



# **Bishop Wood Junior School**

## **Admission Policy 2025-2026**

Bishop Wood is a Voluntary Aided Church of England Junior School which caters for children from the age of seven (Year 3) to eleven (Year 6). There are two classes of 30 children in each of the four school years. The school has a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 60 per year group for the main year of entry, this being the number of children which may be admitted into any one academic year. The Governors are responsible for admissions to the school.

In common with all Church of England schools, the school seeks to provide a distinctively Christian and inclusive environment and has a special responsibility to educate and care for the most vulnerable children in our community. This ethos is reflected in the Admissions Policy.

### **Normal Admission**

Children are normally admitted into the school in the September following their seventh birthday and move to secondary school in the September following their eleventh birthday. Parents of children attending Goldfield Infant and Nursery School are given information about how and when to make an application, including the deadline date. They are also invited to visit Bishop Wood.

The Local Authority (LA) operates an agreed coordinated 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 closing date for admission application forms to be received by the home LA is on 15th January in the year of admission. All applications **must** be made on the Local Authority Common Application Form. Information on completing the online application and notification dates of admission decisions are published by the Local Authority on their website; [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions).

If the school receives fewer applications than there are places available, all applicants will be offered a place. In line with section 324 of the Education Act 1996, all children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan naming Bishop Wood C of E Junior School will be allocated a place at the school. If the school is oversubscribed, other places will be allocated according to the oversubscription criteria outlined below. Parents are informed by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) if a place is available. Once an offer has been made, it needs to be formally accepted within the specified time period (ten school days) in order to be secured. If a child is not offered a place, prospective pupils will be placed on a Continuing Interest List by HCC. These applications will be dealt with according to the same oversubscription criteria and parents will be informed as soon as a place becomes available.

### **Oversubscription Criteria**

The following oversubscription categories only have significance when the application for admission in any one school year exceeds the Published Admission Number (PAN) of 60 per year group.

In order of priority, the oversubscription categories are:

1. Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, including those 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 or became subject to a child arrangements order<sup>1</sup> or a special guardianship order<sup>2</sup>.
2. Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have an exceptional social or medical need to attend Bishop Wood C of E Junior School.
3. Children who have a sibling in the school at the time of admission.
4. Children for whom it is their nearest school - This includes all schools except those which allocate places on the basis of faith (membership or practice) before allocating on the basis of distance/location.
5. Children from Goldfield Infant and Nursery School transferring at the end of Year 2
6. All other children.

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 the 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. Every child entered onto the Herts CC admissions database has an individual random number assigned, between 1 and 1 million, against each preference school. When there is a need for a final tie break the random number is used to allocate the place with the lowest number given priority.

### **Fair Access Protocol**

The school co-operates fully with the Local Authority's Fair Access protocol for children who are hard to place and will admit these children over PAN. Children admitted under the Fair Access protocol take priority over children on the Continuing Interest List.

Children with a disability are considered according to the school's oversubscription criteria and, if allocated a place, the school would then take steps to ensure that a child's individual needs are met.

### **Children Looked After**

Highest priority will also be given to children who were previously looked after, including those looked after outside England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangement order or a special guardianship order.

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order. The application would be prioritised under category 1. Children who were not “looked after” **immediately** before being adopted, or made the subject of a child arrangements order or special guardianship order, **will not** be prioritised under category 1. Children previously looked after outside England are only included in category 1 if adopted from state care.

### **Children with an exceptional medical or social need**

A category 2 application will only be considered when, at the time of application, independent supporting evidence is provided showing that a child, parent or their carer can demonstrate a wholly exceptional medical or social need for attendance at Bishop Wood C of E Junior School and that no other school will suffice.

An application for Category 2 is made when, by means of letter addressed to the Governing Body, a parent/carers explicitly requests consideration under Category 2 and provides supporting evidence. If a parent/carers requests to be considered under Category 2 but fails to provide supporting evidence; that application will not be considered under Category 2. It will be considered under the next appropriate category.

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

- a) Specific recent professional evidence that justifies why only Bishop Wood C of E Junior School can meet a child’s individual needs, and/or
- b) Professional evidence that outlines exceptional family circumstances making clear why only Bishop Wood C of E Junior School can meet the child’s needs.
- c) If Bishop Wood C of E Junior 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 Bishop Wood C of E Junior School essential.

The Governing Body will determine whether the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet the requirements for this rule. The Governing Body may delegate determination of applications under Category 2 to a sub-committee.

Requests to be considered under category 2 should be received on or before the closing date for applications. Parents/Carers applying under Category 2 for children to start in Year 3 in September will be notified of the Governing Body’s decision once all Category 2 applications have been considered. Decision letters will be sent to parents/carers who applied on-time, within 40 school days of the closing date for applications. Decision letters relating to the first and second rounds of continuing interest will be sent in the week prior to allocations being released. When an application for Category 2 is received in respect of an In Year admission, parents/carers will be notified of the outcome of the Governing Body’s decision by letter within 5 school days of the Governing Body meeting.

### **In Year Admissions**

A child normally enters the school in Year 3 in the September following his/her seventh birthday. For admission into any year group at other times of the school year, an application must be made to the In-Year Admission Department at Herts County Council. The In Year application form can be completed at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions). We cannot admit any children to the school unless this procedure has been followed and we are notified by Hertfordshire County Council that they have received a completed application and a place is available. If a place in the relevant year group is not available, then the applicant will be

placed on the Continued Interest List for the rest of that academic year. All In Year admissions are dealt with according to the same oversubscription criteria outlined above.

### **Continuing Interest List**

After places have been offered, Hertfordshire County Council will maintain a continuing interest (waiting) list for all community and voluntary controlled schools. A child's position on a CI list will be determined by the admission criteria outlined above and a child's place on the list can change as other children join or leave it. The county council 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 CI (waiting) list after this time, parents must confirm they are still interested in a place by completing an In-Year application form

### **Year 3 Appeals**

Parents wishing to appeal who applied through Hertfordshire's online system should log in to their online application and click on the link "register an appeal". Out of county residents and paper applicants should call the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request their registration details and log into [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals) and click on the link "log into the appeals system"

### **In Year Appeals**

The county council will write to you with the outcome of your application and, if you have been unsuccessful, will include registration details to enable you to login and appeal online at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals)

### **Out of Year Group**

Bishop Wood C of E Junior School's policy is for children to be educated within their correct chronological year group, with the curriculum differentiated as necessary to meet the needs of individual children. This is in line with DfE guidance which states that "in general, children should be educated in their normal age group".

If parents/carers believe their child(ren) should be educated in a different year group they should, at the time of application, submit supporting evidence from relevant professionals working with the child and family stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age appropriate cohort. DfE guidance makes clear that "it is reasonable for admission authorities to expect parents to provide them with information in support of their request – since without it they are unlikely to be able to make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case".

The Governing Body (or sub-committee) as the relevant admission authority, will decide whether the application will be accepted on the basis of the information submitted. The Governing Body make decisions based upon the circumstances of each case including the view of parents, the relevant headteacher(s), the child's social, academic and emotional development and whether the child has been previously educated out of year group. There is no guarantee that an application will be accepted on this basis. If the application is not accepted this does not constitute a refusal of a place and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal. Similarly, there is no right of appeal for a place in a specific year group at a school. The internal management and organisation of a school, including the placement of pupils in classes, is a matter for the Headteacher and senior leadership of individual schools.

**Please note that this policy will be applied using the following definitions:**

**Child Looked After** - a child who is in the care of a local authority, or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989). This includes children who were previously 'Looked After' including those looked after outside England' but immediately after being 'Looked After' became subject to an adoption, or special guardianship order or a child arrangement order as defined in S8 of the Children's Act 1989 as amended by S12 of the Children's Act of 2014. Children previously looked after outside England are only included in category 1 if adopted from state care.

**Adopted** – under the terms of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (section 46).

**Child Arrangement 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.

**Special Guardianship Order** – under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians.

**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 and verified as necessary with Hertfordshire County Council's Shared Anti-Fraud Service. 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 time. If a child lives at two address equally, parents/carers should make a single joint application naming one address. 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.

Applications made as part of the main year 3 admissions round [*and in-year admission applications*] are processed by Hertfordshire County Council ("HCC") on behalf of the Governing Body, in accordance with HCC's published coordinated admission scheme[s]. If HCC receives two different 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. For the main year 3 admission round, if the initial differing applications (one or both) were received by HCC "on-time", an amended joint application will also be considered "on-time" if received before 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024 (the late deadline). If the amended joint application is received after 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024, it will be treated as "late".

**Distance to School** - a 'straight line' distance measurement is used in all home to school distance measurements in Hertfordshire. 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 recognized method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

**Sibling** - a 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 and in every case living permanently in the same household from Monday to Friday at the time of application. A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same household for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved. A sibling must be in school at the time of application and be expected to still be on roll at the time of admission.

**Multiple Births** - Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), as the admission authority will admit over a school's published admission number when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated a place at a school and the other twin/multiple birth child has applied but not been allocated.

**Parent/carer** - the adult with Parental Responsibility for the child as defined in s 3(1) Children Act 1989.

**Out of Year Group Applications** – The school will automatically admit summer born children who were admitted a year late to Reception out of cohort.

Further information can be found on the HCC admissions website; [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions)

Determined by the governing body on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022.