications from all parents, irrespective of whether they have faith or not. The dates and process of application will be in accordance with the co-ordinated admissions scheme.

Parents living in West Berkshire must make applications either on the West Berkshire common application form or on-line via the West Berkshire website. The closing date for admissions is 15 January 2025. Decisions on which children are to be offered a place will be made by the Admissions Committee of the School as delegated by the full Governing Board, and parents will be informed by letter by the Local Authority on behalf of the Governing Board on 16 April 2025. Parents must return acceptance slips to the school by the date given in West Berkshire's Coordinated Scheme for 2025/26. Parents living outside West Berkshire must use the application form of their home LA (i.e. the local authority of their home address) and completed forms must be sent to their home LA by 15 January 2025. At Mortimer St Mary's C of E Junior School, pupils are normally admitted at the beginning of the academic year (1 September) in which they reach their eighth birthday, and always without reference to ability or aptitude. The Published Admission Number for the year commencing 1 September 2025 is 60. In all other cases, pupils will be admitted provided there are places available in the relevant year group. Each year group has 60 places.

Admissions Timetable for West Berkshire Residents

15 January 2025	Closing date for applications
16 April 2025	Offers and refusals issued to parents
1 May 2025	Parents to return acceptance slips to schools
21 May 2025	Appeals must have been lodged to ensure they are heard before the end of the summer term

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OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

Children with a statement of Special Educational Need or with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming St Mary's C of E Junior School will always be offered places. If there are fewer applications than places available, all children will be offered places. If there is greater demand for admission than there are places available, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out below:

1. Looked-after children and children who were previously looked after, including those children who appear to have been in state care outside England, but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted. (See Note b)
2. Families who have exceptional medical or social needs that make it essential that their child attends Mortimer St Mary's C of E Junior School rather than any other. These needs must be fully supported by written evidence from the appropriate professional person involved with the family. (See Note c)
3. Children whose permanent home address (see Note d) is in the catchment area and with a sibling (see Note e) already on the roll of Mortimer St John's C of E Infant School or Mortimer St Mary's C of E Junior School at the time of application or whose parent has accepted an offer of a place at either school and who is expected still to be in attendance at the time of entry to the school. A designated Catchment Area map is attached to this policy or can be viewed on the school's website or in the West Berkshire Council School Admissions Guide.
4. Children whose permanent home address (see Note d) is in the catchment area of Mortimer St Mary's C of E Junior School.
5. A child whose permanent home address is outside the catchment area of Mortimer St Mary's C of E Junior School but who is on the roll of Mortimer St John's C of E Infant School at the closing date for applications in the normal admissions round.
6. Children whose permanent home address is outside the catchment area of Mortimer St Mary's C of E Junior School and with a sibling (see Note e) already on the roll of Mortimer St John's C of E Infant School or Mortimer St Mary's C of E Junior School at the time of application or whose parent has accepted an offer of a place at either school and who is expected still to be in attendance at the time of entry to the school.
7. All other children.

TIE-BREAKER

Priority will be given within any of the above over-subscription criteria to the applicant whose permanent home address is nearest to the school. Distances will be measured using the West

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Berkshire Admissions Geographical Information System taking a straight line between the home address and the school using the unique property identification points within the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG).

In the case of multiple birth children, all children would be offered a place where the need to apply the tie-break occurred.

In the case of two or more children living equidistant from Mortimer St Mary's CE Junior School, the school will conduct a random allocation in the presence of an independent witness.

ALL OTHER ADMISSIONS

The administration of applications outside the normal admission round is detailed in West Berkshire Council's Coordinated Admissions Scheme. All applications for places outside the normal admissions round are coordinated by West Berkshire Council, but the school as the admission authority takes decisions on whether or not a child can be admitted. If there are more applications than places available in a year group, then the oversubscription criteria detailed earlier in the policy will be used.

If there is a vacancy, and there is no child on the relevant waiting list with a higher priority (according to the over-subscription criteria 1-7 above), a place will be offered.

In-year admissions or admissions at the beginning of school years other than Year 3 will only be considered by the Governing Board up to half a term [using three term year] in advance of the desired date for entry. For example, for entry in January, the application will not be considered until after the October half term break.

If parents are moving house, the school will ask for evidence of the move, when considering any application for a place. Documentary evidence in the form of a solicitor's letter to confirm exchange of contracts, a rental agreement for at least a period of six months will be required (Armed Forces personnel and crown servants are exempt). If the family are returning from elsewhere, to live in a home that they own, the school will require evidence to show that the family have returned. The school will also ask for evidence that any previous house owned has been sold or is being sold. The school would not accept an address where the one given is that of a second home with the main home being elsewhere. If there are two or more homes, the school will check which is the main home, and may refuse to base an allocation of a place on an address which might be considered only temporary. Nor would the school accept an address where the child was resident other than with a parent or carer unless this was part of a fostering or formal care arrangement. The school would not normally accept an address where only part of a family had moved, unless connected with a divorce or permanent separation arrangement, in which case the school would require proof.

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ADMISSION OUTSIDE NORMAL AGE GROUP

Requests from parents for school places outside a normal age group will be considered carefully. Each case will be considered on its own merits and circumstances. However, cases will not normally be agreed without a consensus that to do so would be in the pupil's best interests between the parents, schools concerned (both former and preferred) and any relevant professionals asked for their opinion on the case by the Governors. It is recommended that parents discuss their wishes with the Executive Headteacher in advance of applying for a place. It should be noted that if a place in the requested age group is refused, but one in the normal age group is offered, then there is no right of appeal.

WAITING LISTS

Waiting lists will continue to be maintained by West Berkshire Council for entry to Year 3 where necessary for children not offered a school place, but offered a place at a lower preferred school. Placement will be determined by applying the over-subscription criteria. They will remain until 1 September 2025 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 due to new applications or revised applications in respect of a change of preferred schools. Waiting lists for other year groups or for Year 3 once the school year 2025/26 has started will be kept by West Berkshire Council and priority is given to those subject to a direction or an admission in accordance with the In-Year Fair Access Protocol (available from West Berkshire or the school).

FAIR ACCESS

The school participates in West Berkshire Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol. Children qualifying under the Fair Access Protocol may be offered a place even if there are no places available in the relevant year group and also take priority for admission over any child on the waiting list.

LATE APPLICATIONS

Late applications are considered as detailed in West Berkshire Council's Coordinated Admissions Scheme.

APPEALS

Any parent not offered a school place at the school has the right of appeal to an independent appeals panel managed by the Diocese of Oxford. Information on how to appeal will be provided with the result of the application and is available from the school. Appeals must be lodged by 21 May 2025 for the normal admissions round to ensure the appeal will be heard

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by the end of July 2025, or within 21 school days from the date of the refusal letter. In the event of an unsuccessful appeal against non-admission, the school does not reconsider applications in the same academic year unless there is a major change of circumstances (e.g. change of address).

ENTRY 2023

Admissions for entry into Year 3 in September 2023 were coordinated by West Berkshire Council and decisions regarding offers were made by the Governing Board.

For entry to Year 3 for 2023/24, 60 offers were made as follows:

Looked after child	In catchment with sibling	In catchment	Outside catchment but child attends Mortimer St John's	Outside catchment with sibling	All other applicants
	13	25	14	2	3

3 children had an Education, Health & Care Plan

NOTES:

- a) A parent is any person who has parental responsibility for or is the legal guardian of the child. Where admission arrangements refer to 'parent's attendance at church' it is sufficient for just one parent to attend. 'Family members' include only parents, as defined above, and siblings.
- b) By a "looked-after child" we mean one in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services function. Previously looked-after children were children who had been adopted, subject to child arrangement orders or special guardianship orders. Adopted children are those for whom an adoption order is made under the Adoption Act 1976 (Section 12) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Section 46). A "child arrangements order" is one settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live (Children Act 1989, Section 8, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014, Section 14). A "special guardianship order" is one appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian/s (Children Act 1989, Section 14A). Applications under this criterion must be accompanied by evidence to show that the child is looked after or was previously looked after (e.g. a copy of the adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order). Evidence that a child from outside England was previously in state care will be required to come within this criterion. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside England if they were in the care of or were accommodated

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by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

- c) When applying under criterion 2 (exceptional medical or social needs), you must include supporting evidence from an independent professional person who is aware of the situation and supports your reasons for preferring Mortimer St Mary's C of E Junior School. This supporting evidence must clearly demonstrate why the school is the most suitable and must illustrate the difficulties that would be caused if your child had to attend another school. The person supplying the evidence should be a doctor, health visitor, social worker, etc. who is aware of your child's or your own case. The school reserves the right to ask for further evidence or clarification where necessary and may seek the advice of appropriate educational professionals where necessary.
- d) By normal home address, we mean the child's home address. This must be where the parent or legal carer of the child lives with the child unless it is proved that the child is resident elsewhere with someone else who has legal care and control of the child. The address should be a residential property that is owned, leased or rented by the child's parent/s or person with legal care and control of the child. To avoid doubt, where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week or month, the address where the child lives will be determined having regard to a joint declaration from the parents stating the exact pattern of residence. If the residence is not split equally, then the relevant address used will be that at which we are satisfied that the child spends the majority of the school week. Where there is an equal split or there is any doubt about residence, we will make the judgment about which address to use for the purpose of determining whether or not to offer a place. We will take into account, for example, the following:
- any legal documentation confirming residence
 - the pattern of the residence
 - the period of time over which the current arrangement has been in place
 - confirmation from any previous school of the contact details and home address supplied to it by the parents
 - where the child is registered with his/her GP
 - any other evidence the parents may supply to verify the position.

We may ask for evidence of the normal home address in the form of a recent bill. This could be, for example, the most recent Council Tax bill, utility bill no more than three months old, a current TV licence, buildings and contents insurance, mortgage statement or rent book which shows the address concerned. Parents who are unable to provide this evidence should contact the school to discuss what evidence might be acceptable. If it becomes clear or if there is any doubt that the parents and child are not living at the address given on the application form, the school may seek further evidence. The school works closely with the LA to ensure that places are not obtained at the school on the basis of false addresses, and, in cases of doubt, will take steps to verify the information provided. If a place at the school is offered, and it later becomes clear that the offer was made on fraudulent or misleading information (e.g. a false claim to living in the catchment area), and the school has denied a place to a child with a stronger claim, the school will withdraw the offer of a place. The offer can also be withdrawn even after the child has started at the school.

We regard a child's home address to be where he or she sleeps for the majority of the school week (Monday to Friday). We may ask to see official documentation, such as a

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child benefit book or medical card if there are reasons why a child does not live at his or her parent's address. For example, if he or she is resident with a grandparent, this needs to be made clear on the application form. If such arrangements are not declared or a relative's address is used on the application, we may consider that a false declaration has been made and withdraw the offer of a place. Childcare arrangements are not sufficient reason for listing another address.

If parents move house after the application has been made, but before any offer of a place has been made, the school must be informed.

If parents are moving, we will ask for evidence of the move, when considering any application for a place.

We would not accept an address where the one given is that of a second home with the main home being elsewhere. If there are two or more homes, we will check which is the main home, and may refuse to base an allocation of a place on an address which might be considered only temporary. Nor would we accept an address where the child was resident other than with a parent or carer unless this was part of a fostering or formal care arrangement. We would not normally accept an address where only part of a family had moved, unless connected with a divorce or permanent separation arrangement, in which case we would require proof.

There are special arrangements for families of service personnel with a confirmed posting or crown servants returning from overseas. If the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares the relocation date, and if there is a place available, it will be offered even though there is not an intended address or the family is not yet living in the area.

- e) Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner, where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling, and that sibling is on roll at the school and is expected still to be on roll at the school in September 2024.

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For further information, in the first instance, please contact the Admissions Secretary at the school. Contact details are as follows:

Address: The Admissions Secretary
Mortimer St Mary's C of E Junior School
The Street
Mortimer
Berks
RG7 3PB
Telephone: 0118 9332491
Fax: 0118 9331013
e-mail: officemsm@mortimerschools.org

Chair of Admissions Committee

Date

Approved by the Full Governing Board

Chair of Governors

Date

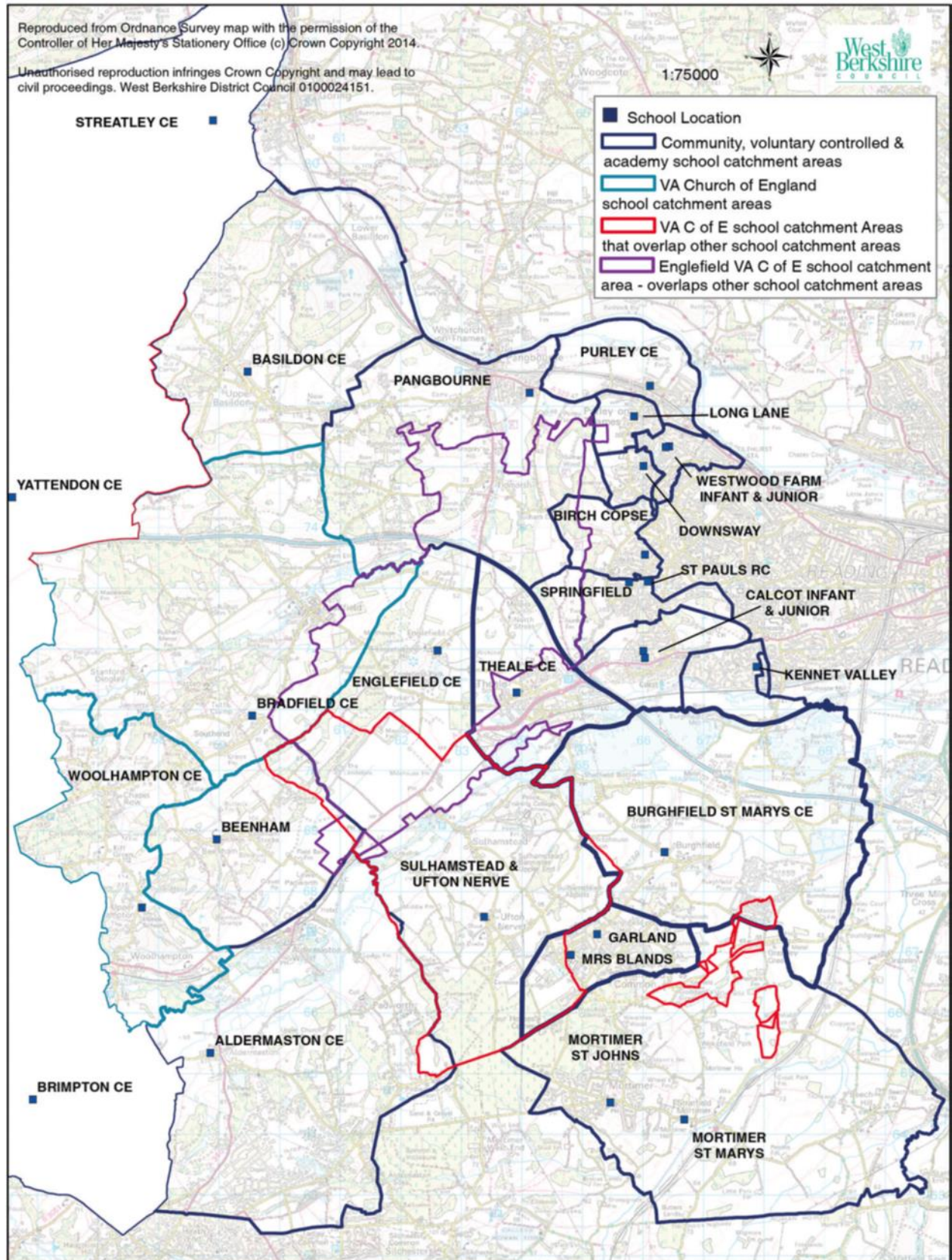
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Primary School Catchment Areas - Eastern area



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