



Learning in the Light of Christ **St Thomas' Catholic Primary** **ADMISSIONS POLICY 2021-22**

St. Thomas' Catholic Primary School - Sevenoaks is a member of the Kent Catholic Schools Partnership (KSCP) Multi Academy Trust in the Diocese of Southwark. It is in the trusteeship of the Diocese. 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.

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. At a Catholic school, the Catholic Doctrine and practice permeates every aspect of the school's activity. It is essential that the Catholic character of the school's education is fully supported by all families in the school.

*The school exists primarily to serve the Catholic community of the parishes of **St Thomas of Canterbury, Sevenoaks, St Lawrence, Edenbridge and St John the Baptist, Westerham**. Subject to the availability of places, the Governing Body welcomes applications from those of other denominations, faiths and those of no faith, who support the religious ethos of the school.*

The Governing Body has responsibility for admissions to this school and having consulted with the local authority and other admission authorities, intends to admit 30 pupils to the Reception class in the school year, which begins September 2021. The school's Published Admission Number (PAN) is 30.

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, the Governing Body will apply the oversubscription criteria to determine the order of priority and offer places up to the relevant PAN.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority:

1. ***Looked after 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, 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.
2. ***Baptised Catholic children***. Evidence of Baptism will be required.
3. ***Children enrolled in the catechumenate of the Catholic Church***. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required.
4. ***Looked After Children and 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.
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 who are members 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.*

Where the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the categories listed above would lead to oversubscription, the following provisions will be applied in order of priority:

- (i) For **category 2**, evidence of Baptism in a Catholic Church or Reception into the Catholic Church will be required. Strength of commitment to the faith, as demonstrated by the level of the parents/carers current Mass attendance on Sundays, will increase the priority of an application within each category. This evidence must be provided by the parents/carers and must be endorsed by a priest at the church where the parents/carers normally worship. Applications will be ranked in the order shown on the supplementary information form; firstly those who attend Mass weekly, then fortnightly, monthly and finally those who attend less often.
- (ii) The attendance of a sibling at the school at the time of admission will increase the priority of an application within the relevant attendance pattern category. *(For example, a baptised catholic sibling with a fortnightly mass attendance reference will be prioritised above baptised catholic non-siblings with a fortnightly attendance reference, but not above baptised catholic children with a weekly attendance reference).*
- (iii) For categories 5 & 6 above, evidence of Baptism (or dedication), if applicable, will be required. Strength of commitment to the faith, as demonstrated by the level of the parents/carers' attendance at services, will increase the priority of an application within each category. This evidence must be provided by the parents/carers and must be endorsed by a priest or minister from the place where the parents/carers normally worship.
- (iv) The Governing Body may increase the priority of an application, within a category, where evidence is provided, at the time of application, of medical, health, social or special access reasons, which makes the school particularly suitable for the child in question.
- (v) The distance from the child's home to the school.

Notes (these notes form part of the above oversubscription criteria)

Oversubscription Priority (1 & 4) - 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 admissions 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.

For the purposes of this policy, Priority 1 includes a 'Looked After Child' who is part of a Catholic family where a priest's reference demonstrates that the child would have been baptised or received if it were not for their status as a 'Looked After Child' (e.g. a 'Looked After Child' in the process of adoption by a Catholic family).

Oversubscription Priority (2) - 'Catholics' are defined as children who are Baptised into the Catholic Church or Received into the Catholic Church and includes members of the Ordinariate and 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.

Provision (ii)- A sibling is defined 'a brother or sister attending the school when the child starts. In this context brother or sister means children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers and sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters.

Provision (iv)- Medical, health, social and special access reasons will be applied in accordance with the school's legal obligations, in particular those under the Equality Act 2010. Priority will be given to those children whose mental or physical impairment means they have demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Equally this priority will apply to children whose parent's/carers', physical or mental health or social needs means that they have demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Such claims must be supported by written evidence from a suitably qualified medical or other practitioner who can demonstrate a special connection between these needs and a particular school.

Provision (v)- The distance between the child's permanent home address and the school is 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. The school uses measurements provided by the local authority and further information on how distances are calculated is available in the Admissions Booklet, provided by the local authority.

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.

A pupil's home address 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 your application form.

If you live separately from your partner but share responsibility for your child, and the child lives at two different addresses during the week, we will regard the home address as the place where the child's lives for the majority of his or her time.

Information about applications in previous years

Whilst all applications are welcomed, parents/carers should be aware that in 2020-21 the school was oversubscribed. We received 65 applications for 30 places. 1 applicant in category 1 was offered a place and 29 applicants in category 2 were offered. In previous years the school was usually oversubscribed by Catholic candidates. The governing body has only been able to offer 10 places to non-Catholic families at any time in the last 15 years.

Admissions procedure

To apply for a place at this school, you must complete and return two separate forms.

1. The **Reception Common Application Form** available from the Local Authority should be returned to the Local Authority or any Kent Primary School by **15th January 2021**.
2. The **Supplementary Information and Priest's Declaration Form** available from the school **must be completed and returned to The Admissions Officer, St. Thomas' Catholic Primary School, South Park, Sevenoaks, Kent. TN13 1EH.**

Note: The closing date for return of these two forms is **15th January 2021**.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application by a common offer date specified by the local authority. This will initially be by letter from the local authority on behalf of the school. If you are

unsuccessful (unless your child gained a place at a school you ranked higher on your Common Application Form), you may ask the school for the reasons, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

Both the Supplementary Information Form and the Common Application Form MUST be completed if you wish your son/daughter to be considered for a place. You are advised to make copies of the forms for your own records.

Appeals

Parents/carers 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 Appeals 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/carers 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/carers 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, which is retained for 6 months. The waiting list will be operated using the criteria listed above.

Should a place become available, parents/carers may be asked to submit an updated supplementary information form.

This does not prevent parents/carers from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health & Care Plan

The admission of pupils with an Education Health & Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. This procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of such plans by the pupil's home local authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.

Before the application of oversubscription criteria, children with an Education Health & Care Plan, who have named the school, will be admitted. As a result of this the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly.

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/carers will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on the waiting list. This does not prevent parents/carers from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

Withdrawal of Offer

After a place has been offered the school reserves the right to withdraw the place in the following circumstances:

1. when a parent/carer has failed to respond to an offer within a reasonable time; or
2. when a parent/carer has failed to notify the school of important changes to the application information; or
3. the admission authority offered the place on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent/carer'.

In-year (casual) admissions

Applications for a place at the school in-year must be made using the In-Year Casual Admission Form (IYCAF) of the local authority (LA) where the child resides. Parents/carers wishing to apply for more than one school must complete a separate form for each school. IYCAFs for St Thomas' Catholic Primary School should be returned to the school and will be processed within 5 school days of receipt. The school's supplementary information form should also 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 will be made by the school. In the event of the governors deciding that a place cannot be offered parents/carers will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on the waiting list. This does not prevent parents/carers from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

Applications for Children to be Taught Outside their Expected Year Group

Requests for admission outside of the normal age group should be made to the Headteacher of each preferred school as early as possible in the admissions round associated with that child's date of birth. 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 a 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. This 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 each named 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 each school's oversubscription criteria.



Archdiocese of Southwark

Supplementary Information Form 2021/ 2022

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. **The school should receive completed forms by 15th January 2021** along with **original** Birth and Baptismal Certificates. **NB You must also complete a Common Application Form available online at www.kent.gov.uk/ola , from schools and/or Local Authorities.**

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

School to which you are applying: **St. Thomas' Catholic Primary School**

Address of school: **South Park, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1EH**

Surname of child: _____ Date of birth: _____

Christian/forename(s) of child: _____

Religion/Denomination: (e.g. Roman Catholic): _____ Boy Girl

Date and place of Baptism (if applicable): _____

Parents'/carers' names: _____

Parents'/carers' religions/denominations: _____

Home address: _____

_____ Postcode _____

Contact numbers: Home _____ Mobile _____ (Mother/Father)

Primary email address: _____

Names and Dates of Birth of siblings who will be on the school roll as at 1.9.21

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

Parish in which you live (e.g St. Thomas' Sevenoaks) _____

Current place of worship (if different): _____

How long have you worshipped there? _____ years

- **(if you have been worshipping at this Parish for less than 6 months, it is recommended that you also submit a Supplementary Information Form from your previous Parish)**

How often do you attend Mass? weekly fortnightly monthly 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 you and 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/Carer Date: _____

(Parts 2 and 3 overleaf)

PART 2 (To be completed by Catholic priests only)

A. For all schools:

I am satisfied that the child is a baptised Roman Catholic or a baptised member of a Church that is in full communion with Rome - **Yes** **No** *

*If no, are the parents/child enrolled in a RCIA/RCIC programme? - **Yes** **No**

B. For schools requiring evidence of practice:

<u>PARENTS/CARER</u>		<u>CHILD</u>	
Are the parent/carers known to you?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Is the Child known to you?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Weekly Mass attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weekly Mass attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fortnightly Mass attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fortnightly Mass attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monthly Mass Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly Mass Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Less Often	<input type="checkbox"/>	Less Often	<input type="checkbox"/>
How long have the parents/carers attended your church? _____		How long has the child attended your church? _____	

Please comment, if appropriate, **only** to clarify the Mass attendance above.

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

Address: _____ Tel.: _____

Priest's signature: _____ Date: _____ Parish Stamp/Seal: _____

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 the parents/carers and child are members of our faith community

The parents/carers and child are 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 by 15th January 2021.