

Kent
Catholic
Schools'
Partnership



'Academies in Christ'
Part of the Archdiocese of Southwark



Primary Schools Admissions policy 2023-2024

1. Introduction

This policy applies to admissions to primary schools within the Kent Catholic Schools Partnership ("the Trust") from 1 September 2023. It has been agreed by the Trust Board, as the admissions authority, after due consultation including with the Archdiocese Education Commission and Kent County Council. The schools included are:

Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Maidstone
More Park Catholic Primary School, West Malling
Our Lady of Hartley Catholic Primary School
St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Tunbridge Wells
St Edwards Catholic Primary School, Sheerness
St Gregory's Catholic Primary School, Margate
St John's Catholic Primary School, Gravesend
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Aylesham
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Broadstairs
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Northfleet
St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School, Tonbridge
St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Deal
St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Whitstable
St Peter's Catholic Primary School, Sittingbourne
St Richard's Catholic Primary School, Dover
St Simon of England Catholic Primary School, Ashford
St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Ashford
St Thomas' Catholic Primary School, Sevenoaks
Stella Maris Catholic Primary School, Folkestone

These schools are part of the Archdiocese of Southwark. Their mission is to provide a Catholic education for all Catholic children in their area and for any other child whose parent or carer wishes their child to have such an education.

2. Planned Admission Numbers

The Trust plans to offer the following number of places in year R in each school:

School	Planned Admission Number
Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Maidstone	30
More Park Catholic Primary School, West Malling	30
Our Lady of Hartley Catholic Primary School	30
Stella Maris Catholic Primary School, Folkestone	30
St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Tunbridge Wells	30
St Edwards Catholic Primary School, Sheerness	30
St Gregory's Catholic Primary School, Margate	45
St John's Catholic Primary School, Gravesend	120
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Aylesham	30
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Broadstairs	30
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Northfleet	30
St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School, Tonbridge	60
St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Deal	30
St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Whitstable	60
St Peter's Catholic Primary School, Sittingbourne	30
St Richard's Catholic Primary School, Dover	30
St Simon of England Catholic Primary School, Ashford	30
St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Ashford	30
St Thomas' Catholic Primary School, Sevenoaks	30

3. Oversubscription criteria

Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

The admission of pupils with with an EHC Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of EHC plans by the pupil's home local authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the SEND code of practice. All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names one of the schools will be admitted before any other places are allocated

In the event that any of the schools receives more applications than the planned admission number, places will be offered in rank order set through the following criteria:

1. Looked after Catholic children or looked after children in the care of Catholic families, previously looked after Catholic children who have been adopted or who become the subject of a residence or guardianship order, and Catholic children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A copy of the baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church must accompany the Supplementary Information Form (SIF). See notes 1 and 2.
2. Baptised Catholic children. A copy of the baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church must accompany the Supplementary Information Form (SIF). See note 2.
3. Other looked after children, previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order, and children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. See note 1
4. Children who will have siblings at the school at the date of entry. See note 3

5. Children of staff. See *note 4*
6. Children enrolled in the catechumenate and children whose families are members of other Christian denominations. See *note 5*
7. Children of other faiths. See *note 6*
8. 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 within each category.

- i. Priority will first be given to children with a sibling (see note 3) in the school at the time of admission
- ii. **For Category 2 above for St Joseph's Primary, Northfleet and St Thomas' Primary, Sevenoaks ONLY:** If the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the applications will be placed in rank order of the frequency and duration of the family's attendance at mass over the last three years. Firstly, those who attend Mass weekly, then once a month etc. This evidence must be provided by completion of the Supplementary Information Form by the child's parents/carers, endorsed by a priest at the Catholic church(es) where the family normally attends mass. If the family has moved very recently, the form can be signed by a priest at their previous church(es).

NB: The suspension of the obligation to attend Sunday Mass was announced on 18th March 2020 by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales due to the Covid-19 pandemic. As of the 5th June 2022, Pentecost, the Bishops of England and Wales reinstated the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days. Parents applying for a place under a faith-based criteria will need to complete a Supplementary Information Form. Evidence of practice will be measured by frequency of attendance at Mass as validated by either a priest or minister, as was the case prior to 18th March 2020. These arrangements apply to the admissions round for 2023 and subsequent rounds.

- iii. **For Category 6 and 7 above:** If the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, priority will be given to those applicants who have shown commitment to their faith for at least three years. This evidence must be provided by completion of the Supplementary Information Form by the child's parents/carers, endorsed by a minister or faith leader of the faith community where the family normally attends. If the family has moved very recently, the form can be signed by a minister or faith leader at their previous place of worship
- iv. The proximity to the school from the applicant's home address, the distance measured in a straight line from the school entrance by the Local Authority. Distance for the purposes of these criteria is measured 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. 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. Evidence of residence will be required. The same address point on the school site is used for everybody. In the unlikely event that there are two or more applications of equal eligibility for the last available place at the school a random selection will be applied.

3.2 Notes

Note 1

Looked after children are children who, at the time of making an application to a school are:

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 arrangement 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 organization, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

Note 2

Catholic children includes members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome. A baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church must be provided with the Supplementary Information Form.

Note 3

Siblings are defined as natural and adopted brothers and sisters, and children who live as a brother and sister in the same house, including stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters.

Note 4

Children of staff applies in either or both of the following circumstances:

- Where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made,
- Where the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage.

Note 5

Catechumens refer to a person who is preparing to become a Catholic usually by way of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and children of catechetical age. Younger children may be initiated through an adapted version sometimes referred to as the Rite of Christian Initiation of Children (RCIC). Evidence should be provided by a parish priest (or equivalent) and should state when the preparation started and when baptism or reception into the Catholic church will take place. The date of baptism or reception must be set and be prior to the date of admission.

Other Christian denominations are denominations that are members of Churches Together in England or the Evangelical Alliance. Evidence of membership of the church or faith community must be provided by a minister or faith leader on the supplementary information form.

Note 6

Children of other faiths means children who are members of other world faith-based communities. Evidence of membership must be provided by a priest, minister or religious leader of a designated place of worship on the supplementary information form.

Note 7

Family means the child together with at least one parent or guardian attending Mass or the relevant form of worship.

Note 8

Home refers to the permanent home address at which the child lives for the majority of his/her time. It is considered to be a residential property that is the child's only or main residence and not an address at which your child might sometimes stay or sleep due to your own domestic or special arrangements. The address must be the pupil's home address on the day you completed the application form and which is either:

- owned by the child's parent, parents or guardian, or
- leased to or rented by the child's parent, parents or guardian under a lease or written rental agreement.

Proof of address will be requested at the time of acceptance of a place.

4. Supplementary Information Form

In addition to applying online through a local authority website or on a paper Reception Common Application Form (RCAF), all applicants must complete a Supplementary Information Form (available on the school websites or from each school's Admissions Officer), and send this to the Admissions Officer at the school by not later than 15 January 2023. Not doing so may lead to your child being placed in a lower priority category than they should.

EVIDENCE OF BAPTISM For Catholic, Other Christian or Other Faith children, a copy of a baptismal certificate or evidence of membership must accompany the Supplementary Information Form.

5. Application Procedure

All applications for entry to year R will be processed through the Kent County Council Co-Ordinated System see www.kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions

In Year or Casual Applications

Applications made too late for the Kent co-ordinated system, In-year applications for year R and applications for entry to years 1-6 must be made on the IYCAF (In -Year and Casual application Form) available on school websites. The same policy and procedure (apart from the timetable) applies to these applications. This form must be sent to the school's Admissions Officer with a Supplementary Information Form. They will be considered under the same policy set out above.

6. Appeals

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful, may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with sections 88 and 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 sent to the Admissions Officer at the school address. Appellants have the right to make written and oral representations to the Appeal Panel.

7. Waiting List

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 criteria listed on Page 1 will be used to rank children on the waiting list. Placing a child's name on the waiting list does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

All schools participate in the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol to allocate places to vulnerable and other children in accordance with the School Admissions Code. Admitting pupils under the protocol may require the school to admit above the published admission number for the relevant year group and may mean that a child directed to the school by the Local Authority will take precedence over those children already on the waiting list.

The waiting lists for Year R will remain operational until at least the end of December 2023.

8. Requests for admission outside the normal age group ('summer born' children)

Parents of 'summer born' children (ie. whose fourth birthdays fall between 1 April and 31 August), may request not only that their admission is deferred until the following September, but also that their child is then admitted into Reception, not into the child's normal Year 1 age group. In deciding whether to agree to any such request, the Headteacher will consider the child's best interests and will follow the provisions of the School Admissions Code and any Department for Education guidance; it will take into account the parents' views and any supporting evidence provided, but it is for the Headteacher to decide in light of its knowledge and experience of the education of very young children whether to accept or decline the request. Parents of a summer born child who wish to defer the start of school until the child reaches compulsory school age and to request admission to Reception instead of to Year 1 should apply at the usual time BUT should include with the Supplementary Information Form a written request for admission out of the normal age group, explaining why it would be in the child's interests to be admitted to Reception rather than Year 1 and include copies of any relevant and appropriate professional evidence (eg from a Speech and Language Therapist or Educational Psychologist). The school will consider the request as soon as possible and will inform the parents of its decision before primary national offer day. If their request is agreed, their application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. If their request is refused, the parents 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. Where a parent's request is agreed, they must make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year. The application will be treated in the same way as usual applications and will be subject to the Oversubscription Criteria for that year ie a place in the following year cannot be guaranteed.

9. Entry to years other than anticipated

If an application is made for admission other than to the child's expected year group, the Headteacher will decide if this is educationally the best option for the child; the application will then be considered against the number on roll for that year group using the standard policy. The expectation is that children will be admitted in the year with their peers of the same age. Only in exceptional circumstances will this not apply, and this is at the discretion of the Headteacher.

10. Admission of children below compulsory school age

Where a child below compulsory school age is offered a place at the school, they will be entitled to attend the school full-time in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents may defer their child's entry to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age, and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year the offer was made for.

Where the parents wish, children may attend part-time (3 days per week) until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.