Victoria
Church of England
Infant & Nursery School

Prince Edward Street | Berkhamsted | Hertfordshire HP4 3HA
Telephone: 01442 865781
Email: admin@victoria.herts.sch.uk
Web: www.victoria.herts.sch.uk

GOVERNORS' NURSERY ADMISSIONS POLICY 2025/2026

Victoria is a Church of England Voluntary Aided Infant and Nursery school. It is a member of Castle Church of England Federation. The Federation Governing Body is the admissions authority; they will admit up to 40 places in total into the Nursery Year in September 2025. Admission numbers and policies for future years may be different.

"Our vision is to flourish in learning and love". We ask all parents applying for a place to respect this vision and its importance to the school community. This does not affect the right of parents who are not of the faith of this school to apply for and be considered for a place.

Nursery Attendance Choices
Victoria School offers Nursery places 5 days a week and the sessions run from our Nursery Classroom. We have a qualified teacher and teaching assistants for all the sessions, to deliver our Nursery offer. There are three sessions and the timings are:
8.20-11.30-Morning Session
11.30-12.30- Lunch Session
12.30-3.00- Afternoon Session

All families of 3-4 year olds are entitled to 15 hours free childcare (universal 15 hours) funding for their child. Working families who meet the criteria are entitled to 30 hours free childcare under the Working Families Entitlement. Families who want their child to attend more than 15 hours per week but do not qualify for Working Families Entitlement can pay for additional sessions.

Children do not have to attend 5 days a week, Monday to Friday. Recognising the needs of the families, we accept part-time applications. We recommend a minimum of 3 days per week (this means at least 3 morning sessions). Attending less than 3 days would impact the high quality provision we aim to deliver. Based on experience, children attending less than 3 sessions have found it harder to settle at Nursery.

Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the governing bodies of all maintained schools to admit a child with an Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan that names the school. If a child's EHCP names Victoria Church of England Infant and Nursery School, that child will be admitted to the school.

If there are fewer applications than places available at the school, all applicants will be admitted. If there are more applications than places available at the school, the criteria outlined below will be used to prioritise applications.

Oversubscription criteria (refer to the Explanatory notes and definitions beginning on page 3)

Priority 1	Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, including those who appear to the Governing Body (as 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. Previously looked after children are those who were looked after but ceased to be so because of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order.
Priority 2	Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school. *A panel of governors will determine whether the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet the requirements for this rule. The evidence must relate specifically to Victoria CE Infant*

	and Nursery School and must clearly demonstrate why it is the only school that can meet the child's needs.
Priority 3	Children who have a sibling on the roll of the school (Nursery to Y2) at the time of application.
Priority 4	Children who have a sibling on the roll of The Thomas Coram Church of England School at the time of application.
Priority 5	Children who are eligible to receive Early Years Pupil Premium funding and live within the ecclesiastical Parishes of Great Berkhamsted or Sunnyside with Bourne End.
Priority 6	Children who have one or more parents/carers with a regular worship commitment at any of the Anglican churches of Great Berkhamsted or Sunnyside with Bourne End, verified on the attached Form 2 by the parish priest concerned.
Priority 7	Children who have one or more parents/carers with a regular worship commitment at other Anglican churches, other Christian denominations or other Faiths, verified on the attached Form 2 by the priest, minister or religious/faith leader concerned, and live within the ecclesiastical Parishes of Great Berkhamsted or Sunnyside with Bourne End.
Priority 8	Children who live nearest to the school.

These Priorities are applied in the order they are printed above. If more children qualify under a particular Priority than there are places available, a tie break will be used by applying the next rule to those children.

Tie Break
When there is a need for a tie break where two different addresses are the same distance from a school, in the case of a block of flats for example, the lower door number will be deemed nearest as logically this will be on the ground floor and therefore closer. If there are two identical addresses of separate applicants, the tie break will be random.

Continuing Interest
After places have been offered, the Governing Body will maintain a Continuing Interest list (waiting list). These and late applications will be positioned according to the priority order listed above and a child's place on the list can change as other children join and leave it. The school will contact parents/carers if a vacancy becomes available and it can be offered to a child. Continuing Interest lists will be maintained for every year group until the summer term (date to be specified and confirmed to parents at the time of allocation). To remain on the Continuing Interest (waiting) list after this time, parents must confirm they are still interested in a place by completing an In Year application form.

ADMISSION PROCEDURE

1. Complete the online application form using the link available on our website www.victoria.herts.sch.uk/admissions not later than **28 March 2025**
2. Should the forms not arrive on time, your application will be considered as late and will be dealt with after the applications of those that were received on time. This means that your application will be of a lower priority rank than if the school had received your application on time.

3. The Governing Body will consider all applications, and a place for the next academic year will be offered to the parents/carers of successful applicants by email on **25 April 2025**. The date by which parents/carers may confirm whether they have rejected offers (deadline for receipt of acceptances) is **2 May 2025.**

4. **In-Year Admissions**
   In-Year applications are considered by the Governing Body for admission into all other age groups and at other times of the school year. Our In-Year Admissions form (called a Supplementary Information Form) is available online from the school's website www.victoria.herts.sch.uk/our-school/admissions. Applicants should complete this In-Year Admissions Form and return it to the school. Admission will depend on vacancies at the proposed time of entry to Nursery and the admission number for that year group. Parents wishing to query the decision should contact the school directly in the first instance. The offer of a place must be accepted in writing within ten school days.

5. Appeals

As Nursery provision is non-statutory, parents who are not offered a place for their child have no right to appeal.

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to terms used in the admissions criteria:

Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, including those who appear to the Governing Body (as 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. Previously looked after children are those who were looked after but ceased to be so because of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order[1] or a special guardianship order[2].

Places are allocated to children in public care according to Chapter 2, Section 7 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

A 'child looked after' 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 (Section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989).

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under Priority 1.

Children who were not "looked after" **immediately** before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order, **will not** be prioritised under Priority 1. Applications for these children, with suitable supporting professional evidence, can be considered under Priority 2.

[1] Child arrangements order
Under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders which settle the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

[2] Special guardianship order Under Section 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians.

Children previously looked after abroad and subsequently adopted will be prioritised under Priority 1 if the child's previously looked after status and adoption is confirmed. Where governors are not satisfied with the evidence provided, or are unsure about its validity, they will seek advice from Hertfordshire's Virtual School.

The child's previously looked after status will be decided in accordance with the definition outlined in The Children & Social Work Act 2017:

i. to have been in state care in a place … because he or she would not otherwise have been cared for adequately, and
ii. to have ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted.

A child is in "state care" if he or she is in the care of, or accommodated by –

a) a public authority,
b) a religious organisation, or
c) any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school

Priority 2 applications will only be considered at the time of the initial application, unless there has been a significant and exceptional change of circumstances within the family since the initial application was submitted.

All schools in Hertfordshire have experience in dealing with children with diverse social and medical needs. However, in a few very exceptional cases, there are reasons why a child has to go to one specific school.

Few applications under Priority 2 are agreed.

All applications are considered individually but a successful application should include the following:

a. Specific recent professional evidence that justifies why only one school can meet a child's individual needs, and/or
b. Professional evidence that outlines exceptional family circumstances making clear why only one school can meet the child's needs.
c. If the requested school is not the nearest school to the child's home address clear reasons why the nearest school is not appropriate.
d. For medical cases – a clear explanation of why the child's severity of illness or disability makes attendance at only a specific school essential.

Evidence should make clear why only one school is appropriate. A Priority 2 application will generally not be upheld in cases where more than one school could meet the child's need.

In exceptional cases relating to a disability, where more than one school in the county can meet the child's specific needs, a clear and compelling case can be made for the "nearest" school with the relevant facilities, environment or location. You must clearly explain why attendance at the "nearest" school with these facilities is essential.

Applications under Priority 2 can only be considered when supported by a recent letter from a professional involved with the child or family, for example a doctor, psychologist or police officer. The supporting evidence needs to demonstrate why only one named school can meet the social/medical needs of the child.

Applications for children who were not "looked after" immediately before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order may be made under this Priority.

Definition of sibling

A sibling is defined as: the sister, brother, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent/carer or partner or a child looked after or previously looked after[1] and in every case living permanently[2] in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of this application.

A sibling must be on the roll of the named school at the time the younger child starts or has been offered and accepted a place.

If a place is obtained for an older child using fraudulent information, there will be no sibling connection available to subsequent children from that family.

[1] See definition regarding looked after and previously looked after children.

[2] A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.

If an applicant has more than one address, the sibling must also reside at the same address for the majority of the school week. The sibling's address will be verified by the school.

Multiple births

The Governing Body, as the admission authority, will admit over the school's published admission number when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated a place at the school.

Parish boundaries

A map of the parish boundaries is available on request from the school. Alternatively the website www.achurchnearyou.com may be helpful.

Early Years Pupil Premium
Children are eligible to receive Early Years Pupil Premium funding if:

- parents receive Universal Credit
- parents receive Income Support
- parents receive Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- parents receive Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- parents receive support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- parents receive the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- parents receive Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- parents receive Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credits

or if they have:

- been looked after by the local authority for at least one day
- been adopted from care
- have left care under a special guardianship order or residence order

"Regular" worship commitment
A "regular" worship commitment means attendance at a service of public worship at least once a month for a period of six months immediately prior to the date of application. Those new to the area should have attended at least once a month since their arrival in the area and they should also submit a letter from the minister of their previous church or place of worship indicating their pattern of worship there. Attendance of a child at Sunday school/club or a church toddler group does not fulfil the regular worship commitment requirement.

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 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.

Christian denomination
A Christian denomination is one which is a member of Churches Together in England or the Evangelical Alliance.

Home address
The address provided on the application form must be the child's current permanent address at the time of application.

- "At the time of application" means the closing date for applications
- "Permanent" means that the child has lived at that address for at least a year

Where a family has not lived at an address for a year at the time of application, they must be able to demonstrate that they own the property or have a tenancy agreement for a minimum of 12 months **and** the child must be resident in the property at the time of application. If, because of the nature of the agreement, it is not possible to provide a 12-month tenancy agreement, alternative proof of address will be requested.

It is for the Governing Body (as the admission authority) to determine the address to be used for admission purposes.

The application can only be processed using one address. If a child lives at more than one address (for example due to a separation) the address used will be the one where the child lives for the majority of the school week. If a child lives at two addresses equally, parents/carers should make a single joint application naming one address.

If the child's living arrangements change after you apply and they now spend the majority of the school week living at a different address, you must provide evidence of the new permanent address.

Addresses will be verified as necessary with Hertfordshire County Council's Shared Anti-Fraud Service.

If a child's permanent residence is disputed, parents/carers should provide court documentation to evidence the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes. If two applications are received, with different addresses, neither will be processed until the address issue is reconciled.

If the school receives two different main admission round applications for the same child from the same address e.g. containing different preferences, parents/carers will be invited to submit a joint application or provide court documentation to evidence the preferences that should be used for the admission process. Until the preference issue is reconciled, neither application will be processed.

Fraudulent applications
Address evidence may be requested. I fit is found the address information you have provided is purposely incorrect, Victoria School may withdraw your child(ren)'s offer of a place at the Nursery.

Parents/carers will need to show that they have relinquished residency ties with their previous property and they, and their child(ren) are permanently residing at the address given on the application form.

Home to school distance measurement for purposes of admissions
A 'straight line' distance measurement is used in all home to school distance measurements. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

Applications from children* from overseas
An application for a school place will only be accepted for such children currently overseas if, for In-Year applications, proof is provided that the child will be resident in Hertfordshire within two weeks. In-Year allocations are made on the assumption that the child will accept the school place and be on roll within that timescale.

Applications will not normally be accepted from, nor places allocated to, an overseas address. The exception to this (for both In-Year and transfer processes) is for children of UK service personnel and crown servants (and from military families who are residents of countries with a Memorandum of Understanding with the UK). In these cases, the Governing Body will allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a Hertfordshire County Council Unit postal address or quartering area address, for consideration of the application against oversubscription criteria.

Applications will also be considered, and places offered in advance for these families, if the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date but does not provide a quartering or unit address because the family will be residing in private accommodation. In these cases, if the family does not already have a permanent private address in Hertfordshire, the military base or alternative "work" address in Hertfordshire will be used for allocation purposes. If the family already has an established alternative private address, that address will be used for admission purposes.

The Governing Body will also consider accepting applications from children* whose family can evidence intent to return to and/or permanently reside in Hertfordshire prior to the start of the new academic year. These applications, if accepted, will be processed from the overseas address until sufficient evidence is received to show the child is permanently resident in Hertfordshire. Evidence must be submitted at the time of application.

Evidence submitted after the date for late applications cannot be taken into account before the allocation date for on-time applications. Decisions on these applications will be made by the Governing Body, as the admissions authority, and communicated with parents within 6 weeks of the closing date for applications.

If an applicant owns a property in Hertfordshire but is not living in it, perhaps because they are working abroad at the time of application, the Hertfordshire address will not be accepted for the purposes of admission until the child is resident at that address.

Other children, than those mentioned above, from overseas do not generally have automatic right of entry to the UK. An application for a school place will not therefore be accepted until they are permanently resident in Hertfordshire. Proof of residency such as an endorsed passport or entry visa will be required with the application, in addition to proof of Hertfordshire address, for example a council tax bill or 12-month rental agreement.

*Children who hold full British Citizen passports (not British Dependent Territories or British Overseas passports), or have a UK passport describing them as a British citizen or British subject with the right of abode and normally have unrestricted entry to the UK. Freedom of movement into the UK for European Economic Area and Swiss citizens ended at the end of 2020. EEA (Irish citizens aside) and Swiss national children entering the UK after the end of 2020 are now treated the same as other foreign nationals. This means they will no longer have the right to enter the country to access a state-funded school unless they fall within certain immigration categories. Find out more about visas and immigration and the EU Settlement Scheme for European Economic Area and Swiss citizens.

Nursery Provision

Victoria CE School has Nursery provision. The admission arrangements detailed in this document apply for those being admitted into the Nursery. A separate Admissions Policy for the School is available on our website. The Governing Body is the admissions authority.

Parents of children who are admitted to Nursery provision at the school must apply in the normal way for a place at the school if they want their child to transfer to the Reception class. Attendance at the Nursery does not guarantee admission to the school.