

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Admissions Policy 2016-2017

*Here at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we learn and grow through the love of Jesus.
Our community is a safe, caring and happy place where everyone is supported and valued.
We encourage and challenge everyone to achieve their full potential,
spiritually, academically, morally and socially.
We inspire others with a love of learning and aim for excellence in everything we do.
Through our own faith, we treat one another the way we would like to be treated.
We help every child to be gentle and fair: to always do their best.*

'Learning through the Love of Jesus Christ'

Admissions Policy

St. Joseph's is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic Primary School situated in the Parish of St. Joseph's, Bromley which is part of the Southwark Diocese. 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.

The school exists primarily to serve the Catholic community and Catholic children always have priority of admission. The Governing Body of the school have as their objective, the establishment, maintenance and advancement of the Catholic religion. However, the Governing Body welcomes all applications, particularly from those of other denominations and faiths who support the religious ethos of the school.

Admission of Pupils

Admissions to St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School are decided by the Governors. The number of children to be admitted to the reception class each year is 30. Children will be admitted to the Reception class in the September following their fourth birthday.

Children will be admitted without reference to ability or aptitude. The published admission number is inclusive of students with a statement of special educational needs in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements

Where incorrect information is used to unfairly gain a place then the Governors will immediately withdraw any place offered.

In 2016-2017, St. Joseph's will be participating in the London Borough of Bromley Coordinated Admissions. This will comply with the Local Authority agreed timetable of admissions.

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 (children for whom the Local Authority has responsibility) and looked after children in the care of Catholic families, together with formerly looked after children.

(Note: A looked after child is a child who is in care to a Local Authority or who is provided with accommodation by that authority and will still be looked after when at the time an application for their admission to a school is made, and who the Local Authority has confirmed will still be looked after at the time when the child is admitted to the school. This includes children with a special

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guardianship order or a residential order. 'Formerly looked after children' are children that have been legally adopted.)

2. Children who, having been baptised into the Catholic Faith, are each certified on the Supplementary Information Form by the Parish Priest to have at least one parent or carer who is a committed and practicing Catholic.

(Note: Unless the school has received the completed Supplementary Information Form, including the baptismal certificate before the closing date the application will not be considered under this criteria.)

3. Children not falling within the categories above who have been baptised into the Catholic Faith.
4. Children enrolled in the catechumenate. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required.
5. Other looked after children (children in public care) and formerly looked after children.
6. Children of families who are members of other Christian denominations.

(Note: Evidence of Baptism (or dedication) provided by a Priest or Minister of a designated place of worship will be required. This can be evidenced within the Supplementary Information Form to be completed by the Priest or Minister of the denomination concerned.)

7. Any other children.

The following order of priorities will be applied when applications exceed the places available and it is necessary to decide between applications

- i. The strength of evidence of commitment to the Catholic faith will be demonstrated by the level of the family's Mass attendance on Sundays (i.e. practice).

(Note: This evidence must be provided by the parents/carers and be endorsed by the parish priest at the church(es) where the family normally worship. Applications will be ranked in the order shown on the Supplementary Information Form; firstly those who attend Mass weekly, then once or twice a month, less than once a month etc.)

- ii. Siblings - A brother or sister on the school roll at the time of admission to St Joseph's Catholic Primary School. Evidence of the relationship may be required.

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

- iii. Proximity of the child's home to the school as measured in a straight line from the front door of the home to the front door of the school. 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.

(Note: The distance will be supplied by the Local Authority derived from their computerised mapping system. Evidence of residence may be required.)

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Special Considerations

In exceptional circumstances there is discretion to admit children on the grounds of their or their family's acute medical or social need for that particular school and who would not otherwise qualify for admission. The application must be supported by a letter from a hospital consultant, the special support service, social worker or similar professional, setting out the reasons why the school is the only one to meet the child's needs, before an admission decision is made. The admission decision will be considered in consultation with sub groups of the Admissions Forum which includes teaching and medical professionals. Medical professionals provide advice on applications made under medical conditions and teaching professionals advise on applications made for social or special reasons. Supporting evidence must be provided before the closing date for applications.

Admissions Procedure

Common Application Form (CAF)

This form should be completed on line or on paper and returned to the Admissions Office of the Local Authority where the child resides before the closing date which is published on the Local Authority Website.

Supplementary Information Form

In addition to the Common Application Form (CAF) supplied by the Local Authority, for Catholic and other Christian denomination applicants, the Statement of Practice must be evidenced on our '[Supplementary Information Form](#)'. This form can be downloaded from the school website or a paper copy can be collected from the School Office. The Governors will require written verification of commitment and practice from the Parish Priest and this includes a **baptismal certificate**.

The signed Supplementary Information Form and baptismal certificate, must be delivered to the School Office at St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, not later than the closing date published by the Local Authority. **It is the responsibility of the applicants to ensure that the school has received the Supplementary Information Form.** This must be done even if the CAF is completed online.

Where there is no Supplementary Information Form, the Governors will not be able to apply their admission criteria and the application will be considered under the 'other children' category. Offers of places will be sent to parents on the common offer date as notified by the Local Authority.

Policy 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 that the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

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Policy Amendments

The school will agree any changes to its published admission arrangements following consultation with the Local Authority and other local admission authorities as specified by the Schools Standard and Framework Act, 1998. The Policy is published within the school, the school's website, the parishes of St. Joseph's and St. Swithun, Southwark Diocese, local media and the Local Authority.

Admission of children below compulsory school age

The Governors will provide for the admission of all children in the September following their 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 that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents of gifted and talented children, or those who have experienced problems or missed part of a year, for example due to ill health, can seek places outside their normal age group. This is not an automatic right to choose this option as decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. The views of the head teacher of the school concerned must also be taken into account.

In-Year (Casual) Admissions

For all admissions, including in-year (casual) admissions, children directed via the 'Fair Access Protocol' will take precedence over any child already on the school waiting list and this includes admitted children over the published admission number.

Applications for a place at the school in-year must be made using the Bromley In-Year Common Application Form. This form must be returned to Bromley Local Authority. The school's Supplementary Information Form should also be completed and delivered directly to the school 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 at the school will be made by the Local Authority on behalf of the Governors. In the event of the Governors deciding that 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.

The Local Authority coordinates casual admissions during all primary year groups.

Waiting List

Parents of children who have not been offered a place at the school may ask the Local Authority for their child's name to be placed on a Waiting List. The Waiting List will be maintained for at least one term in the academic year of admission and 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 Authorities 'Fair Access Protocol' they will take precedence over those children already on the Waiting List.