



Admissions Policy

"I am the vine; you are the branches.

If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit"

(John 15:5)

Our Vision

'A Christian Community Achieving Excellence and Equality'

Be safe: self-control; peace; patience

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Be Kind: kindness; gentleness; goodness.

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Be responsible: faithfulness; love; joy

Policy Reference:	
Approved by Vine Schools Trust on:	Spring 2025
Adopted by this school on:	Autumn 2026
Next review:	

Introduction

Our vision for the Trust is that our schools are places where pupils grow and thrive, where we share our Christian values with them and the communities we serve. We endeavour to ensure our children are receiving an education that helps them to realise their true potential and encourages them to approach life with Christian character. As the Church of England Vision for Education puts it, our schools are deeply Christian, serving the common good.

As a church school, we believe that to love God is to love our neighbour. If God is within us, we shall be good neighbours and show God's love to the world. Our school seeks to reflect the Christian understanding that all people are precious to God. Emphasis is placed on an education for life, developing each child's particular talents within a happy, caring, and disciplined environment, where co-operation, mutual respect and responsibility are encouraged.

Recognising its historic foundation, St James' C of E Primary School & Nursery will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the churches at parish and diocesan level. The School aims to support children and their families by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

Consequently, our admissions policy reflects these core values: we were founded to bring education to our local communities and so our admissions arrangements give priority to those communities and in particular to the most disadvantaged and vulnerable. We also recognise that our schools rightly offer an opportunity for parents who value our approach to education and to faith and that we have strong and lasting links with the Church of England. We also want our schools to be welcoming and inclusive, open to people of all faiths and beliefs and backgrounds. Our admissions policies will therefore give priority to the local community and will, where appropriate, enable those who particularly value our Christian ethos to have opportunities to be part of our school community, insofar as this makes the school more inclusive and welcoming.

Since our School is a Church of England school, it and the Trust must consult with the Diocese of Chelmsford about certain things, including our admissions arrangements. That is because the Diocese is what is known as our Representative Religious Body and we must have regard to its advice on these matters.

Responsibilities

- a. The Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust (the Trust') of which St James C of E Primary School & Nursery ("the School") is a part, is the Admissions Authority and is responsible for the admission arrangements of the School. This document sets out the admission arrangements of the School for the academic year 2026-2027.
- b. Each School will participate in the co-ordinated admissions process for normal admissions in the local authority in which it resides. For this school, that is normally Essex County Council and details of the admissions procedure for St James C of E Primary can be found at [Admissions – St James'](#)
- c. The Trust Board has delegated the implementation of some admissions duties to its Local School Boards. Those responsibilities include:

- (i) Proposing to the Trust Board suitable criteria for offering places when the school has more applications than it has available places.
- (ii) Administering the application of places, including liaising with the Local Authority which operates the Essex Common Application Process to ensure the process works effectively and efficiently
- (iii) Providing information, advice and support to families considering or applying for a place at the school
- (iv) Applying the admissions criteria to applications in a fair, objective and lawful manner when making admissions decisions, and efficiently communicating those decisions to the Local Authority in a timely and accurate way, so that parents can be informed of the outcome of their application by the required deadline
- (v) Proposing potential amendments or variations to the admissions arrangements to the Trust Board and to the Diocese of Chelmsford (the representative religious authority for the Trust) in advance of their public consultation.
- (vi) Conducting the annual cycle for consultation on any proposed changes to the admissions arrangements in accordance with Trust policy and the requirements of the Admissions Code 2021.
- (vii) Determining the admissions arrangements for each admissions year according to the required timetable and procedures applicable under the Admissions Code 2021.
Arranging any Independent Education Admissions Appeals Panels and communicating with parents and the Panel to ensure their fair and effective conduct.

The number of places available

- a. The published admission number (PAN) for entry into the School is 60 in any year group. The School will admit up to the PAN in the normal year of entry, which is the Reception year. Where there are more applications for admission than places available at the School, then places will be offered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out at Section 3 of this policy.
- b. Infant Class Size Regulations apply to the normal year of entry (and Year 1 and Year 2). These Regulations require classes to be no bigger than 30 children, although the PAN may be much lower than 30.

Admission Arrangements for the Academic Year 2026/27

Applications for a 'Reception' school place must be made via the Schools Planning and Admissions Department at Essex County Council who allocate all children wishing to join Saint James' Church of England Primary School and Nursery. For places starting in September 2026 the closing date for applications is 15th January 2026. In the first instance you will need to apply online at essex.gov.uk/admissions, if you do not have internet access, please apply to the local authority for a paper copy.

For Reception intake the local authority forward names of pupils wishing to join Saint James' Church of England Primary School and Nursery to the Local Schools Board.

- a. The published admission number (PAN) for entry into the School is 60 in any year group. The School will admit up to the PAN in the normal year of entry, which is the Reception year. Where there are more applications for admission than places available at the School, then places will be offered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out below.

- b. Infant Class Size Regulations apply to the normal year of entry (and Year 1 and Year 2). These Regulations require classes to be no bigger than 30 children, even if the PAN is much lower than 30.

For **mid-term transfers**, please apply to the school directly by using the application form found on our school website.

The Local Schools Board of the school will consider application for admission against the following criteria and in the following order, subject to availability of places in the appropriate year group. The maximum number to admit in any Year Group is 60.

Applications must be made by the National Closing Date detailed in the Primary Education Essex booklet, which is available from the LA. Late applications will be dealt with as detailed in these booklets for children resident in Essex. Children resident outside of Essex should refer to the process for handling late applications published by their home LA.

Applications for entry into the Reception Year Group must be made to the Local Authority by the closing date published in the Primary Education in Essex Booklet. Late applications will be dealt with as detailed in this booklet.

In addition, if applying under the Supplementary Information all applicants will be required to complete and return this form to the school.

LAC, PLAC and IAPLAC

1. " Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children

From September 1, 2021, we are to include children from outside of England who have been adopted from public care, as follows.

Looked After Children, Previously Looked After Children or Children Internationally Adopted After Public Care

After children with an **EHCP Plan** naming our school, our first oversubscription criterion must always be Looked After, Previously Looked After and Internationally Adopted Previously Looked After Children, as this is a legal requirement.

i. A "Looked After Child" (LAC) s 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 (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school

ii. A "Previously Looked After Child" (PLAC) is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order immediately following having been looked after.

iii. An "Internationally Adopted Previously Looked After Child (IAPLAC) is a child who appears (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.

2. Children whose parents attend the Parish Church of St James the Great

Regular attendance is defined as the child and parent or carer attending public worship, either: at St James the Great Church; St James' Church of England Primary School or at another event led by clergy of St James the Great Church for not less than twelve times in a twelve-month period prior to the date of submission of the application for admission to the school. (Supplementary information form is required).

3. Children whose parents are 'at the heart' of other Anglian churches or other Trinitarian Christian churches expressing a wish for a CE education and whose involvement is confirmed by a reference from their Parish Priest or Church Minister.

Regular attendance at public worship in any other Christian church for not less than eight times in a twelve-month period prior to the date of submission of the application for admission to the school. For the purposes of these admission arrangements 'other Christian church' means any Anglican church or a church which is Designated under the Ecumenical Relations Measure 2018, nationally by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, or locally by the diocesan bishop; or which is a member of Churches Together in England; or affiliated to the Evangelical Alliance; or a Partner Church of Affinity. The list of nationally Designated churches can be found at https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-04/list_of_designated_churches_3_oct_18.pdf

4. Children who at the time of their proposed admission to the school, have a sibling or siblings who are also current pupils at the school. (Sibling is defined as children who live as brother and sister in the same house, including natural brothers and sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters).

" A child whose home address is inside the priority admissions area (sometimes also called the catchment area) is eligible for this category where they have a sibling attending the School on the date of application and the sibling will still be attending the School at the time of admission.

- Sibling means brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, foster brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom admission is sought is living in the same family unit as that sibling and at the same address.
- Home address means the place where the child resides for the majority of the school week (Sunday to Thursday) with the person/s who legally has care of the child (child care arrangements are excluded). The School may require documentary evidence of house ownership or tenancy together with evidence of the child's residency at the property.
- Priority Admissions Area means the geographical area from which children will be afforded priority for admission to the School. A map showing the priority admissions area is shown as an appendix to this Admission Policy and is available to view on the School website. A hard copy is available at the School office.

5. Children living in the priority admission area (a map is available at the end of this document or as a hard copy from the school office).

6. Children outside the priority admission area but living in the Parish of St James & St Paul, Colchester. Parish catchment area, means the geographical area from which children will be afforded priority for admission to the School. A map showing this area is shown as an appendix to this Admission Policy and is available to view on the School website as well as a hard copy in the school office. an appendix map available in the school office.

7. All other children

A child with an **Education Health Care Plan** that names St James' on the statement will be admitted irrespective of the above criteria.

8. Tie Breaker

For admissions purposes, the school uses a distance tie-breaker, based upon the Local Authority's scheme, which uses data provided by the Ordnance Survey (OS) to measure straight line distances. The OS data plots the co-ordinates of each individual property (the home address) which are referred to as address points. The definition of the home address is as described above. Straight line distance is measured from the address point of the home address to address point of the school. Distances are reported in miles to three decimal places.

If a child's time is split equally between two residences, the address of the residence at which the child resides for the majority of the school week would be used to measure the distance between the child's school and home. In the unlikely event of two applicants with an identical distance competing for a single place at a school – for example because both families live in a block of flats with a common entrance - the place will be offered to one applicant on the basis of lots drawn by an officer of the County Council not involved in admissions.

Supplementary Information Form (SIF)

- a. You **must complete** the relevant part of the SIF if you are applying under Category 2 or Category 3.
- b. Category 2: you must fully complete the relevant part of the SIF and provide the required supporting evidence. The SIF must be verified and signed by the relevant Church or Faith Leader, or an authorised Church or Faith Officer.
- c. Category 3: you must fully complete the relevant part of the SIF and supply written evidence to support the application. The SIF must be verified and signed by the relevant Church or Faith Leader, or an authorised Church or Faith Officer.
- d. The SIF must be returned to the School office by the closing date. The SIF is available on the School website or a paper copy may be requested from the School office. Please note that if the School does not receive your SIF and any relevant evidence on time, then the Admissions Committee will have to make its decision only on the information it has in front of it. If there are exceptional circumstances that made it impossible for you to submit the SIF on time, these must be notified to the School immediately.

Other Important Information

a. Waiting Lists

If the School is oversubscribed for entry, a waiting list will be maintained across the entire academic year. The position of the child on the waiting list will correspond with the oversubscription criteria; it will not be based on length of time on the waiting list. The right of

appeal remains. You may request your child's name be removed from the waiting list at any time. If a place is offered but refused then the child's name will be removed from the waiting list.

b. Summer Born Children

Summer born children (which refers to children born from 1 April to 31 August) are not required to start school until a full year after the point at which they could first have been admitted – the point at which other children in their age range are beginning Year 1. Should the parent wish their child to be admitted to Reception, rather than Year 1, they may request that the child is admitted out of their normal age group. Please note the following:

- (i) **You must make an application for admission to the School for September 2026 entry but make it clear on the application form that you wish your child to enter the Reception class in September 2027.**
- (ii) Discussions with the School are strongly recommended prior to planning to decline entry for an entire year **and** to be admitted to Reception in September 2027. Any decision will be on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.
- (iii) If the request is agreed, the September 2026 application may be withdrawn before a place is offered **but a fresh application will need to be made** for September 2006 +1 entry **which will be processed as a fresh application along with all other applications and in accordance with the School's admission arrangements.** PLEASE NOTE that it is possible even if the request is agreed that the child may not be admitted in September 2027 as there is no guarantee of a school place.
- (iv) If the request is refused the parent must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or to refuse it and make an in-year application for admission to Year 1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday.

c. Deferred entry and part time attendance below statutory school age

A child may start at the School in the academic year in which he/she reaches the age of 5.

Where the child has not yet reached statutory school age (5 years old), the child is entitled to a full-time place and parents may choose for their child to attend full time. Alternatively, parents may choose for their child to attend part time until their child attains compulsory school age. If parents do not consider their child is ready to start school then they may defer entry altogether to later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age or not beyond the beginning of the final term in the school year (whichever is the sooner).

d. Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may seek a place for their child outside their normal age group, for example if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

Such requests should be discussed with the Headteacher as early as possible in the admissions round associated with that child's date of birth. This will allow the School sufficient time to plan regarding the request before the closing date for applications and national offer day. Decisions to admit a pupil outside their normal age group will be based on the circumstances of each case and based on what is in the best interests of the child concerned. We may request supporting professional evidence to assist in the decision-making. There is no legal requirement for this medical or educational evidence to be secured from an appropriate professional. However, failure to provide this may impede our ability to make an informed decision.

e. Multiple Birth Applications

Where there are multiple birth applications the PAN will, provided it is practicable, be exceeded or increased at the point of allocation in order to ensure that multiple birth siblings can be allocated places at the School.

1. Withdrawal of an Offer

The School may withdraw an offer where it has been offered in error, has been made on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application, or a parent has not responded to an offer of a place within a reasonable period of time.

2. In Year Admissions

- a. Applications for in year admission may be submitted at any time during the school year. The application form is on the School website or a paper copy may be requested from the School office.
- b. Where the School has no spaces available, because the admission of another child would prejudice the efficient education of others at the School or would prejudice the efficient use of resources, or would breach Infant Class Size Regulations, the application will be refused and a right of appeal will arise.
- c. The oversubscription criteria will be only used where the School is considering more than one in year application at the same time and there are not enough spaces to accept all applicants.

3. Further Information

- a. Important information published by the LA applies to some aspects of school admissions. If you are considering applying for a place at the School you are advised to refer to your home LA's website. For Essex County Council, the website can be found at
- b. If you have any questions in relation to these admission arrangements please contact the School office.
- c. The School will handle all personal data in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.

As required by law, this school provides for the full-time admission of all children offered a place in the reception year group from the September following their fourth birthday.

Parents can also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. For parents opting to take up a part time place, this would be mornings only.

If you would like to come and have a look around St James' Church of England Primary School and Nursery, please contact 01206 865747 to arrange an appointment.

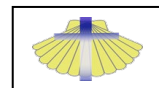
Appeals – in the event of a place not being available, parents have a right of appeal against the decision of the Governors' Admissions Committee. Appeals should be made to: The Clerk to the Independent Appeal Panel,

P.O. Box 11, Chelmsford, CM1 1LX Telephone: 01245 430447

Waiting List - The school maintains a waiting list for each year group.

Supplementary Information Form for Admission for 2026/2027

Personal Details



First Name of Pupil.....Gender:

Last Name of Pupil.....

Date of Birth.....

Names of parents/carers.....

Relationship to child.....

Address.....

Post Code.....Tel.....

Is your child a 'Looked After' Child? Yes / No

Does your child have an Educational Health Care Plan? Yes / No

Admissions Criteria Details

Look at the admissions criteria and put the number in the box under which you are applying.

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If you are applying under criteria 2 or 6, please put the admissions criteria number in the box. This information will be verified by the Rector when the form is returned to school.

☐

If you are applying under criteria 3, please tick the box here, and give the name of your local priest/minister and name and address of the church. We shall contact your Church To verify your information.

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Name of Priest/Local Minister.....

Name of Church and address.....

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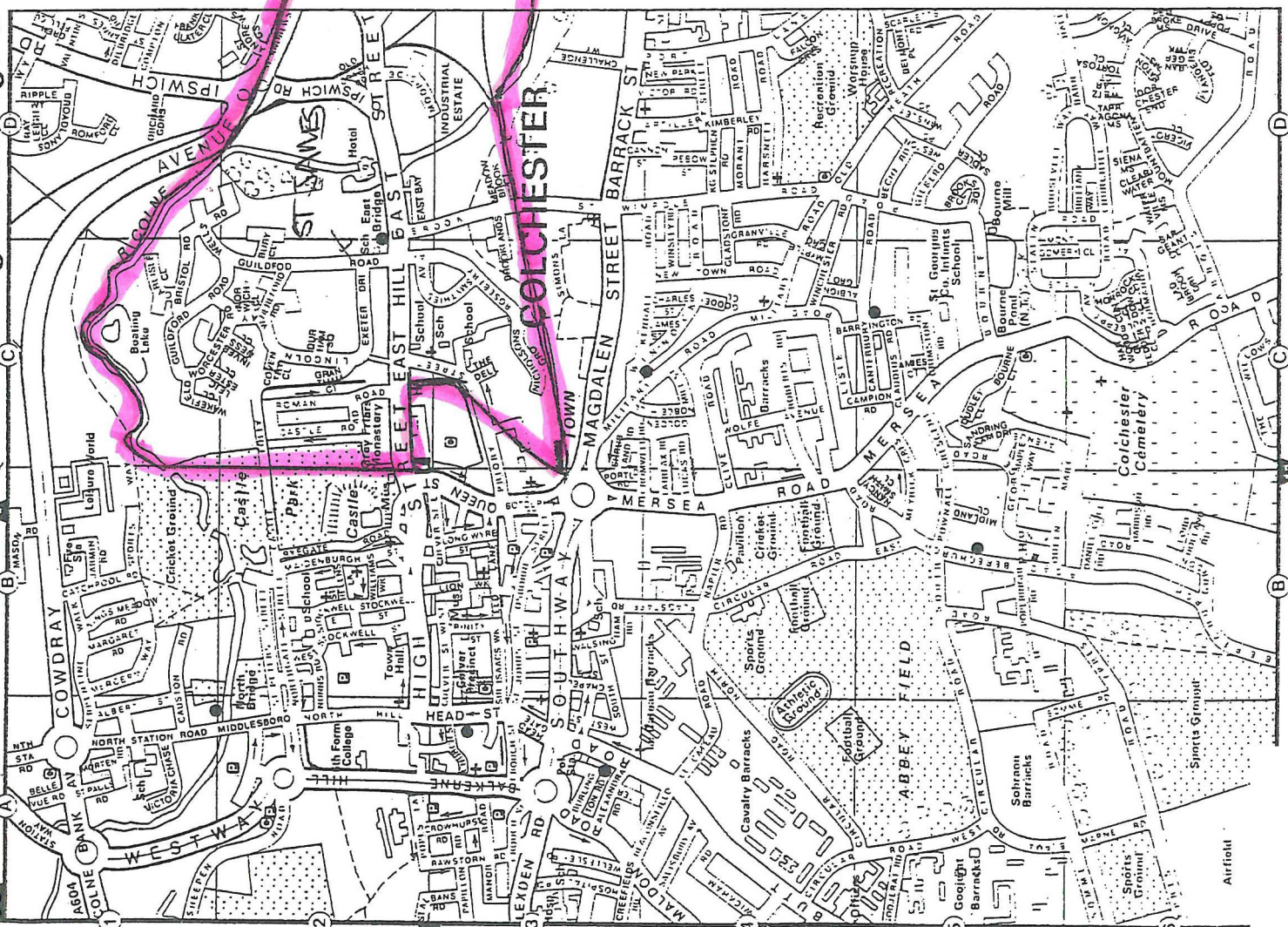
PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM DIRECTLY TO THE SCHOOL

Date SIF received in school.....

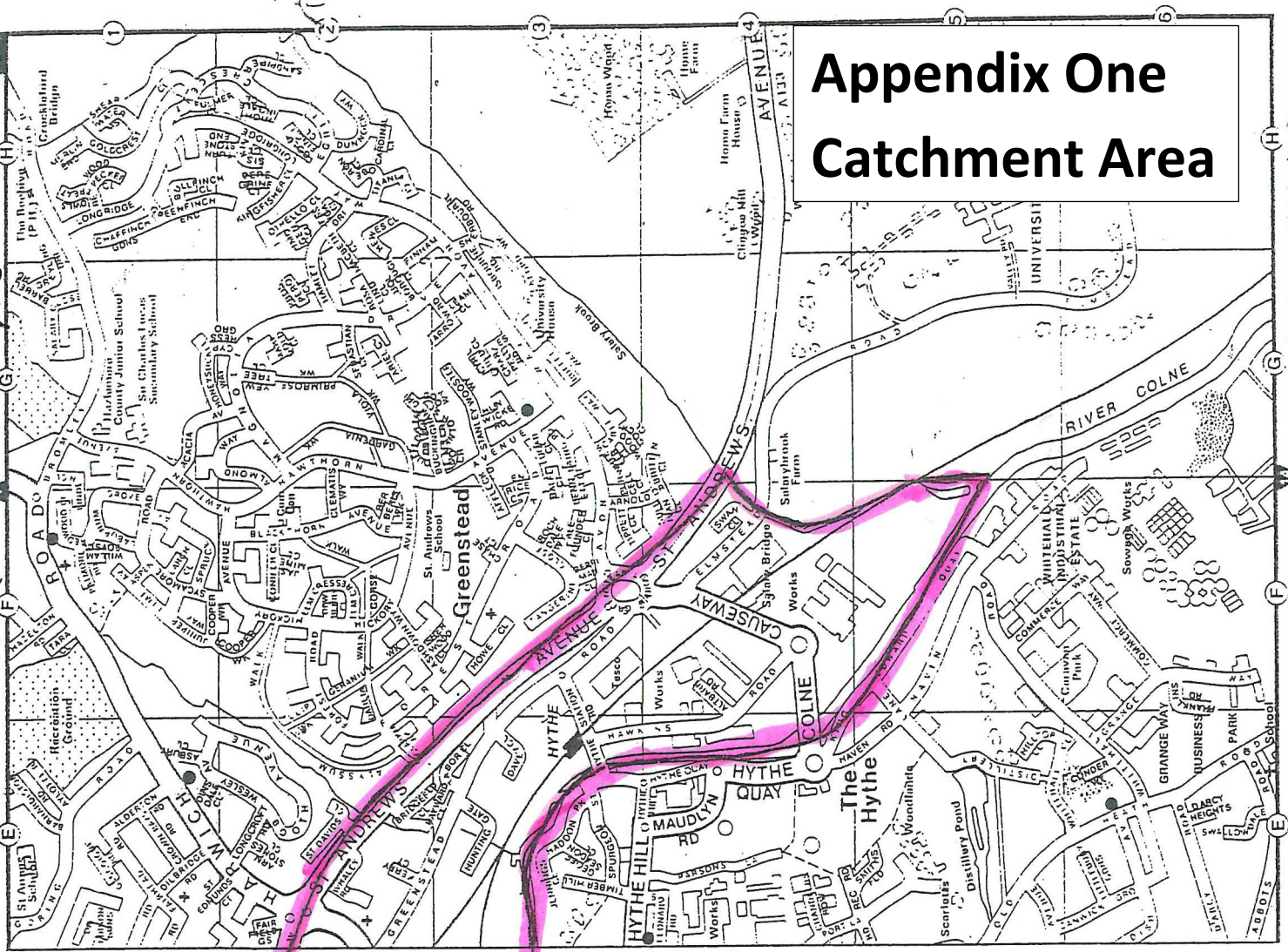
Where applicable, date verification of details requested.....

Date verification of details received.....

Date all details verified by the Rector.....



Appendix One Catchment Area



Parish Catchment Area

