



ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR SEPTEMBER 2024

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School

**OUR MISSION
STATEMENT**

Excellence for All
Service to Others
Inspired by Christ

***This Policy was adopted by the Full Governing Body: February 2023
Next review date: January 2024***

Thank you for your interest in St John's Catholic Comprehensive School.
If you choose to proceed to application, please ensure you read this document carefully.
You will need to return a completed Supplementary Information Form (SIF) directly to the school by Friday 10th November 2023 for your application to be considered under categories 1,2,5 or 6.

ADMISSIONS POLICY for ADMISSIONS in SEPTEMBER 2024

St. John's Catholic Comprehensive School is a Voluntary Aided School in the Trusteeship of the Archdiocese of Southwark. The School is conducted by the 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. However, the Governing Body welcomes applications from parents of children of other denominations and faiths, subject to the availability of places, who support the religious ethos of the School.

As a Church School, the Governors make the decision to offer places for admission into the School. The School wishes to give extra consideration to children attending Catholic Primary schools in the areas of Dartford, Gravesend, Hartley, Meopham, Northfleet, Strood and Swanley. The Primary feeder schools are St Bartholomew's Catholic Primary School, Swanley, St John's Catholic Primary School, Gravesend, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Northfleet, Our Lady of Hartley Catholic Primary School, Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, Dartford, English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School, Strood, and St Anselm's Catholic Primary School, Dartford.

The number of pupils registered in the school at the beginning of September 2023 was 1410.

Although our current PAN in Year 7 is 180 pupils, having consulted with the Local Authority (LA) and other Admission Authorities, the Governors intend to admit 190 pupils in September 2024 at age 11, without reference to ability or aptitude.

Admissions will be decided without reference to aptitude or ability and on the overriding criteria that the "Catholic Character" of the school will always be preserved in accordance with the Trust Deed and the Instrument of Government.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

Application must be made using the Common Application Form provided by the child's home Local Authority. Applications are now made online at www.kent.gov.uk/ola or by paper form and submitted directly to the Local Authority.

Completion of a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) is not mandatory. However, if you believe your application meets the criteria for categories 1, 2, 5 or 6 and you do not return the SIF then the school cannot consider you for them.

Part 2A (The Priest's Declaration Form) of the SIF will need to be completed and if appropriate, a Baptismal Certificate will also need to be submitted to the school, for your application to be considered under categories 1 or 2 (*Catholic applicants*).

Part 2B (The Minister of Religion's Declaration Form) of the SIF will need to be completed for your application to be considered under categories 5 or 6 (*applications from other denominations or faiths*).

A copy of the SIF is detailed on the last 2 pages of this policy and can also be obtained from St John's Catholic Comprehensive School.

The Supplementary Information Form (SIF), and if appropriate a Baptismal Certificate (Catholic applicants), must be returned directly to the School by Friday 10th November 2023 for your application to be considered under categories 1, 2, 5 or 6.

If there are more applications than places, the over-subscription criteria are applied. The Declaration Form (Part 2 on the SIF) that is completed by a Priest or Minister of Religion, where this is required in the oversubscription criteria, will be considered as part of the application.

OVER-SUBSCRIPTION

Where the applications exceed the number of places available, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out. Priority will be given to Baptised Catholic children and Looked After Children. In each of the categories 1, 2, 5 and 6, priority will be given to those whose level of regular attendance at religious worship is supported by their Priest or Minister of their normal place of worship.

OVER-SUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA for ADMISSIONS for SEPTEMBER 2024

The Governors will consider applications according to the following order of priorities:

- Category 1** **Looked after Baptised Catholic children or looked after children in the care of Catholic families**, looked after Catholic children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order and Catholic children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.
- Category 2** **Baptised Catholic children**: a Baptismal Certificate must accompany the Supplementary Form and consideration will be given to the Priest's Declaration Form to verify the practice of the child. Applications will be ranked in the order shown on the Supplementary Form Highest priority to those who attend Mass weekly, secondly to those who attend Mass at least once a month, etc.'
- Category 3** **Other looked after children**, looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order and children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.
- Category 4** **Non-Catholic Children who attend the named feeder schools**: examples St. Bartholomew's, Swanley, St John's Primary School, Gravesend, St Joseph's Primary School, Northfleet, Our Lady of Hartley, Our Lady's Roman Catholic School Dartford, English Martyrs, Strood and St Anselm's, Dartford.

Category 5 Children of families who are committed members of other Christian denominations that are part of Churches Together in England: evidence of Baptism provided by a priest, minister or religious leader of a designated place of worship will be required and consideration will be given to the Letter of Support Provided.

Category 6 Children of other faiths: evidence of religious commitment provided by a priest, minister or religious leader of a designated place of worship will be required.

Category 7 Any Other Child

TIE-BREAKS

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

1. Siblings
2. Home-School distance (Nearness of children's homes to school)

In the unlikely event that two or more children in all other ways have equal eligibility for the last available place at the school, the names will be issued a number and drawn randomly to decide which child should be given the place. This process will be independently supervised.

PUPILS WITH A STATEMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OR EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE (EHC) PLAN

The admission of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or with an EHC Plan is dealt with by a separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of statements and EHC plans by the pupil's home local authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the SEND code of practice. Pupils with a statement or EHC plan naming the school will be admitted without reference to the above criteria.

DEFINITIONS

In the context of school admissions, Catholic children are defined as Children who are baptised or received into the Catholic Church, children baptised or received into the Eastern Churches in union with Rome and children of members of the Ordinariate.

"Practice" means regular attendance at Sunday Mass, as defined in Canon 1247 of the Code of Canon Law, the basis for which is taken to be at least more often than not.

"Looked After Children and Previously Looked after Children" 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 (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

A previously looked after child means such children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after and 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.

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

“Sibling” means blood or step sibling of those who are pupils at the School at the time of enrolment; or where a family, already having children at the School at the time of enrolment, have adopted or fostered a child. It does not include siblings who were pupils at the School in the past.

“Nearness of Children's Homes to School” - the distance between the child’s permanent home address and the school, measured in a straight line using the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) address point data, is used. Distances are measured from a point defined as within the child’s home to a point defined as within the school as specified by NLPG. The same address point on the school site is used for everybody. When the distance criteria for the school is applied, these straight-line measurements are used to determine how close each applicant’s address is to the school. This process is undertaken by Kent County Council (KCC).

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.

Such appeals must be made in writing within **20 school days** of the date of the letter informing the parent that their child has not been admitted to the School. This will enable the appeal to be heard in time for any successful appellants to join the school in September. The letter must set out the grounds on which the appeal is made. Any appeals lodged after this date will be dealt with on an ad hoc basis.

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 for twelve school weeks, will be operated 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. It is possible that when a child is directed under the local authority’s fair access protocol they will take precedence over those children already on the list.

In Year waiting lists will be retained until the end of that academic year and if you wish for your child to be included on the consecutive year’s waiting list, you must inform the school in writing.

FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOL

The school participates in the local authority’s Fair Access Protocol to allocate places to vulnerable and other children in accordance with the School Admission Code 2014. Admitting pupils under the protocol may require the school to admit above the planned admission number for the relevant year group.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In 2023, there were more applications than places and the Governors applied the over subscription criteria.

Late applications will be dealt with according to the Co-ordinated Admissions Procedure and will be considered according to the over-subscription categories above.

Once the reallocation process of the Co-ordinated Admissions Procedure has been concluded, the Governors will draw up a waiting list of those who still wish to have a place at the School. Parents of children who have not been offered a place at the school may ask for their child’s

name to be placed on the waiting list. The waiting list, which will be maintained until the end of the first term, will be operated 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. It is possible that when a child is directed under the local authority's Fair Access Protocol, they will take precedence over those children already on the list.

CASUAL AND IN YEAR ADMISSIONS

The criteria and procedures contained within this Admissions Policy, also apply to casual and in year admissions.

Requests for admission to Year 7 outside of the normal age group should be made to the Headteacher as early as possible to allow the school and admissions authority sufficient time to make a decision before the closing date.

Where a parent is requesting for their child to apply a year early, they should contact the school at the start of the application process related to the year they wish their child to start. Where a parent is requesting for their child to apply a year later than expected, they should make their request at the start of the application process associated with the child's date of birth.

Parents are required to complete an application for the normal point of entry at the same time, in case their request is declined. This application can be cancelled if the school agrees to accept a deferred application for entry into Year 7 the following year.

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 a school's ability to agree to deferral or early admission to their secondary phase of education. The school will take into account the year group the child has been taught in leading up to transition. If the request is declined, a school may offer a year 8 place as an alternative or simply refuse admission if the child is younger than the normal entry age. Deferred applications must be made via paper Secondary Common Application Form (SCAF) to the LA, with written confirmation from each named school attached. Early or 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 each school's oversubscription criteria. Further advice is available at www.kent.gov.uk/schooladmissions



Supplementary Information and Priest's Declaration Form: Archdiocese of Southwark

Please return to St John's Catholic Comprehensive School, Rochester Road, Gravesend, DA122JW

by Friday November 10th, 2023

To submit this Supplementary Information Form (SIF) to the school, you can either:

- a) Scan and email the form to lhodges326@stj.kent.sch.uk
You will receive an acknowledgement email to confirm the form has been received.

or

- b) Hand the form into a member of our school reception team.
You will be issued with a receipt when you hand your form into reception.

Please do NOT hand in the form to any other member of staff or leave the form at reception without receiving a receipt – the school cannot accept liability for a lost form unless you are able to produce a receipt.

Completion of a supplementary form is not mandatory but will help Governors to determine admissions applications. If you are a Catholic, please complete and sign the form below and ask your Parish Priest or the Parish Priest at the church where you normally worship to add his reference (Part Two A). You should then forward the form to the school to which you wish to apply. If you are not a Catholic, please hand the form to your Minister of Religion, or equivalent, who will add his or her reference (Part Two B).

Part One – To be completed by the Parents or Carers:

Surname of child Date of birth

Christian/forename (s) of child..... Boy or girl

Religion

Date and place of Baptism (if applicable)

Is the child a Designated Looked After Child?

Name of current school.....

Forename, surname and title of person with whom the child lives

Relationship to child.....

Home address Postcode

.....

Contact numbers: Home Work..... (mother/father/carer)

E-mail address:

If Catholic, please indicate which Mass you normally attend.....

Parish in which you live

Usual place of worship (if different)

How long have you worshipped there? years

How often do you attend Mass? (please tick) Weekly once or twice a month Less often

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

Signed..... Parent/Carer

Date.....

Part Two A – to be completed by the Catholic Priest only

Parents or carers

Is the family known to you? Yes No

Child's religious practice

Is the child known to you? Yes No

Across the last three years, how would you describe the Child's Attendance to Mass?

Weekly attendance at Mass (i.e. every Saturday evening or Sunday)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regular attendance at Mass (i.e. twice a month)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Irregular attendance at Mass (i.e. less than once a month)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not known	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you consider there are valid reasons for Mass attendance to be considered equivalent to weekly, because of illness or other reasons, please state below.

I am satisfied that the child is a Baptised Catholic/Enrolled Catechumen.

I am satisfied that the child has been received into Full Communion with the Catholic Church

Priest's name:

Parish (if any):

Address: Tel No:

Parish stamp or seal

Priest's signature:

Date:

Parents/carers from other Denominations or Faiths should hand this form to their Minister of Religion, or equivalent. The completed form should be returned by the parent/carer to St John's.

Part Two B - To be completed only by a Minister of Religion or equivalent

I confirm that this child/family is known to me and they are committed members of our Faith community

I confirm that this family are members of our Faith community

The family is not known to me

Name:

Signed:

Date:

Position:

Parish or Organisation.....