



ST. JOSEPH'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL
'LEARNING TO LOVE, LOVING TO LEARN'

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC NURSERY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS CRITERIA FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/2024

Introduction

St Joseph's is a voluntary-aided Catholic Primary and Nursery School situated in the Diocese of Southwark and maintained by the Wandsworth Local Authority. The school serves the Parishes of St Thomas a Becket, Wandsworth, St Mary Magdalen's, East Hill and St Gregory's, Earlsfield.

The Governors, who are responsible for admissions to this Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, having consulted with the Local Authority intend to admit up to 26 full time equivalents to the Nursery in September 2023 without reference to ability or aptitude. Where the number of applications exceeds 26 full time equivalents, the Governors will offer places using the following criteria in the order stated:-

Admissions Criteria

Places will be offered in accordance with the following order of priorities:

1. Looked after baptised Catholic children or looked after children in the care of Catholic families, 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 the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted (Note 1)
2. Looked after children, looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order and children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted (Note 1).
3. Baptised Catholic children of practicing Catholic parent(s).
If this criterion is oversubscribed the following tie-breakers will be applied in the following order:
 - Living within the Parishes who have a sibling at the school at the time of admission (Note 3) (Note 4)
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4. Baptised Catholic children whose parent(s) are non-practicing



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5. Other children with a sibling at the school at the time of admission (Note 4)
 6. Children within the Parishes whose parents are practicing members of other Christian denominations
 7. Other children

If there are more applications than places within any of the above criteria, priority will be given to:

- (i) Children with a professionally supported **exceptional** medical need or exceptional social need for a place at this School (Note 5)
- (ii) Children who live* nearest to the school **in order of straight-line distance from home to school, as measured by the Council's Geographical Information System (Note 6)**. (*the L.A. determines the home address as part of the co-ordinated application process)
- (iii) 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 1: A child looked after is a child in the care of a Local Authority or provided with accommodation by that Authority in accordance with section 22 of the children Act 1989. An adopted child is defined by section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 or section 12 of the Adoption Act 1976. A residence order is defined by section 8 of the Children Act 1989. A child arrangement order is defined by section 8 of the Children Act 1989 as amended by section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014. A special guardianship order is defined by section 14A of the Children Act 1989.

Note 2: A practicing Catholic is defined as one who attends Mass weekly. Catholics include members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome. Reference to the other Christian denominations refers to denominations that are full members of Churches Together in England. Proof of Baptism and proof of practice by means of a reference from your Parish Priest will be required.

The strength of commitment to the faith as demonstrated by the level of the family's weekly mass attendance. The evidence must be provided by the parent(s)/carer(s) and endorsed by the priest at the church where the family normally worship on the

Supplementary Form. Applications will be ranked accordingly; firstly, with those who attend Mass Weekly.

Note 3: Living within the Parishes means within the boundaries of the Parish of St Thomas a Becket, Wandsworth, St Mary Magdalen's, East Hill and St Gregory's, Earlsfield. (A map is available in the school)

Note 4: A sibling is defined as:

- A full brother or sister
- A step/half brother or sister living at the same address
- A child who is living as part of the family by reason of a court order; or
- A child who has been placed with foster carers as a result of being looked after by a local authority

Note 5: Applications made on **exceptional** medical grounds must be supported by a current letter from a specialist health professional. Applications made on exceptional social grounds must be supported by a current letter from a Social Worker or other care professional working with the family. The letter must give reasons why the child's condition or circumstances make it necessary for the child to attend this school, and the difficulties that would be caused if they had to attend an alternative school. If this information is not provided by the application closing date, the application will not be considered under this criterion.

Note 6: The straight-line measurement used to prioritise applicants for admission to schools in Wandsworth commences in all cases at the location of the property and terminates at the central point of the school site as determined by Wandsworth Council's Geographical Information System. Measurements by alternative systems and/or to other points will not be considered in any circumstances. Where applicants have identical distance measurements, priority amongst them will be determined at random.

Additional Information

- (a) Only one application for each child can be made in any one academic year.
- (b) The parents of those children whom the Admissions Committee have agreed to admit as pupils at the school will be informed in writing by Wandsworth Council and shall be required within a fixed period of time to confirm or otherwise acceptance of the offer of a place.
- (c) **Appeals:** Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with section 94 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: -

- the admission of additional children would not breach the infant class size limit; or
- 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
- 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.

Please note: there have been changes to the Schools' Admissions Appeals Code. The two key proposals were to allow hearings to be held either remotely or in person and to permit a panel of two to decide appeals in circumstances where the third panel member has to withdraw. The proposal to allow remote hearings to take place by video conference or telephone, when video conferencing is not possible and where the appellant and presenting officer agree, will be implemented. Concerns were raised relating to a panel of two being able to decide an appeal and therefore, this proposal will not be implemented. The amended Appeal Code and the draft Admission Appeals Code (2023) was laid before parliament on 16th June 2022. Provided there are no objections, it will come into force on 1st October 2022. The School Admission Appeals Code 2022 can be accessed via <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code>

(d) **Waiting List for September 2024:** 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 waiting list, which will be maintained until **31 August 2025**, 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 authority's fair access protocol they will take precedence over those children already on the list.

(e) **In Year Admission Arrangements:** Applications for in year admissions to classes during the school year and refusal of a place when there is a vacancy available require approval by the Board of Governors in accordance with the Governors' admissions criteria. Applicants for places during the school year must be made to Wandsworth Council on the Council's in-year application form and the school's supplementary form. The Council will refer the application to the school which will inform the applicant whether or not a place can be offer and advise the Council of the outcome.

(f) **Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan:** The admissions of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or with an EHC Plan are dealt with by a completely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making

and maintaining of statements and EHC plans by the pupil's home local authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the SEND code of practice. Pupils with a statement or EHC plan naming the school will be admitted without reference to the above criteria.

- (g) **Admission of children outside their normal age group:** Parents who are seeking a place for their child outside of their normal age group, eg, the child has experienced problems such as ill health or the parents of a summer born child choosing not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday, may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1. Governors will make decisions on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. 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 age group if it were not for being born prematurely. They will also take into account the views of the school's head teacher. When informing a parent of the decision which 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 be admitted to the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school the local authority will process the application as part of the main admissions round, (unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible) and on the basis of the determined admission arrangements, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which 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.
- (h) **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.
- (i) **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 School Admission Code 2021. Admitting pupils under the protocol may require the school to admit above the planned admission number for the relevant year group.

Please note: Governors review the school's admissions arrangements annually and will consult on any changes to the oversubscription criteria. From time to time the admissions criteria for the school may need to be amended. Parents should always



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check that the criteria they are using relate to the year of their application for entry to the school.

The criteria always prominently display the academic year to which they relate.

Please Note

1. The right of appeal does not apply to parents of children refused a place in the nursery
2. Children who gain a place in the Nursery Unit do not have priority for Reception Class