



## **St. Mary's Catholic Junior School Admissions Policy for 2023-2024**

### **Mission Statement**

St. Mary's Catholic Junior School is an Academy within the Multi Academy Trust of St Mary's Catholic Primary Schools Trust, in the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is in the trusteeship of the Archdiocese. 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. However, the Governing Body also welcomes applications from those of other denominations and faiths who support the religious ethos of the school.

Our Mission Statement is an expression of belief that is based on Gospel values and the teachings of the Church. It is central to the life of the school in fulfilling its purpose as a Catholic institution and encompasses all aspects of school life. It includes a series of aims which indicate what we hope will be achieved to fulfil our mission statement.

Our aims are to:

- develop a loving, caring ethos based on the teachings of Christ;
- foster the development of the Catholic Faith in each individual;
- develop caring relationships between home/parish/school and the wider community;
- recognise the dignity, value and worth of every individual through each curriculum policy; and
- community cohesion.

The Governing Body of the School is responsible for the admission of pupils to St Mary's Catholic Junior School. Up to a total of 60 boys/girls will be admitted to year three each year without reference to ability or aptitude. In-year applications will be accepted until the maximum of sixty has been reached in each other year group.

**Previous admission to St. Mary's Catholic Infant School does not confer an automatic right to admission to St. Mary's Catholic Junior School.**

Where the number of applications exceeds the Planned Admission Number of 30 in each class, the Governors will allocate places using the following criteria in the order stated:

1. Looked after Baptised Catholic children or looked after children in the care of practising Catholic families and previously looked after Baptised Catholic children, including those 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, or becoming the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order.
2. Catholic children, a baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church must accompany the supplementary information form.
3. Children enrolled in the catechumenate. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required.
4. Other looked after children and other previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a child arrangement order or guardianship order.

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.

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.

- i. 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 over a period of 3 years. This evidence must be provided by the parents/carers 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; firstly those who attend Mass weekly, then once or twice a month etc.
- ii. A brother or sister on the school roll at the time of admission. Evidence of the relationship may be required.
- iii. Social, pastoral and medical needs which make the school particularly suitable for the child in question. Strong and relevant evidence must be provided by an appropriate professional authority (eg qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker or priest).
- iv. Proximity to the school of the child's home address, the distance measured in a straight line from the school entrance by the local authority using a geographical computerised information system. Evidence of residence may be required. 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.

#### **Notes:**

- a. 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 denominations refers to denominations that are full members of Churches Together in England.
- b. 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 (eg cousins).
- c. 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.
- d. Looked after children are those in the care of a public authority and are in public care. Applications made under this criterion must be accompanied by details of circumstance and professionally supported evidence (eg from an appropriate social worker).

#### **Making an Application:**

To apply for a place at St Mary's Catholic Junior School, please complete two separate Forms:

1. The Common Application Form (CAF) from the Local Authority where your child lives, **to be returned to the Authority or completed online at the Authority's website**. The Common Application Form

(CAF) can be obtained from the School office or alternatively from the Local Authority website. It is mandatory to complete this Form.

2. The Supplementary Information Form (SIF), which needs to be returned to the School. The completion of a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) is not mandatory. However, if a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) is not received by the School, the Governors will not be able to apply the School's Admission Criteria, and the application will then be considered under category 12 above of the Admission Criteria ('Any Other Children'). The Supplementary Information Form (SIF) is available on the websites of both the Local Authority and the School. *(For the avoidance of doubt, the Supplementary Information Form (SIF) is not available from the website of the St Mary's Reparation, Croydon).*

### **Appeals:**

Parents whose application for a place at this School is unsuccessful may appeal to an independent appeal panel under the relevant provisions of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing setting out the reasons on which the appeal is made, and sent to the School's Admissions Appeals Clerk, so that it is **received by the date given in the letter confirming the Governors' decision not to offer a place**. Parents/Carers have the right to make oral representations to the appeal panel. The Decision of the appeal panel will be made in accordance with the Code of Practice on Schools Admissions Appeals published by the Department for Education, and is binding on all parties. Information about the appeals process can be requested from the School Office. As nursery provision is non-statutory, there is no right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

### **Pupils with an Education, Health and Care plan or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan:**

The admission of children with an Education, Health and Care plan or with an EHC Plan are dealt with by completely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of EHC plans by the child's home local authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the SEND code of practice. Pupils with an EHC plan naming the School will be admitted without reference to the above criteria.

### **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 School will hold its waiting list for one year. When a place becomes available, all current applications for a place in the year group will be considered in accordance with the criteria of the Admissions Policy.

The School will not, therefore, maintain an ordered waiting list. Information can be provided to parents about the order of priority of applications being held at a particular time but no guarantee can be given that higher priority applications will not be received by the time a place becomes available.

### **In-Year (Casual) Admissions:**

Applications for a place at the school in-year must be made using the School's supplementary form. This should 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 at the School will be made by the Head teacher 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 for an academic year. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

### **Admission of Children outside Compulsory School Age:**

The Governors will provide for the admission of all children in the September following their seventh birthday. Where a child has been offered a place at the School, his or her 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. Parents cannot defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's eighth birthday, nor beyond the academic year for which the original application was accepted.

### **Admission of Children outside their normal Age Group:**

It is advisable that a child is educated alongside his/her age equivalent peers, in almost all cases. It is the School's view and it strongly advises that all children who are offered a place at the School should enter into their normal year group. The responsibility for addressing individual educational needs lies with the School through an appropriately differentiated and enriched curriculum.

However, parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child (*See Notes and Advice below*) may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their eighth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to Year 3 rather than Year 4.

The Governors will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case, and in the best interests of the child. 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 aged group if it were not for being born prematurely. The Governors will also take into account the views of the School's Head Teacher. When informing a parent of their decision on the 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 a relevant age group (i.e. the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school), the local authority and the Governors will process the application as part of the main admissions round, unless the parental request for this is made too late for this to be possible, and on the basis of the School's determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. The Governors must not give the application lower priority on the basis that the child is being admitted out of their normal age group. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school where they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

### **Late Applications:**

Any late applications will be considered by the Governors Admissions Committee and will be treated under Admission criterion 12 above of the Admission Criteria ('Any Other Children'). If all the places have been filled, parents will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on the School's waiting list. The

School will hold its waiting list for a period of one year, during which time the child must remain on the roll of another school. When a place becomes available, all current applications for a place in the year group will be considered in accordance with the Admissions criteria (including those criteria relating to oversubscription) set out above in this Admissions Policy Document. This does not prevent parents from exercising, should they wish to do so, their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

**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 current School Admissions Code. Admitting children under that Protocol may require the School to admit above the Planned Admission Number (PAN) for the relevant year group.

**General Data Protection Regulation:** The school is registered for holding personal data. The school has a duty to protect this information and to keep it up to date. The school is required to share some of the data with the Local Authority, the Diocese and with the DFE. Further details can be found on our Privacy Notice on the website or via the school office.