



# **ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR SEPTEMBER 2021**

**St John's Catholic Comprehensive  
School**

**OUR MISSION  
STATEMENT**

Excellence for All  
Service to Others  
Inspired by Christ

***This Policy was adopted by the Strategy Team***

## **ADMISSIONS POLICY for ADMISSIONS in SEPTEMBER 2021**

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 2019 was 1221.

Having consulted with the Local Authority (LA) and other Admission Authorities, the Governors intend to admit 180 pupils in September 2021 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](http://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. The SIF should be returned directly to the School, together with the additional documents requested, as appropriate. A copy of the SIF may be obtained from St John's Catholic Comprehensive School. Catholics must also submit the Priest's Declaration Form.

Depending upon the category in which you make your application, these additional documents are:

1. A Baptismal Certificate (*Catholic applicants*),
2. The Priest's Declaration Form (*Catholic applicants*),
3. A letter of Support from the Minister of your Church (*other denominations or faiths*).

The SIF and other documents must be completed and returned to the School no later than the date published on the Form.

Failure to supply the required documentation will mean that the Governors cannot consider your application under categories 1, 2, 5 or 6.

If there are more applications than places, the over-subscription criteria are applied. The Declaration Form from a Priest or Minister of Religion, where these are required in the over-subscription 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 2020**

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 and previously looked after Catholic children:** who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.
- 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 and other previously looked after children:** who have been adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order.
- 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

## **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.

**"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).

**"Brother or Sister"** means blood or step brothers and blood or step sisters 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 brothers or sisters who were pupils at the School in the past.

**"Nearness of Children's Homes 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 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. The same address point on the school site is used for everybody. When we apply the distance criteria for the school, these straight-line measurements are used to determine how close each applicant's address is to the school.

## **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. 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 do so 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 2020, there were more applications than places and the Governors applied their 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.



**Archdiocese of Southwark**  
**St John's Catholic Comprehensive School, Gravesend**  
**Supplementary Information and Priest's Declaration Form**  
**Please return to St John's Catholic Comprehensive School, Rochester Road, Gravesend,**  
**DA12 2JW, by Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.**

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. 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 One – To be completed by the Parents or Guardians**

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/carers)

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 .....

Details of brothers and sisters who will be attending the school at the time of enrolment

Name	Date of birth	Year group
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....

**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 ☐

**Child's Attendance to Mass**

Weekly attendance at Mass ☐  
(i.e. every Saturday evening or Sunday)

Regular attendance at Mass ☐  
(i.e. twice a month)

Irregular attendance at Mass ☐  
(i.e. less than once a month)

Not known ☐

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.....