

**ST. MARGARET CLITHEROW
ADMISSIONS POLICY
2015-2016**

St. Margaret Clitherow 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 and Catholic children always have priority of admission, the Governing Body welcomes applications, (subject to availability of places), from those of other denominations and faiths 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 30 pupils, at one point of entry, to the Reception Class in the school year which begins in September 2015.

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 at the beginning of the academic year in which their fourth birthday occurs. The number of intended admissions each year beginning September 1st is twenty six full-time equivalent.

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).

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.

How places will be allocated

The number of intended admissions each year beginning the 1st September is thirty (30). 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. Catholic children/children in the care of Catholic families who are either looked after, have been adopted and were previously in care or have left care under a special guardianship or residence order.
2. Baptised Catholic children from practising* Catholic families - 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 and practice will be required.
3. Children enrolled in the catechumenate*. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required.
4. Other children who are either looked after, have been adopted and were previously in care or have left care under a special guardianship or residence order.
5. Children who are members of Eastern Orthodox Churches. Evidence of Baptism will be required.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. Any other children.

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 in order to decide between applications:

- A. For category 2 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 or 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 (e.g. qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, 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. Margaret Clitherow is the most suitable school and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school.
- D. Proximity to the school from the candidate's home* address, the distance measured by the shortest straight line measurement from a single fixed point in the centre of the home address to the front entrance of the school in Cole Close (this will be confirmed using the Greenwich Geographical Information System). Evidence of residence may be required. 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.

ADMISSIONS TO ST MARGARET CLITHEROW PRIMARY SCHOOL 2015-2016

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 22 of the Children's Act 1989, and means any child in the care of a public authority and are in public care. Applications made under this criteria must be accompanied by details of circumstance and professionally supported evidence (e.g. from an appropriate social worker). Please note that children in private fostering arrangements are not considered looked after children.

"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, half and step brothers or sisters. It does not include other relatives, e.g. cousins or unrelated children who live at the same address.

"twins" where twins or children from other multiple births qualify for the last school places to be allocated, the governors will admit the qualifying siblings in breach of the legislation relating to infant class size as they will be considered as excepted pupils.

"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. 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 principle 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.

"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.

Churches in union with Rome

Personal Ordinariate.

Baptised children of parents who are members of the Ordinariate established under the Apostolic Constitution *Anglicanorum Coetibus* of November 4th 2009 are to be given equal preference to that offered to children baptised in a Catholic church. It is important to note that these children may have been baptised in the Church of England.

"Oriental Rite Churches" -in union with Rome

Alexandria: Coptic, Ethiopian (includes Eritrean Catholic Church)

Antioch: Malankrese (Sri Lanka), Maronite, Syrian

Armenian: Armenian

Chaldean (Syro-Oriental): Chaldean, Malabar

Constantinople (Byzantine): Albanian, Byelorussian, Bulgarian, Georgian, Greek (Hellenic), Greek Melakite, Italo-Albanian, Church of the Byzantines of the Diocese of Krizevci, Macedonian, Romanian (Greek), Russian, Ruthenian, Slovakian, Ukrainian, Hungarian.

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, Icthus Christian Fellowship, Independent Methodist Church, International Ministerial Council of Great Britain, Joint Council for Anglo-Caribbean Churches, Lutheran Council of Great Britain, Mar Thoma, Methodist Church, Moravian Church, New Testament Assembly, New Testament Church of God, Ecumenical Patriarchate, Redeemed Christian Church of God, Religious Society of Friends, Roman Catholic Church, Russian Orthodox Church, Salvation Army, Transatlantic Pacific Alliance of Churches, United Reformed Church, Wesleyan Holiness Church.

(Please note the onus is on parents to provide up-to-date information to support the application at the time of consideration.)

Admission Procedures

The Governing Body has set the number of intended admissions to the Reception Year at 30, with pupils being admitted in September of the academic year in which they become of statutory school age (that is five years of age).

Applications for places at St Margaret Clitherow are made by way of an online or paper **Common Application Form (CAF)** supplied by the home local authority and the **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)**, available from the school.

The CAF should be returned to the home local authority. The SIF returned to the school.

Any special information regarding social or medical need should be included with the Common Application Form at the time of application and parental approval may be sought for the school to make reference to the relevant authority. New information may not be brought to bear after an application has been refused.

The SIF should be completed and sent to the Clerk to the Governors at the school, no later than the closing date published by Royal Greenwich, the maintaining local authority. The form must be endorsed by the parent/s' or guardian/s' Parish Priest (or another priest who celebrates Mass at the church they normally attend), confirming Catholicity and must be accompanied by a copy of the child's baptismal certificate. Where a family has recently moved to the area, the form may be completed by a priest of their former parish and must be accompanied by a copy of the child's Baptismal Certificate. Where a family has recently moved to the area, the form may be completed by a priest of their former parish. If the SIF is not completed by the deadline, the Governing Body of the school will only be able to consider the application after all applicants who have completed a SIF and have submitted it on time, have been considered.

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

Appeals Procedures

Parents of children who are not offered a place have the right to appeal to an Independent Appeal Committee under the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act. Appeals must be made in writing and must set out the reasons on which the appeal is made. Parents wishing to appeal should obtain an appeal form from the school office. The form should be sent to the Clerk of the Appeal Committee, c/o the school, within 20 days of the notification of the decision.

Infant classes are restricted 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 admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

Parents/carers have the right to make oral representations to the Appeal Panel.

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. Placement on the waiting list does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision, nor can it in any way affect the outcome of such an appeal. It is possible that when a child is directed under the local authority's Fair Access Panel they will take precedence over those children already on the list or those pending appeal.

Late applications

In the event of there being any available places, late applications will be considered by the Governors' Admissions Committee, 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.

In- Year Admissions

The school manages its own in-year applications for admission to primary school. Application 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's Fair Access Protocol. Children admitted via the Fair Access Protocol take priority over those children on the school's waiting list and those pending appeal.

This admissions procedure, although primarily relevant to children for whom a place is sought at the normal age of entry to primary education (Year Reception), will also apply to succeeding years and be subject to the availability of places.