



ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS CRITERIA FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/24

Introduction

St Joseph's is a voluntary-aided Catholic 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 Responsibility for the admission of pupils rests with the Governing Body. In accordance with the provisions of Regulation 49 of the Education (School Government) Regulations 1999, the Governing Body has delegated responsibility for determining admissions to its Admissions Committee. Having consulted the L.A. and others in accord with the requirements of the law, the Governing Body has set as its planned admissions number 30 pupils for the school year commencing **September 2023**.

All applicants for entry into the Reception Year in **September 2023** must list the school as a preference on the common application form of the Local Authority where they live. This must be returned to the council by the published closing date. Applicants are also requested to complete the supplementary form, Part A and Part B, which must be returned direct to the school by the same date. Completion of the Supplementary Form is not mandatory; however, if one is not received the Governors will not be able to apply their admissions criteria and the application will be considered under the 'other children' category.

Admissions Criteria

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

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 order, special guardianship order or child arrangements order. (Note 1).
2. Baptised Catholic children of practicing Catholic parent(s) and children enrolled in the catechumenate (Note 2) living within the Parishes (Note 3) who have a sibling at the school at the time of admission.
3. Baptised Catholic children of practicing Catholic parent(s) and children enrolled in the catechumenate (Note 2) living within the Parishes
4. Baptised Catholic children of practicing Catholic parent(s) and children enrolled in the catechumenate (Note 2) living outside the Parishes who have a sibling (Note 4) at the school at the time of admission
5. Baptised Catholic children of practicing Catholic parent(s) and children enrolled in the catechumenate (Note 2) living outside the Parishes



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6. Baptised Catholic siblings living within the Parishes whose parent(s) are not practicing
7. Baptised Catholic siblings living outside the Parishes whose parent(s) are not practicing
8. Baptised Catholic children living within the Parishes whose parent(s) are not practicing
9. Baptised Catholic children living outside the Parishes whose parent(s) are not practicing
10. Other looked after children and other previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence order, special guardianship order or child arrangements order. (Note 1)
11. Other children with a sibling at the school at the time of admission (Note 4)
12. Children within the Parishes whose parents are practicing members of other Christian denominations
13. 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



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

COVID 19 - please note the following information:

On the advice of the Education Commission of the Archdiocese of Southwark, the governing body of St Joseph's 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 COVID 19. 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 a certain frequency at a particular parish (or parishes) prior to 18th March 2020 then they will be considered to have attended Mass in that parish (or parishes) at the same frequency since that time. This will remain the case until the Sunday obligation is reintroduced by the Bishops.'

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 taken into account 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.



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(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.

(d) **Waiting List for September 2023:**

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 2024**, 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



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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 2014. Admitting pupils under the protocol may require the school to admit above the planned admission number for the relevant year group.



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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 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.