



St John Fisher School
Admissions Policy
2021 - 2022

St John Fisher Catholic Primary School is a voluntary aided school in the Diocese of Southwark. 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. However the Governing Body also welcomes applications from those of other denominations and faiths who support the religious ethos of the school.

Having consulted with the Local Authority, the Diocese and other admission authorities, the Governors intend to admit into the reception class, in September 2021, up to 30 pupils without reference to ability or aptitude.

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 or looked after children in the care of Catholic families and previously looked after Catholic children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.
2. Catholic children, a baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church must accompany the supplementary information form.

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.

Catholic children, a baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church must accompany the supplementary information form. 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.

It is the intention of the governing body to seek a variation from the Office of the Schools' Adjudicator, in relation to Catholic practice. Granting of this variation is, at this time, pending.'

On the advice of the Education Commission of the Archdiocese of Southwark the governing body of St John Fisher Catholic Primary School has agreed the following statement in order to clarify how its faith-based oversubscription criteria will be interpreted whilst churches are closed or attendance at church is not possible due to COVID19. This statement has been shared widely with parishes in order to ensure that determinations made by parish priests concerning regular practice of the faith are being made on a consistent basis.

The suspension of the obligation to attend Sunday Mass was announced on 18th March 2020 by Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. If a parent/carer attended Mass at particular parish (or parishes) prior to 18th March 2020 then they will be considered to have attended Mass in that parish (or parishes) regularly since that time. This will remain the case until the Sunday obligation is reintroduced by the Bishops.

3. Other looked after children and other previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.
4. Children who are members of Eastern Orthodox Churches. Evidence of Baptism will be required.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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

A brother or sister on the school roll at the time of admission. Evidence of the relationship may be required. For this priority, brother or sister normally means a sibling through blood, marriage or adoption. They will not necessarily be residing at the same address or have the same surname.

Social 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).

Distance from home to school. Evidence of residence may be required. This gives priority to pupils living nearest to the school based on a straight line measurement from home to school. Home will be taken as the child's home address at the time of allocation that is the address at which the child lives with the parent or legal guardian who is also the main carer.

This will be measured by Bexley Council. [For information please refer to Bexley Councils "Admission to Primary Schools" booklet] 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.

The distance will be measured on a straight line measurement The distance will be measured by the Local Authority's computerised measuring system from the gate of the home address to main school entrance on Kale Road.

A home address is the address at which the child lives with a parent or registered guardian who is the main carer, defined as the parent eligible to receive Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit.

Notes: Archdiocese of Southwark - Guidance on School Admissions 19 Updated
March 2012

- 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. Appendix 1
- 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).
- e) 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.

Admissions procedure

In addition to the Common Application Form (CAF) supplied by the Local Authority, the Supplementary Information Form (available from the school and from the local authority), should be completed and sent to the school not later than the closing date published by the Local Authority. This should be done even if the CAF is completed online.

If the Supplementary Information Form is not completed, the governing body of the school will only be able to consider the application after all applicants who have completed a Supplementary Information Form. [Appendix 2](#)

Offers of places will be sent to parents by the Local Authority on the common offer date as notified.

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 Appeals 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;
- c) 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.

Appeals must be lodged within a month of the date when notified of the decision. This gives parents time to prepare and lodge their written appeal.

Appeals submitted within this timeframe will be heard within 40 school days i.e. usually by mid July.

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 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 Headteacher. 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

Waiting Lists

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 for one year from the date of application, 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 the 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 on the list.

Late Applications

Any late applications will be considered by the *Governors' Admissions Committee*, in the event of there being any available places using the above criteria. If all places have been filled, 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. This admissions procedure, although primarily relevant to children for whom a place is sought at the normal age of entry to primary education (Year R), will also apply to succeeding year, and be subject to availability of places.

Appendix 1

Oriental Rite Churches in union with Rome

Alexandrian Coptic Catholic Church
Ethiopian Catholic Church ('Gheez rite') (Includes Eritrean Catholic Church)
Antiochean (West Syrian)
Syrian Catholic Church
(Syro-) Maronite Catholic Church
Syro-Malankar Catholic Church
Armenian Armenian Catholic Church
Chaldean (East Syrian) Chaldean Catholic Church
Syro-Malabar Catholic Church
Constantinopolitan (Byzantine)
Albanian (Byzantine) Catholic Church Belarussian Catholic Church Bulgarian
(Byzantine) Catholic Church Georgian Catholic Church Greek (Hellenic) Catholic
Church Greek-Melakite Catholic Church Hungarian (Byzantine) Catholic Church
Italo-Albanian (Byzantine) Catholic Church
Church of the Byzantines of the Diocese of Krizevci (Krizevci Catholic Church)
Macedonian Catholic Church Romanian (Greek)
Catholic Church Russian Catholic Church Ruthenian (Byzantine) Catholic Church
Slovak (Greek) Catholic Church Ukrainian (Greek) Catholic Church

There are an equivalent number of Eastern Orthodox Churches with similar names that are not in union with the See of Rome. The general rule is Eastern Rite Churches in union with the See of Rome will have the word Catholic in their titles. Churches with the word Orthodox in their titles are not in union with the See of Rome and children from these Churches should be considered after Catholic children. Please refer any queries to the Commission.

Members of Churches Together in England

Antiochan 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
Icthus 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
Oecumenical Patriarchate
Religious Society of Friends
Roman Catholic Church
Russian Orthodox Church
Salvation Army
Transatlantic Pacific Alliance of Churches United
Reformed Church Wesleyan holiness Church

Appendix 2

Governors will consider a preference for St John Fisher Catholic School equally against the over subscription criteria regardless of whether parents list the school as first, second or third preference.

We manage the information we collect in line with Data Protection Act requirements. Personal information is stored securely and only accessible by the necessary authorised staff when it's needed.

You can make a formal request in writing for personal information held about you or your child. Further information is contained within the schools Privacy Notice available to download from the school website, or in hard copy direct from the school office.

We have a duty under the Children's Act 2004 to work with partner organisations to provide and improve services to children and young people. It may be necessary to share information with other such organisations.

We may also use information from your application to prevent and detect of fraud.