



St Anselm's Catholic Primary School

Admissions Policy

2018-2019

Introduction

St Anselm's Catholic Primary School is a voluntary aided school in the trusteeship of the Archdiocese of Southwark. The Governing Body is the admissions authority and is responsible for ranking applications received via Wandsworth Council for places in the reception class in respect of children who will be five years old in the forthcoming academic year (1 September – 31 August). The Governing Body returns the applications ranked according to its published admissions criteria so the Council can make offers to parents following the coordination process across the borough.

The Governing Body will rank all applications according to the criteria set out below; first according to the main categories (1-8) and, within each main category, by subsidiary categories (i-iii) as they apply on the closing date for applications.

Main categories (in order of priority)

1. Baptised Catholic Looked After Children and previously looked after children who ceased to be so because they were adopted, or because they became subject to a residence order, child arrangements order or a special guardianship order*
2. Baptised Catholic children with at least one parent who is a practising Catholic attending Mass in the Parish of St Anselm's, Tooting Bec.
3. Baptised Catholic children with at least one parent who is a practising Catholic attending Mass in another parish.
4. Baptised Catholic children not falling within categories 1, 2 or 3.
5. All other Looked After Children and previously looked after children who ceased to be so because they were adopted, or because they became subject to a residence order, child arrangements order or a special guardianship order*
6. Baptised children with a parent who is a practising member of another Christian denomination.
7. Children with at least one parent who is a practising member of another religion or faith.
8. Other children.

*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.

Subsidiary categories (in order of priority)

The following priorities will be applied (i-iii) when applications within the main categories exceed places available and it is necessary to decide between them.

- (i) children with a sibling who will be on the roll of the school at the time of admission;
- (ii) children for whom the school is particularly suitable on exceptional medical, social or pastoral grounds;
- (iii) children living nearest to the school, measured in a straight line.

Notes (these notes form part of the admissions criteria – please read carefully)

Catholic means a baptised member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. The overall priority afforded to baptised Catholic children reflects the school's Catholic mission, trusteeship and voluntary aided status under statute. Applications under categories

1-4 must be accompanied by a copy of the relevant Baptismal Certificate (for applications under categories 6 and 7, equivalent documents may be sought).

Catholic practice is as defined by the Catholic Church in Doctrine and Canon Law, in essence: baptism and attendance at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. The Governing Body requires those parents that wish to be considered under categories 2 and 3 to supply information on the family's religious practice over the last three years via a supplementary form. The Governing Body will then seek verification of that information from the appropriate parish priest(s). Applications without information on religious practice, verified by a priest's reference, cannot be considered under main categories 2 or 3. The school may not engage directly with parents to assess or verify religious practice; this is a matter for parish priests. With reference to attendance at Mass, to be considered for category 2 or 3, the family must have been attending Mass for at least 3 years prior to the closing dates for applications. Applications will be ranked in the order shown on the Supplementary Information Form, ie, families who attend Mass regularly will get priority over families who attend occasionally, who will get priority over families who attend irregularly. The tie break criteria will be applied firstly to families who attend regularly, then families who attend occasionally and then families who attend irregularly.

Siblings are defined by the Governing Body as a brother or sister, step-brother or step-sister of the candidate, or another child for whom the parents have full and permanent legal care or guardianship and who resides with the family for the majority of the time. The sibling must be on the roll of the school at the time of admission of the candidate.

Claims of *exceptional medical, social or pastoral grounds* must: (i) be made at the time of application on the Wandsworth Council form; (ii) relate to the needs of the child rather than the family; and (iii) be relevant to the application to *this* school rather than to a general need. The Governing Body will require validation of any claim to a higher priority on the basis of exceptional grounds, in the form of written evidence, from the appropriate professionals (e.g. doctor, social worker and/or priest). This process should not be confused with arrangements for applicants with statements of special educational needs (SEN) for whom a separate process is provided by the local education authority (contact Wandsworth Local Education Authority (LEA) Special Needs Assessment Section).

Home refers to the permanent home address at which the child lives for the majority of his or her time as at the deadline for applications. Offers of a place at the school may be subject to the verification of address of residence. Delays to verifying address of residence may cause applications to become "late" and therefore considered after the initial round of offers have been made (see below).

The *distance* between home and school is measured in a straight line commencing in all cases at the location of the home as determined by the National Land Planning Gazetteer and terminating at the central point of the school site as determined by Wandsworth Council's Geographical Information System. This system is used to prioritise applicants for admission to all schools in Wandsworth. Measurements by alternative systems, and/or between other points, cannot be taken into account under any circumstances. Where applicants have identical distance measurements, priority between or amongst them will be determined by lottery.

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.

Date of Admission/Deferred Entry

Children will normally be admitted to the reception year in the September following their fourth birthday.

In line with the Admissions Code, parents can defer their child's entry to the reception year until later in the school year, where they have been offered a place at a school to start before they are of compulsory school age. Where entry is deferred, the school will hold the place for that child and not offer it to another child. However, entry cannot be deferred beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the beginning of the final term of the Reception Year. Parents can also request that their child attends part-time until he/she reaches compulsory school age.

Children will not normally be admitted to Reception prior to the September following their fourth birthday.

Delayed Admission of Summer Born Children to Reception to the following September^[1]

Children will normally be admitted to the reception year in the September following their fourth birthday and the vast majority of pupils are educated within their normal chronological age group. However, if there are exceptional reasons, parents can request that the child is admitted outside his/her age group. Such requests would normally apply to children that are summer born^[2] and there are significant reasons that would benefit the child's academic, social and emotional development by starting Reception a year later.

Parents considering delaying entry to Reception to the following September discuss this with their preferred schools before making a formal request. The school may wish to discuss how your child's could be met within their actual age group and the impact of being educated with children of a different age group.

If, following this discussion, parents wish to proceed with the request they should apply for a school place in your child's actual age group by the closing date of 15 January 2018 and include a written request with the application. The Council will then write to you to confirm the request has been received and that your current application has been cancelled.

^[1] This is interim guidance on the consideration of requests to be admitted outside a child's normal year group following the government's announcement in September 2015 to make changes to the Admissions Code. This may be superseded by the publication of a new Admissions Code.

^[2] For admission purposes, summer born children are defined as born between 1 April and 31 August.

It will be necessary to reapply for a Reception place in the following year. There can be no guarantee that there will be a place available at the school as this will depend upon the number of applications and pattern of admissions in that year. If the preferred school(s) are oversubscribed, the application will be considered in accordance with the schools' admission criteria. It is not possible to reserve a place for the following year.

Admission of children outside their normal age group to other year groups¹

Any request for admission outside of the child's chronological year of entry will be considered in accordance with paragraphs 2.17-2.17B of the Admissions Code.

The governing body, as the admission authority for the school, will consider requests 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. The headteacher's views will also be taken into account. Each case should be supported by a letter from a professional (e.g. GP, Hospital Consultant, Social Worker) that provides the reasons for admission outside of the chronological year group. If the request is approved, the application will then be considered in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria in the event of oversubscription.

Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at the school but this right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

Children will not normally be admitted to Reception prior to the September following their fourth birthday.

Late applications: applications received by Wandsworth Council after the relevant deadline are ranked by the school *after* the first round of offers has been made. An application may be deemed "late" by the Council if it is not complete – including verification of address – by the deadline. After the first round of offers has been made, all outstanding applications are ranked on the register of continuing interest according to the admissions criteria.

Appeals

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Parents should contact the Wandsworth Appeals Service (educationappeals@wandsworth.gov.uk or 020 8871 7554). Information on the deadline for appeals will be available on the council's website at www.wandsworth.gov.uk/admissionsappeals.

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; or
- c) the panel decides that the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable.

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 waiting list 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.

Signature _____ Chair of Governors Date _____

Signature _____ Headteacher Date _____