

ST. PATRICK'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY ADMISSIONS POLICY

2027-2028

St. Patrick's is a Voluntary Aided Catholic Primary School in the Diocese of Southwark in which Religious Education is at the heart of the curriculum. 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, Catholic doctrine and practice underpins everything we do and it is essential that the Catholic character be fully supported by all families in the school.

Although the school exists primarily to serve the Catholic community, the Governing Body welcomes applications, (subject to availability of places), from those of other denominations and faiths, and those in the community who support its religious ethos.

Responsibility for admission rests with the Governors who are the admitting authority. Having consulted with the Local Authority and other admission authorities the Governors intend to admit 45 pupils, at one point of entry, to the Reception Class in the school year which begins in September 2027.

The admissions criteria are the same for both nursery and the main school, however separate applications are required.

Nursery

Children will be admitted to the Nursery (subject to availability of places) from the term after their third birthday. There are 52 part time places (15 hours per session) available at the school. Some children may be eligible to receive additional hours in exceptional circumstances where there are known safeguarding/social care concerns. Please contact the school for further information. Admission to the nursery does not guarantee a place at the school.

Reception

Children will be admitted for full-time schooling in September of the academic year in which they become of statutory school age (that is five years of 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 school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that year; parents may also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

How places will be allocated

The number of intended admissions each year beginning the 1st September is forty-five (45). Pupils will be admitted without reference to ability or aptitude. 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. Baptised Catholic “Looked after” children or “Looked after” children in the care of Catholic families.
2. Baptised Catholic children residing within the parishes of St. Patrick’s Plumstead and Holy Cross Plumstead Common– this includes children of parents who are members of the Ordinariate or any of the Oriental Rite Churches in union with Rome who are baptised and practising. Evidence of Baptism or reception into church will be required.
3. Baptised Catholic children from families residing outside the parishes of St. Patrick’s Plumstead and Holy Cross Plumstead Common– this includes children of parents who are adherents to any of the Oriental Rite Churches in union with Rome who are baptised and practising. Evidence of Baptism will be required.
4. Children enrolled in the catechumenate. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required.
5. Other “Looked after” children and “previously looked after” children.
6. Children who are members of Eastern Orthodox Churches. Evidence of Baptism will be required.
7. 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.
8. Children of other faiths.
9. Any other applicants.

If more applications have been received in any of the above categories than the school/nursery has places available, the following criteria will be applied in the order of priority set out below:

- A. For category 2 and 3 above – The strength of evidence of commitment to the faith as demonstrated by the family's Mass attendance on Sundays. (The frequency of Mass attendance as confirmed by the Parish Priest will be used to rank applicants, i.e. children whose families attend weekly Mass will be given priority over those who attend fortnightly; those who attend fortnightly priority over those who attend monthly, those who attend monthly priority over those who attend occasionally etc; in the order specified on the Confirmation of Religious Practice Form). This evidence must be provided by the parents/carers and be endorsed by a priest at the church/es where the family normally worship.
- B. The presence of a brother or sister on the school roll at the time of admission. Evidence of relationship will be required.
- C. Those with social, medical or pastoral needs which make the school particularly suitable for the child in question. Strong and relevant evidence must be provided by an appropriate professional authority (e.g. qualified medical practitioner, social worker or priest). The Governing Body will require written evidence in such cases from any relevant professional at the time of the application. This evidence must set out the particular reasons why St. Patrick's is the most suitable school and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. In making their decisions, Governors will consider documentary advice offered by social workers, health visitors and other professionals.
- D. Distance between home and school measured as a straight line measurement from the child's home to the entrance of the school. If more than one applicant lives in a multi-occupancy building, i.e. flats, priority will be given to the applicant whose door number is the lowest numerically and/or alphabetically. In cases where distance is identical, the place will be allocated by drawing names from a hat.

Admission Procedure

Applications for places at St Patrick's are made by way of a Common Application Form (CAF) submitted to the home local authority. In addition to the CAF the supplementary Information Form (available from the school office and from the Royal Borough of Greenwich), should be completed and sent to the headteacher at the school no later than the closing date published

by the local authority. This should be done by hand, even if the CAF is completed on-line. If the, supplementary Information form is not completed and sent to the school with a certified copy of the child's baptism certificate or certificate of reception into the church, the governing body of the school will consider the application under criterion 9. You are advised to make two copies of the forms. You should retain one copy and pass the second to the priest as indicated.

The Governing Body has set the number of intended admissions to the Reception Year at 45, with pupils being admitted in September of the academic year in which they become of statutory school age (that is five years of age)

In- Year Admissions

The school manages its own in-year applications for admissions to primary school. Applications forms for in-year admissions are available from the school office. Forms should be completed and returned to the school office along with copies of the baptismal certificate (if available). Families will be contacted directly by the school to arrange for the child to visit the school. The school participates in the Local Authority Fair Access Protocol. Children admitted via Fair Access Protocol take priority over those children on the school's waiting list and those pending appeal.

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 a EHC Plan are dealt with by a completely separate procedure . The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of the statements and EHC plans by the pupils home local authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the SEND code of practice. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or with a EHC plan naming the school will be admitted without reference to the above criteria.

Waiting List

If an application for a place in the school is unsuccessful, parents may ask for their child's name to be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list is operated using the same admission criteria as those used originally, although the inclusion on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place in the school will become available at any time in the future. Children's names remain on the waiting list for the entire academic year. It is possible that when a child is

directed under the Local Authority's Protocol they will take precedence over those children already on the waiting list. Placement on the waiting list does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to admit, nor can it in any way affect the outcome of such an appeal.

Fair Access Protocol

The school participates in the local authority Fair Access Protocol to allocate places to vulnerable pupils and other children in accordance with the School Admission code 2014. Admitting pupils under the protocol may require a school to admit above the planned admission number for the relevant year group.

Appeals

Parents whose application for a place is unsuccessful may appeal to an independent appeal panel set up in accordance with the Schools 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 have the right to make oral representations to the Appeals 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 admissions arrangements did not comply with the 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.

Definitions:

These definitions explain some of the terms used in our Admissions Policy. Please read them carefully.

“looked after children” has the same meaning as in Section 20 of the Children’s 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). Please note that children in private fostering arrangements are not considered looked after children.

“Previously looked after children” – children looked after previously by an English or Welsh local authority.

“practising Catholic families” is defined by frequency of Mass Attendance in the order shown on the Supplementary Form, thus applications will be ranked: Weekly, Fortnightly, Monthly, Occasionally etc.

“brother or sister” means children who live as brother and sister, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, step brothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters who live at the same address. It does not include other relatives, e.g. cousins or unrelated children who live at the same address.

“families” is defined as being the child’s natural or adoptive parents, or officially designated carers. It does not include grandparents or other relatives unless they are officially designated carers.

“Catholic” means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. ‘Catholics’ include members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of baptism in a Roman Catholic Church or a certificate of reception into full communion of the Roman Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy it includes a looked after child who is part of a Catholic family where the Priest’s reference demonstrates that the child would have been baptised or received into the church 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).

“home” refers to the principal home address at which the child lives for the majority of his/her time . If your child resides equally between both parents, the principal home address will be considered as being the address at which your child is registered whilst attending early years provision, with their GP and, if applicable, the address of the parent who is in receipt of Child Benefit or Child Tax Credits for your child.

“catechumen” – member of the catechumenate of the Catholic Church (someone undergoing instruction prior to being baptised into the Catholic Church). This must be evidenced by either a letter from the Parish Priest to confirm this or a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens.

“Oriental Rite Churches” –in union with Rome

Alexandria: Coptic, Ethiopian

Antioch: Malankrese (Sri Lanka), Maronite, Syrian

Armenian: Armenian

Chaldean (Syro–Oriental): Chaldean, Malabar

Constantinople (Byzantine): Albanian, Byelorussian, Bulgarian, Greek, Melchite, Italo–Albanian, Romanian, Russian, Ruthenian, Slovakian, Ukrainian, Hungarian.

Source: Annuario, Pontificio 2002 Riti nella chiesa pp 979–982

Other Christian Denominations refers to denominations that are members of Churches Together in England, which include the following:

Antiochian Orthodox Church, Baptist Union of Great Britain, Cherubim and Seraphim Council of Churches, Church of England, Church of God of Prophecy, Church of Scotland (in England), Congregational Federation, Coptic Orthodox Church, Council of African and Caribbean Churches UK, Council of Oriental Orthodox Churches, Ichthus Christian Fellowship, Independent Methodist Church, International Ministerial Council of Great Britain, Joint Council for Anglo–Caribbean Churches, Lutheran Council of Great Britain, Methodist Church, Moravian Church, New Testament Assembly, New Testament Church of God, Ecumenical Patriarchate, Religious Society of Friends, Roman Catholic Church, Russian Orthodox Church, Salvation Army, Seventh Day Adventist Church, Transatlantic Pacific Alliance of Churches, United Reformed Church, Wesleyan Holiness Church.