



THOMAS RUSSELL INFANTS' SCHOOL – part of the JTMAT

ADMISSIONS POLICY SEPTEMBER 2025 INTAKE

Normal Age of Entry: Academic Year 2025/2026

Full time places in reception classes will be available in September of the academic year within which the child becomes five years old.

It is the school's policy to try and meet parents' wishes where possible, however in some cases there may be more applications than there are places available.

Thomas Russell Infants' School Planned Admissions Level for the reception year is 60, (30 per class). This level has been agreed by the Governors for the 2024 entry. This number may be exceeded at the discretion of the Governors, but they are not obliged to accept pupils in excess of this number unless parents have won their case at an Independent Appeal Panel.

Oversubscription criteria

If the total number of preferences for admission to a school exceeds the published admission number of 60 (PAN), the following order of priority is used to allocate the available places.

- 1) Children in care and children who ceased to be in care because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order) including those children 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 *see additional notes * below*
- 2) Children who have an elder sibling in attendance at Thomas Russell Infants and who will still be attending the school at the proposed admission date; (For admission purposes, a brother or sister is a child who lives at the same address and either: have one or both natural parents in common; are related by a parents' marriage; are adopted or fostered by a common parent or are unrelated children who live at the same address, whose parents live as partners.)
- 3) Children living within the catchment area of Thomas Russell Infants *see additional notes ** below*
- 4) Children who satisfy both of the following tests:-

Test 1: The child is distinguished from the great majority of applicants either on their own medical grounds or by other exceptional circumstances. Medical grounds must be supported by a medical report (obtained by the applicant and provided at the point of application). This report must clearly justify, for health reasons only, why it is better for the child's health to attend the school rather than any other school.

Exceptional circumstances must relate to the choice of school and the individual child, i.e. the circumstances of the child, not the economic or social circumstances of the parent/carer. It should be supported by a professional report (obtained by the applicant and provided at the point of application), e.g. social worker. This report must clearly justify why it is better for the child to attend the school rather than any other school.

Test 2: The child would suffer hardship if they were unable to attend the school. Hardship means severe suffering of any kind, not merely difficulty or inconvenience, which is likely to be experienced as a result of the child attending a different school. Applicants must provide detailed information about both type and severity of any likely hardship at the time of application.

5) Other children arranged in order of priority according to how near their home addresses are to the main gate of the school, determined by a straight-line measurement as calculated by the local authority's geographical information system *see additional notes *** below*

Where it is not possible to accommodate all children applying for places within a particular category then the trust will allocate the available places in accordance with the remaining criteria. If for instance, all the catchment area children cannot be accommodated at a school, children who are resident within the catchment area will be arranged in order of priority according to the remaining criteria.

Unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria stated above and not based on the date their application was received.

Additional notes

Admissions for the normal age of entry are administered through a coordinated admission scheme and preferences for maintained schools will be processed centrally by the School Admissions and Transport Service. Each child will receive only one offer of a place at a Staffordshire school.

In accordance with legislation, children who have a statutory statement of special educational need or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that names Thomas Russell Infants as being the most appropriate to meet the child's needs must be admitted to that school. This will reduce the amount of places available to other applicants. Children in Care means children who are in the care of, or provided with accommodation by a local authority in accordance with section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of making the application. In accordance with legislation, children who have an education, health and care plan (EHCP) that names Thomas Russell Infants as being the most appropriate to meet the child's needs must be admitted. This will reduce the amount of places available to other applicants.

It is the applicant's responsibility to provide any supportive information required in order for the application to be assessed against the published admissions arrangements, the school will not seek to obtain this information on behalf of the applicant.

** Copies of school catchment area maps are available from the local authority (www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Admissions-primary/Catchment-areas.aspx) or school.

On behalf of the trust, the local authority uses a geographical information system (GIS) to calculate home to school distances in miles. The measurement is calculated using Ordnance Survey (OS) data from an applicant's home address to the main front gate of the school. The coordinates of an applicant's home address is determined and provided by the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and OS address point data.

The requirement for the trust to meet the infant class size legislation may result in the refusal of catchment area or sibling applications where a class has already reached its limit of 30 pupils. However, as an exception, the trust will give careful consideration to offering places above the published admission number to applications from children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted even when there are no other vacant places.

The home address is considered to be the child's along with their parent/carer's main and genuine principal place of residence at the time of the allocation of places i.e. where they are normally and regularly living. If a child is resident with friends or relatives (for reasons other than legal guardianship) the friends or relatives address will not be considered for allocation purposes.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with both parents for part of the school week, parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes.

It is expected that parents will agree on school places before an application is made, and it may be necessary to request evidence from you to confirm that this is the case. The Local Governing Body is not in a position to intervene in disputes between parents over school applications and will request that these are resolved privately.

If a place is offered on the basis of an address that is subsequently found to be different from the child's normal and permanent home address at the time of allocation of places, then that place is likely to be withdrawn.

The requirement to meet the Infant Class Size legislation may result in the refusal of catchment area or sibling applications where a class has already reached its limit of 30 pupils. However, as an exception, the John Taylor MAT Academy will give careful consideration to offering places above the Admission Number to applications from children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted even when there are no other vacant places.

If there are a limited number of spaces available and we cannot distinguish between applicants using the criteria listed, such as in the case of children who live in the same block of flats, then the child or children who will be offered the available spaces will be randomly selected. This process will be independently verified.

Deferred Entry to Reception Class

Parents may decide to defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the application was made. In addition, where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

Before deciding whether to defer their child's entry to school, parents should visit our school to clarify how we cater for the youngest children in Reception and how the needs of these children are met as they move up through the school.

Admission Outside of the Normal Age Group

Parents may wish to apply for their child's admission to school outside of their normal age group. In addition, parents of summer born children who choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday may request that they are admitted outside of their normal age group to reception rather than Year 1.

Any such parents will need to make an application alongside children applying at the normal age explaining why they consider it to be in the child's best interest to be admitted outside of their normal age, this may include information such as professional evidence as to why this is the case and why an exception should be made in the case of the child. A decision as to

whether this is agreed will be made by the Local Governing Body. They will take into account the circumstances of the case, including the parent's views and information provided; information about the child's academic, social, and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of any medical professionals; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely as well as views of the Headteacher of Thomas Russell Infants.

Parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular year group.

Waiting lists

Unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria stated above and not based on the date their application was received. There will be a period of two weeks after the national offer date whereby available places will not be reallocated. If places become available after this date they will be offered according to the child at the top of the waiting list.

For cases where the infant class size regulations apply, the waiting list will operate until the cohort concerned leaves Year 2 and parents will be written to each year to ask whether or not they wish their child's details to remain on the list.

For all other cases, Waiting Lists will be kept until the 31st December.

Inclusion on a school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available at the preferred school.

A child's position on a waiting list is not fixed and is subject to change during the year i.e. they can go up or down the list since each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the oversubscription criteria. It is ranked purely on eligibility for a place not length of time on the list.

Children who are subject of a direction by a local authority to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those on the waiting list.

Late Applications

Preferences received after the closing date will be considered alongside those applicants who applied on time wherever possible. Where it is not practicable because places have already been allocated, or are shortly to be allocated, then late preferences will be considered only after those that were made before this point.

A late application does not affect the right of appeal or the right to be placed on a school's waiting list.

Repeat Applications

Parents do not have the right to a second appeal in respect of the same school for the same academic year unless, in exceptional circumstances, the local authority has accepted a second application from the appellant because of a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school but still refused admission.

"In-Year Transfer" Arrangements

Parents or carers seeking to transfer to a particular Academy may make an application using the appropriate application form, which can be obtained from the Academy. In year

applications for school places will be responded to within a maximum of 15 school days. However our schools, where possible, would envisage processing applications more swiftly.

This application will be processed in line with the procedure outlined in the determined admission arrangements and parents and carers need to be aware that any date set for joining the new school may be after the next term or half term holiday and those parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that their child continues to receive appropriate education in the interim.

In the interests of safeguarding it is Thomas Russell Infant's procedure to inform the Local Authority that a pupil has left in order to attend another school in the UK or abroad.

Admission Procedure

Admissions will be handled in the first place by the Local Authority Schools Admissions Officers who will make the final allocations after consultation with the school, if the number exceeds 60. Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application on national offer day.

Parents whose request for a place for their child is not accepted, may appeal, stating their grounds for appeal. Appeals are heard by an independent panel.

It is the Governors' policy to avoid any form of discrimination on grounds of a child's ability, religion or race. The school will attempt to make provision for children with disabilities.

Entry later than September,

Parents moving to the area, or those who wish to move their child to the school, should contact the school directly.

Agreed by the Local Governing Body September 2023

Reviewed by the Local Governing Body September 2024