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4th November 2026

Dear Parent / Carer / Stakeholder,

Full Statutory Consultation on St Marks Church of England Primary School Admissions Arrangements for 2028/2029

In accordance with Department for Education requirements, we are writing to inform you that the Weydon Multi Academy Trust is proposing changes to St Mark's Church of England Primary School's admissions arrangements for the academic year 2028/2029.

As part of our commitment to transparency and meaningful engagement, we are holding a full statutory consultation and would like to invite your views on any aspect of the proposed admission policy, as well as the proposed changes.

The consultation will run for a six-week period from Thursday 5th November 2026 until noon on Friday 18th December 2026.

The proposed changes to the St Marks Church of England Primary School Admissions Policy 2028–2029 are as follows:

Governance and Admissions Authority

- 2027/28 Policy: Referenced The Prospect Trust as the employer for staff priorities.
- 2028/29 Draft Policy: Formally establishes that St Mark's is an academy within Weydon Multi Academy Trust (WMAT), with WMAT acting as the official Admissions Authority.

This brings the policy up to date with the school's current governance arrangements and clearly identifies responsibility for admissions decisions. This supports transparency and accountability, consistent with the Code's requirement for clear and accessible admission arrangements.

Exceptional Social or Medical Circumstances

- 2027/28 Policy: Referred generally to "Exceptional Arrangements" without a dedicated supplementary information form.

Diocese of Guildford
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

WMAT

- 2028/29 Draft Policy: Standardises this criterion as Exceptional Social or Medical Circumstances and requires completion of a dedicated Exceptional Circumstances Supplementary Information Form (SIF), with professional evidence on letterhead submitted directly to the WMAT Admissions Officer.

Clearer criteria and a standardised evidence process should help parents understand what is required and support consistent, objective decision-making. This is in keeping with paragraph 1.16 of the Code, which addresses the use of social and medical needs as oversubscription criteria.

Sibling Priority

- 2027/28 Policy: Applied to brothers and sisters living in the same family unit who were on roll at the school.
- 2028/29 Draft Policy: Explicitly includes mainstream applicants who have a sibling with a final Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming St Mark's, provided the sibling starts on or before the applicant's admission date.

The revised wording makes eligibility clearer for families and helps admissions staff apply the criterion consistently. It is important that the wording also reflects the statutory priority arrangements for children with EHCPs and does not create ambiguity about how the published oversubscription criteria operate.

Regular Worship (Faith Criterion)

- 2027/28 Policy: Gave priority to children or parents who regularly worship at St Mark's Church, defined as attending two out of every four weeks over at least one year.
- 2028/29 Draft Policy: Clarifies that priority applies to children and parent(s) who live within the parish boundary of St Mark's and regularly attend and worship at St Mark's Church, maintaining the two-out-of-four-weeks attendance requirement over one year.

The revised wording makes the residence and worship requirements more explicit, helping parents understand the criteria before applying and supporting consistent decisions.

Staff Children

- 2027/28 Policy: Applied to staff employed by The Prospect Trust.
- 2028/29 Draft Policy: Updates the employer to WMAT and requires the staff member's contract to specify St Mark's as their place of work. For skills shortage claims, the post must be an officially identified vacant post with a demonstrable skills shortage.

This reflects the Trust's current structure and clarifies which staff qualify, reducing uncertainty for parents and admissions staff. Paragraphs 1.39–1.42 of the Code set out the circumstances in which children of staff may receive priority, including relevant employment conditions and skills-shortage provisions.

Tie-Breaker Procedure

- 2027/28 Policy: Referenced general random allocation administered via Hampshire County Council.
- 2028/29 Draft Policy: Specifies that random selection for equal distance ties will be drawn from a container, supervised by two senior officers from the WMAT Central Team who are independent of the school's admissions process.

A clearly documented procedure with independent oversight makes the process more transparent and helps demonstrate that decisions are made fairly and consistently. Paragraph 1.8 requires admission arrangements to be clear, fair and objective, including an effective tie-breaker where necessary.

Waiting Lists and Appeals

- Waiting lists — 2028/29 Draft Policy: Specifies that Reception waiting lists are maintained until 31 December, after which a new Spring waiting list is formed, requiring parents to contact the school after 1 January to remain listed.
- Appeals — 2028/29 Draft Policy: Explicitly directs parents to lodge appeals through the Surrey Schools Appeals Service.

Clearer information about waiting lists and appeals helps parents understand their options if their child is not offered a place. Identifying the appeals service also makes the process easier to navigate.

We value your comments and feedback and encourage you to share your views on these proposals. The full draft admissions policy can be read on our school website at https://www.stmarkscofe.co.uk/admissions

Responses can be submitted via:

- Online form: Feedback Form
- Email: StMarksChurchofEnglandPrimaryAdmissionsConsultation@wmat.org.uk
- Post: St Mark's Church of England Primary School Admissions Consultation, Weydon Multi Academy Trust, Weydon Lane, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 8UG

Please note that only responses which are fully completed, including the respondent's name and address, and received by the consultation end date will be accepted.

After the full statutory consultation period closes at noon on 18th December 2026, all responses received by that date will be collated and presented to the Governing Board. The Board will then decide whether to proceed with the proposed arrangements. Once ratified by the WMAT Board of Trustees, the final determined admission arrangements will be published on our website.

Please ensure this information is shared widely, including on your website and circulated to your parent body via your newsletters.

Kind regards,

Weydon Multi Academy Trust