

SAINT MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL - ROYSTON
ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2015-16

THE SCHOOL GOVERNORS' ADMISSION POLICY: NURSERY
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As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. At a Catholic school, Catholic doctrine and practice permeate 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. All applicants are therefore expected to give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school. This does not affect the right of parents who are not of the faith of this school to apply for and be considered for a place here.

The Local Authority (LA) no longer coordinates nursery admissions. Applicants apply online or direct to the setting for a nursery place. The LA simply 'hosts' the online system.

For Nursery, applications are invited for September 2015 for children born between 1st Sept 2011 and 31st August 2012.

All parents applying for places in our Nursery are asked to apply online at www.hertsdirect.org/nurseryadmissions. Applicants who live outside Hertfordshire must use the CAF from their own Local Authority and return it to them. Applicants are also required to complete a St. Mary's Supplementary Information Form (SIF) and return it by 20th March 2015. (If you do not have internet access at home, you can use the internet at your local library free of charge or telephone the school and arrange a time to come in and use one of our computers.) The SIF and the Diocesan Priest's Reference form (if required) can be obtained from the school and the SIF is also available from the LA offices, from the school website and the LA website. You can collect the forms from the school or contact the school and ask for them to be sent to you. *A completed SIF is very important to enable our Admissions Committee give the correct priority to your application.*

Your application may be compromised if both these forms and requested documents are not received by 20th March 2015.

The Governors intend to admit 26 children at Nursery age in the school year commencing September 2015. **(There is no automatic transfer from Nursery to Reception: each has its own application process. Children attending the Nursery have no priority when applying for a place in Reception.)** There will be a continuing interest list for initially unsuccessful Nursery applicants which will remain open for a year. (This list is maintained in the order of the over-subscription criteria and not in the order of when applications are received.) Email offers will be made directly to parents from Hertfordshire County Council on 28th April 2015. If you are unsuccessful you may ask us for the reasons, related to the oversubscription criteria listed below. For further information and queries please contact the Schools Admission Officer. **Each 15hrs allocation will be in the form of a morning session, Monday to Friday. Morning sessions will be between 9am and 12 noon.**

Oversubscription Criteria

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

1. Catholic Children Looked After (CLA) and adopted and/or residence order and/or special guardianship immediately after been looked after.
2. Baptised Catholic children from practising Catholic families.
3. Other baptised Catholic children.
4. Other Children Looked After (CLA) and adopted and/or residence order and/or special guardianship immediately after been looked after.
5. Baptised children from non-Catholic families whose parents can demonstrate commitment to the Christian faith and its practice. We will include in this criterion the children of parents who practise a Christian faith where infant baptism is not used e.g. Baptists, Trinity Life Church.
6. Baptised children from other non-Catholic families.
7. Children of other faiths whose parents wish them to have a Catholic education and whose application is supported by a religious leader.
8. Any other children.

Notes (these Notes form part of the Oversubscription Criteria)

- a) The admission of children with a statement of Special Educational Needs is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. This procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of statements by the child's home Local Authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. Under the Education Act 1996, the Governors are obliged by law to admit any child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs where this school is named in the Statement.
- b) Within each of the categories priority will be accorded to children who have siblings in the school in years Reception to Year 6 at the time of admission to the school. Sibling refers to brothers and sisters, step brothers and sisters, half brothers and sisters or adopted brothers and sisters.
- c) For categories 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 a certificate of baptism is required unless the family belongs to a Christian church where infant baptism is not used. (A baptismal certificate may not be needed for Category 1: see definition of 'Catholic', below.)
- d) For category 2 a completed Diocesan Priests Common Reference Form is required (see 'Practising Catholic' below). In the case of practising members of an Eastern Catholic or Eastern Christian Church, a letter from their priest verifying practice is required. For categories 5 and 7 a letter from a religious leader confirming practice of the faith of the applicant is required.
- e) Twins / Multiple Births: Please note that twins and children of multiple births are an exception to infant class size legislation (2.15 (g) Schools Admissions Code. Feb 2012). Therefore, where there is one place remaining and siblings of a multiple birth application meet the criteria and are the next ranked application, all the siblings of that given multiple birth application will be offered a place even when this takes the class size above 26

- f) When applicants have exceptional needs, governors will give such applicants top priority within each criterion as long as appropriate written evidence is received. Evidence or claims under this criterion must be made at the time of application and must be supplied by a professional such as a doctor, social worker or priest to demonstrate that the needs can only be met at St. Mary's.

Definitions

'Child looked after', CLA, has the same meaning as in section 22 of the Children Act 1989, and means any child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by them (e.g. children with foster parents).

'Catholic' means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of baptism in a Catholic Church or a certificate of reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy, it includes a CLA 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 CLA (e.g. a CLA in the process of adoption by a Catholic family). [For the purposes of this policy, [catechumens] and members of an [Eastern Christian Church] are included in the definition 'Catholic'.

'Practising Catholic' means a Catholic child from a practising Catholic family where this practice is verified by a reference from a Catholic priest in the standard format laid down by the Diocese.

'Parent' means the adult or adults with legal responsibility for the child.

'Adopted'. An adopted child is a child who is adopted under the terms of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 s.46 (adoption orders).

'Residence Order' A residence order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.8 which defines it as an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

'Special Guardianship Order' A special guardianship order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.14A which defines it as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s).

'Sibling' means brother or sister, to include adopted brothers and sisters, half brothers and sisters or step brothers and sisters. A sibling relationship does not apply when the older child(ren) will leave before the younger one starts.

'Eastern Christian Church' includes orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of Baptism or Reception from the authorities of that Church.

'Christian' for the purposes of this policy, means a member of one of the Churches affiliated to 'Churches Together in Britain and Ireland'.

Tie Break

Where the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the criteria listed above would still lead to oversubscription, the places up to the admission number will be offered to those living nearest to the school. We will use the straight line distance measurement provided by Hertfordshire County Council. (The home

address is defined as the address at which the child resides for 50% or more of the school week.) If one place remains and the last two children on our ranked list live the same distance from the school, the Governing Body will draw lots in the presence of an independent witness.

Information about Applications in Previous Years

For the 2013-14 intake, governors used the distance tie break to award the final place to an applicant within criterion 8: 'Any other children'. (In 2008-9, 2009-10, 2010-11 and in 2011-12 our final successful applicant was also within criterion 8.)

Fair Access Protocols

The school is committed to taking its fair share of vulnerable children who are hard to place, in accordance with locally agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal round of admission, the Governing Body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol which carries the agreement of both the Governing Body and the Diocese for the current admission year. The Governing Body has this power even when admitting such a child would exceed the normal admission number.

In-Year Admissions

The school's in-year admission arrangements will work within the remit of Hertfordshire's agreed scheme of in-year co-ordination. The governing body remains responsible for the allocation of all places in accordance with the school's admission policy but all applications for, and allocations to, the school must be made via a child's home authority.

Applications for In-Year admissions are made in the same way as those made during the normal admissions round. Where there is no waiting list the local authority will be notified and the child will be admitted. If more applications are received than there are places available then applications will be ranked by the Governing Body in accordance with the oversubscription criteria, with the following modifications: Catholic children without an offer of a school place elsewhere are given priority immediately after Catholic 'looked-after' children; similarly, other children without an offer of a school place are given priority immediately after other 'looked-after' children. If a place cannot be offered at this time then you may ask us for the reasons and you will be informed of your right of appeal. You will be offered the opportunity of being placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained by the Governing Body in the order of the oversubscription criteria and not in the order in which the applications are received. Names are removed from the list at the end of each academic year. When a place becomes available the Governing Body will decide who is at the top of the list so that the LA can inform the parent that the school is making an offer.