

WILLIAM AUSTIN INFANT SCHOOL

Admissions Policy

March 2025

Rationale

William Austin Infant School follows the guidelines on admissions issued by Luton Borough Council. Our admission policy is designed to be operated fairly. When parents apply for, or accept a place at the school, they are expected to adhere to the policy.

The Local Authority (LA) is responsible for admissions for statutory age pupils and for 'Starting School' admissions to Year R. Any appeals arising from admissions procedures will be directed to the LA Admissions Officer.

Organisation of the School

Our current standard number for admissions is 120 in Year R, Year 1 and Year 2.

William Austin Infant School admits children on a full-time basis into the Reception Classes in the September following their fourth birthday.

Children then join Year 1 classes in the September, following their fifth birthday, and move into Year 2 in the September following their sixth birthday. The Governors have expressed their wish that classes should be arranged so that Year R, Year 1 and Year 2 children are not mixed, on educational and social grounds.

Current legislation restricts infant class sizes to a maximum of 30 pupils. The Governing Body would not agree any increase in this number unless:

- The Local Authority insists that the school admits a pupil with a Statement of Special Educational Needs
- The Local Authority insists that the school admits a Looked After Child.

Arrangements for Admission – please refer Admission Arrangements for Luton's Community Schools for September 2025" which can be found on the school website or the link below

https://m.luton.gov.uk/Page/Show/Education_and_learning/Schools_and_colleges/School%20admissions/transferring-to-a-new-school-or-academy/Pages/Starting-school-in-September.aspx

Admissions to Reception:

Children usually start school full-time in September after their fourth birthday. Parents are encouraged to use the online Admissions Portal to apply for a Starting School place where possible. A paper copy of the form is available directly from LAAD.

The applications process opens in the autumn term with a closing date of 15 January. Applications made after this date will be treated as a 'late' application and will be processed after the first round of school applications have been processed and places allocated.

The online process requires parents to upload a copy of their child's Birth Certificate and proof of the child's current address in the form of either a Working Tax Credit/Child Tax Credit award letter for the current year or recent (within the last 3 months) gas, electricity, water bill or council tax bill for the current year.

All applications received by the due date are assessed by the LAAD against the admissions criteria applied in rank order as set out in Appendix A. Parents are informed of their application outcome by email or letter soon after the commencement of the summer term.

The school will make every effort to ensure parents are aware of this process, through newsletters to existing parents, placing notices around the school and on noticeboards and Greenside Community Centre, our main feeder nursery.

Admission for Statutory School Age Pupils - In Catchment

Most pupils of statutory school age join the school as pre-statutory pupils in the Year R classes, and stay at the school until they transfer to Junior School. There are some exceptions to this:

- **Children who move into the catchment area**

When a family moves into the catchment area of the school during the course of the academic year there is no automatic right of admission if:-

- a) the school is already full in the appropriate year group and
- b) no flexibility exists for class organisation to allow the child to be admitted and
- c) to admit the child would result directly in a class size above 30.

The Governors would not agree to any classes being reorganised to admit an extra child i.e. to mix year groups, or for a child to be admitted to a different year group, i.e. a Year 1 child being admitted to a Year 2 class where there was a vacancy. This may mean that a place is available for one child in a family, but not for another, depending on availability of places.

Any catchment area child not offered a place at the school will be eligible to be placed on the waiting list held by the LAAD, and should a place become available, the first name on the waiting list can be offered a place. This list is renewed on an annual basis by re-application to the LA Admissions Department

- **Out of Catchment Pupils**

Any out of catchment area child will be eligible to be placed on the waiting list held by the LA Admissions Department, and should a place become available the first name on the waiting list will be offered a place. This list is renewed on an annual basis by re-application to the LA Admissions Department.

- **Deferred Entry**

Occasionally parents wish to keep their child at pre-school provision, such as nursery, and to take up a place at the school once the child reaches statutory school age. Parents will be informed that they can do this, but the admission procedures previously outlined will still apply. Parents may only request deferred entry until compulsory school age.

Admission of children outside of their normal year group:

Parents seeking a place for their child outside of the chronological age group should submit their written case to the Council. Parents should include information regarding the child's academic, social and emotional development; and whether they have previously been educated outside of their normal age group. If the child has been born prematurely, parents should include these details in their application. Applications relating to the Starting School (Year R) admissions round will be discussed with the head teacher(s) of the preferred school(s) and other relevant local authority professionals. Decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and parents will be informed of the reasons for the decision in writing.

Requirements by the school from parents prior to admission

All parents will be asked to comply with the following as condition of admission to the school.

- I. To provide a proof of address, such as Working Tax Credit/Child Tax Credit award letter for the current year or recent (within the last 3 months) gas, electricity, water bill or council tax bill for

the current year.

- II. To complete and sign an admission form and give details of any medical needs including allergies and emergency contact numbers.
- III. To provide the child's birth certificate

This admission form states:

"The information I have given is correct and I recognise that if I knowingly give false information my child may forfeit their place at William Austin Infant School." This is included because the school has experienced problems with parents giving false addresses to gain entry to the school, which have caused difficulties when we need to contact the family in an emergency, and which also constitutes fraud.

Home-School Agreement

Parents will be asked to sign the current Home-School Agreement, but a place will not be refused if they refuse to do so.

The Home-School Agreement contains details of parental responsibilities concerning attendance, notification of absence and regulations on holidays taken during term time.

Leave of Absence

Please refer to the Leave of Absence Policy or click the following link for further details

<https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/williamAustinInfants/UploadedDocument/d7ea9834-1d91-47f4-a88a-f1325156ef16/leave-of-absence-guidance-for-parents-sept-2024.pdf>

The school has a policy on attendance which includes the following:

"Requests for leave of absence should not normally be granted for the purposes of a holiday. The law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time."

Parents are strongly advised not to take leave of absence during term time however, if they do, they are asked to complete a form with details of the length of absence, reason for request, and provide booking and flight details both outbound and return. This must be done at least two weeks in advance of any travel. Failure to provide these details may result in removal from the school roll.

The Governors have agreed that the Headteacher or the person deputising for the Headteacher, will only authorise extended leave of absence in **exceptional circumstances** during term time. If parents are unable to give a date of return when they request leave of absence, then the school will seek advice from the Attendance Support Team and the pupil's name may be removed from the school roll after 20 school days.

Medical evidence from abroad will not be accepted routinely as evidence that a pupil was unable to attend school. If a pupil is unable to return to school by the agreed date due to illness, the school may require evidence from the pupil's doctor in the UK to confirm they have received medical attention and are unfit/fit to return to school.

In cases of removal of the pupil's name from the school roll, the parents will have to re-apply for a place and this can only be granted if there is one available in the appropriate year group. If a place is not available, then the procedure for joining the waiting list will apply. The parents will be advised to contact the LAAD to find out where there is a suitable vacancy.

Transfer to Junior School

The LA will send letters to all parents of Year 2 children inviting them to complete an online Transfer to Junior application. The LA, will deal with these admissions and any queries or appeals resulting from them.

Reviewed March 2025

Next review March 2026

Appendix A

1. A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order including those who appear to the council to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in care as a result of being adopted. A looked after child 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).

An adoption order is an order under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders). A 'child arrangements order' is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 as amended by s.14 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).

A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

2. Brothers and sisters of pupils attending the school or the linked junior school when the pupil starts at the school.

3. Pupils living in the catchment area of the school.

4. On medical grounds supported by medical evidence.

5. Pupils attending the linked infant/junior school.

6. Children of staff who work at the School.

7. On the shortest distance, measured in a straight line, between the main entrance of the school site and the pupil's home address, with those living closer to the school being accorded higher priority. Main entrance of the School means the door used to access the School's main reception. The home address is measured from a point at the address identified in the Local Land and Property Gazetteer.

