

## **ADMISSIONS POLICY 2023-2024**

St. Thomas' Catholic Primary School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. 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 of Jesus Christ. Whenever there are more applicants than places available, priority will always be given in accordance with the over-subscription criteria listed below. The Governing Body has responsibility for admissions to this school and intends to admit 30 pupils to the reception class in the school year commencing in September 2023.

### **Admission and Over-subscription Criteria**

Where the number of applications exceeds 30, the Governors will offer places using the following criteria in the order stated:

1. Looked after 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.
2. Baptised Catholic children. Evidence of Baptism or reception into the Catholic Church will be required. 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. The children or their families may be ranked depending on their attendance at Mass but not on any other involvement in parish or community activities.
3. Other looked after children, other 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.
4. Children enrolled in the catechumenate. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required.
5. Children who are members of Eastern Orthodox Churches. Evidence of Baptism will be required.
6. Children of families 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 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 on the Supplementary Information Form 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 to those who attend mass weekly, then at least once a month.)*

2. A brother or sister on the school roll at the time of admission. Evidence of the relationship may be required.
  
3. Pastoral, Medical Health and Special Access Reasons\* which make the school particularly suitable for the child in question. Priority will be given to those children whose mental or physical impairment means they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Equally this priority will apply to children whose parents'/guardians' physical or mental health or social needs mean that they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Such claims will need to be supported by written evidence from a suitably qualified medical or other practitioner who can demonstrate a special connection between these needs and the particular school. Strong relevant evidence must be provided by an appropriate professional authority e.g. qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker or priest.
  
4. **Nearness of children's home to school.** We use 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. 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 we apply the distance criterion for the school, these straight line measurements are used to determine how close each applicant's address is to the school.

Tie-break: Where the last remaining place is to be allocated and two or more children are deemed to live at the same distance from the school, the place will be decided by the drawing of lots.

5. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan: The admissions of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or with an EHC Plan are dealt with by a completely 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.

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

A "brother or sister" means children who live as brother and sister including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers or sisters. It would not include other relatives e.g. cousins.

Home refers to the permanent home address at which the child lives for the majority of his/her time and with the parent who is in receipt of child benefit.

**Children in Local Authority Care or Previously in Local Authority Care** – a 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption child arrangements, or special guardianship order. 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).

### **Admissions of children below compulsory school age**

The Governing Body will provide for the admissions of all children in the September following the child's 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 their child attends part – time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

### **Admission of children outside their normal age group**

Parents who are seeking a place for their child outside of their normal age group, e.g. the child has experienced problems such as ill health or the parents of a summer born child preferring not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday, may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1.

Governors will make decisions on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; 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. They will also consider the views of the school's head teacher. When informing a parent of the decision which year group the child should be admitted to, the governors will set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

Where the governors agree to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school the local authority will process the application as part of the main admissions round, (unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible) and on the basis of the determined admission arrangements, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but is not in their preferred age group.

### **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 one year, will be operated using the same admissions criteria listed above. Placing a child's name on the waiting list does not guarantee 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.

### **Appeals**

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with section 85(3) 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 the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

### **In – Year (casual admissions)**

The school's Supplementary Information Form (SIF) should be completed to enable the Governing Body to rank the application in the event of there being more than one application for a place. The Governing Body 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 Governing Body. In the event of the Governing Body deciding 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.

Fair Access Protocol: The purpose of Fair Access Protocols is to ensure that - outside the normal admissions round - unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are found and offered a place

quickly, so that the amount of time any child is out of school is kept to the minimum. This is why every local authority is required to have in place a Fair Access Protocol, developed in partnership with local schools.

**ST. THOMAS' CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM**

PLEASE RETURN FORM BY:

TO: ST. THOMAS' CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
99 MILITARY ROAD, CANTERBURY, KENT CT1 1NE

**CHILD'S DETAILS**

Surname:	Forename(s):
Legal Name: (as on birth certificate)	

Date of Birth:	Male/Female:
Place of Birth:	Nationality:

Address:	
Postcode:	Home Telephone Number:

Religion of Child:	Religion of Father:	Religion of Mother:
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Church and Date of child's Baptism:
Please enclose a copy of the baptismal certificate where appropriate.

Church/Place of Worship Normally Attended:
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How often do you attend Mass? <input type="checkbox"/> weekly <input type="checkbox"/> at least once a month <input type="checkbox"/> less often
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Name of Parish Priest/Minister: (Who is willing to support your application) Print:	Signature:
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<b>Name(s) of person(s) with parental responsibility</b>		
Mother:	Father:	Other:
Telephone:	Telephone:	Telephone:

Please add here any other information you may feel is relevant to this application in relation to the schools' admission policy in respect of exceptional medical, social or pastoral needs of your child that make only this school suitable for them. (Strong relevant evidence must be provided by an appropriate professional authority e.g.: qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker or priest).
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I confirm that the information given on this form is accurate and truthful.
Signed ..... (Parent/Carer)    Date: .....

<b>FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY.</b> *Birth Certificate and *Evidence of Residency must be provided in the event of an offer of a school place.
Date Form Received: .....
Evidence seen: Baptismal Certificate ..... Evidence of child's residency .....
DATE OF ADMISSION .....