

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

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St Mary's Catholic Primary School Draft Admissions Policy and Procedures 2018–2019

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is part of the Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership. The school is conducted by its governing body as part of the Catholic church in accordance with its Trust Deed and Instrument of Government, and seeks at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ. The school exists primarily to serve the Catholic community and Catholic children always have priority of admission. However, the Governing Body welcomes all applications, particularly from those of other denominations and faiths who support the religious ethos of the school. Furthermore, before the application of oversubscription criteria, children with a statement of special educational need or Education (SEN), Health & Care Plan (EHCP) which names the school will be admitted. As a result of this, the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly.

Having consulted with the Local Authority and other admission authorities, the Governors intend to admit into the reception class, in September 2018, up to 60 pupils without reference to ability or aptitude.

The Governors will offer places using the following criteria in the order stated:

1. Looked after and previously looked after Catholic children or looked after and previously looked after children in the care of Catholic families¹.
2. Baptised catholic children. A Baptism Certificate will be required.
3. Children enrolled in the catechumenate or in the process of being received into the Catholic church. Evidence of enrolment will be required.
4. Other looked after and previously looked after children.¹
5. Children who are members of Eastern Orthodox Churches. A Baptism Certificate will be required.
6. Children who are members of other Christian denominations that are part of Churches Together in England. Evidence of Baptism (or dedication) provided by a priest or minister of a designated place of worship will be required.
7. Children of other faiths. Evidence of membership of the faith provided by a priest, minister or religious leader of a designated place of worship will be required.
8. Any other children.

The following order of priorities will be applied when applications within any of the above categories exceed the places available and it is necessary to decide between applications:

1. For Category 2 above – The strength of evidence of commitment to the faith as demonstrated by the level of the family's Mass attendance on Sundays. This evidence must be provided by the parents/carers and be endorsed by a priest at the church(es) where the family normally worship. Applications will be ranked in the order shown on the Supplementary Form. Highest priority will be given to those who attend Mass at least once a month.

¹ Children in Local Authority Care - a looked after child is a child under the age of 18 years for whom the Local Authority provides accommodation by agreement with their parents/carers (section 22 of the Children Act 1989) or who ceased to be so because they were adopted or who is the subject of a care order under part IV of the Act.

2. A brother or sister on the school roll at the time of admission. Evidence of the relationship will be required.²
3. Social and medical needs which make the school particularly suitable for the child in question. Strong and relevant evidence must be provided by an appropriate professional authority (eg qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker or priest).
4. Distance from home to school. Evidence of residence will be required. Distance from home to school is measured as a straight line from the home to the school using the measurement supplied by the local authority derived from their computerised mapping system. In a tiebreaker situation the nearness of an applicant's home to school will be the decider. If in the event more than one applicant has the same distance from home to school (as measured by the local authority), then a random selection will be applied³

Note:

Catholics include members of the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome. Reference to other Christian denominations refers to denominations that are full members of Churches Together in England.⁴

Admissions procedure

In addition to the Common Application Form (CAF) supplied by the Local Authority, the Supplementary Information Form (available from the school) should be completed and sent to the School Office not later than **Monday 15 January 2018**. This should be done even if the CAF is completed online. If the Supplementary Information Form is not completed, the Governing Body of the school will only be able to consider the application after all applicants who have completed a Supplementary Information Form. You are advised to make two copies of the forms. You should retain one copy and pass the second copy to the school or your priest, as indicated.

Offers of places will be emailed after 4pm or sent to parents via first class post by the Local Authority on **Monday 16 April 2018**.

If you require any assistance with your application or have any concerns about this procedure, please contact the School Office.

Appeals

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with section 94 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing and must set out the reasons on which the appeal is made. Appeals should be made to the Admissions Appeal Clerk at the school address. Parents/carers have the right to make oral representations to the Appeal Panel.

Infant classes are restricted by the legislation to 30 children. Parents should be aware that an appeal against refusal of a place in an infant class may only succeed if it can be demonstrated that:-

- a. The admission of additional children would not breach the infant class size limit; or
- b. The admission arrangements did not comply with admissions law or had not been correctly and impartially applied and the child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had complied or had been correctly and impartially applied; or
- c. The panel decides that the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

Waiting lists

Parents of children who have not been offered a place at the school may ask for their child's name to be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list, which will be maintained until the end of December 2018, will be operated

² Brothers or sisters are defined as siblings through blood, marriage or adoption and include step-brothers and sisters. They will not necessarily be residing at the same address or have the same surnames.

³ Distance from home to school is measured by the LA in a straight line using Ordnance Survey address point data as defined in the Kent LA booklet Admission to Primary School in Kent.

⁴ A full list is available from the School Office on request.

using the same admissions criteria listed above. Placing a child's name on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.⁵

Late applications

Any late applications will be considered by the Governors' Admissions Committee, in the event of there being any available places using the above criteria. If all places have been filled, parents will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on the waiting list. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

In-year (casual) admissions

Applications for a place at the school in-year must be made directly to the school. The school's supplementary form should be completed to enable the governors to rank the application in the event of there being more than one application for a place. The governors will use the same criteria to rank the application as that listed above. The offer of a place at the school will be made by the school on behalf of the governors. The parents are given 10 days to respond to the offer of a place from the school. If no response is received a letter will be sent advising the parent that the place has been withdrawn and of their right of appeal. In the event of the governors deciding that a place cannot be offered, parents will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on the waiting list. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

Starting school

Places are offered for the term commencing September 2018.

The governors will provide for the admission of all children in Year R in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year; parents may also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Requests for admission outside of the normal age group should be made to the Headteacher as early as possible. This will allow the school and admissions authority sufficient time to make a decision before the closing date. Parents are not expected to provide evidence to support their request to defer their application, however where provided it must be specific to the child in question. This might include medical or Educational Psychologist reports. 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 the school's ability to agree to deferral. Parents are required to complete an application for the normal point of entry at the same time, in case their request is declined. The application can be cancelled if the school agrees to accept a deferred application for entry into Year R the following year. Deferred applications must be made via paper CAF to the LA, with written confirmation from the school attached. Deferred applications will be processed in the same way as all applications for the cohort in the following admissions round, and offers will be made in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria.

Admissions Code and guidance

This document has been drawn up to comply with the School Admissions Code (Dec 2014)⁶ and the Education Commission Guidance on Admissions (August 2015).⁷ St Mary's Catholic Primary School applies the local authority's In Year Fair Access Protocol.⁸

This admissions procedure, although primarily relevant to children for whom a place is sought at the normal age of entry to primary education (Year R), applies also to succeeding years, subject to availability of places.

⁵ Children subject to a direction by a local authority to admit in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol take precedence over any child already on the waiting list.

⁶ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/389388/School_Admissions_Code_2014_-_19_Dec.pdf

⁷ <http://www.educationcommission.org.uk/SiteFiles/80.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.kelsi.org.uk/admissions-and-attendance/admissions/in-year-fair-access-protocol>

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Supplementary Information Form

This form should be completed when applying for a place in a Catholic School in the Archdiocese of Southwark. Please complete and sign the form below and, if you are Catholic, hand it to your parish priest or the parish priest at the church at which you normally worship. He will add his reference in Part 2. If you are not a Catholic, please hand the form to your priest, minister or faith leader who will add his or her reference in Part 3.

Note 1: You MUST also complete and return a Common Application Form (available from schools and/or Local Authorities)

Note 2: When returning your completed Supplementary Information Form to the school, you MUST enclose your child's original baptism certificate for verification

PART 1 (To be completed by all parents or carers)

School to which you are applying: _____

Address of school: _____

Surname of child: _____ Date of birth: _____

Christian/forename(s) of child: _____

Religion/Denomination: (eg Roman Catholic) _____ Boy Girl

Date and place of Baptism (if applicable): _____

Parents'/carers' names: _____

Home address: _____

_____ Postcode _____

Contact numbers: Home _____ Work _____ Mother/Father/Carer

If **Catholic**, indicate which Mass you normally attend: Saturday at _____ (time) or Sunday at _____ (time)

Parish in which you live (eg Our Lady Immaculate, Whitstable) _____

Usual place of worship (if different): _____

How long have you worshipped there? _____ years How often do you attend Mass? at least once a month less often

Please add here any other information you may feel is relevant to this application in relation to the school's admissions policy in respect of exceptional medical, social or pastoral needs of your child that make only this school suitable for them. Strong and relevant evidence must be provided by an appropriate professional authority (e.g. qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker or priest). Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

I confirm that the information we have given on this form is accurate and truthful:

Signed: _____ Parent/carers Date: _____

PART 2 (To be completed by Catholic priests only)

A. For all schools:

I am satisfied that the child is a baptised Catholic

Yes No

B. For schools requiring evidence of practice:

Is the family known to you?

Yes No

How long has the family attended your church? _____

How often does the family attend Mass?

At least once a month

Less often than once a month

If you consider there are valid reasons for church attendance to be considered equivalent to monthly, because of illness or other reasons please, state this below:

Priest's name: _____ Parish (or ethnic chaplaincy): _____

Address: _____ Tel.: _____

Parish stamp or seal

Priest's signature: _____ Date: _____

PART 3 (To be completed only by priests/ministers of other denominations or faiths)

Non-Catholic parents/carers from other denominations or faiths should hand this form to their priest/minister or faith leader who should complete the section below and return it as soon as possible to the school indicated over.

I confirm that this family are members of our faith community The family is not known to me

Name of minister: _____ Denomination/faith: _____

Parish or faith community: _____

Address: _____ Tel.: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Comment (if appropriate) regarding the points above:

To the priest, minister or other faith leader:

Please ensure this form is completed and returned to the school before 15 January 2018.