



St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School
'Jesus is at the heart of everything we think, do and say'

ADMISSIONS POLICY

2017 - 2018

Introduction

St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families in Fulham. 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.

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic applicants in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below.

As a Catholic school we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. At a Catholic school, Catholic doctrine and practice permeate every aspect of the school's activity. It is essential that the Catholic character of the school's education is fully supported by all families in the school. All applicants are therefore expected to give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school.

The Published Admissions Number (PAN) for the reception classes at St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School is 60. The Governing Body has sole responsibility for admissions to this school and intends to admit 60 pupils to the reception classes in the school year which begins in September 2017. Applications are invited from families whose child will reach their 4th birthday between 1st September 2016 and 31st August 2017.

Oversubscription Criteria

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 'looked after' children and Catholic children who have been adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders, immediately after having been looked after.
2. Baptised Catholic children with a certificate of Catholic Practice, who have a sibling at the school at the time of admission.
3. Baptised Catholic children with a certificate of Catholic Practice who are resident in the parish of St Thomas of Canterbury.
4. Baptised Catholic children with a certificate of Catholic Practice who are not resident in the parish of St Thomas of Canterbury.
5. Other baptised Catholic children.
6. Other looked-after children and children who have been adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders, immediately after having been looked after.
7. Children of Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church.
8. Christians of other denominations and whose application is supported by a letter from a minister/religious leader, showing membership of the faith community
9. Children of other faiths whose application is supported by a letter from a minister/religious leader, showing membership of the faith community.
10. Applications from any other applicants.

CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE

Applicants applying under criteria 2, 3 and 4 must submit a Certificate of Catholic Practice (CCP) by the closing date. This form (which used to be called a priest's reference form) is available from the school or from the diocesan website. Parents should fill in the top part of the form with their details and then take the form to their parish priest (or the priest at the parish where they normally worship) for signature. It is the parent's duty to ensure that the CCP is submitted to the school in good time. The priest will only sign this form if he knows you.

Multiple Births

When the last offer is made to a child of a multiple birth i.e. twin, triplets etc, the remaining child(ren) will also be offered a place, even though it will mean exceeding the published admission number.

Exceptional Need

The Governing Body will give top priority, after the appropriate category of looked-after children, to an application where compelling evidence is provided at the time of application, from an appropriate professional such as a doctor, priest or social worker, of an exceptional social, medical, pastoral or other need of the child, which can only be met at this school.

Where the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the categories listed above would lead to oversubscription the following provisions will be applied.

Last year we received () applications for 60 places. All applicants in category 1 and category 2 were offered a place, along with () in category 3 and () in category 4. The governing body was unable to offer places to any applicants beyond category 4. As the school is usually oversubscribed by Catholic candidates, it is very unlikely that applicants who are not Catholics will gain a place. In the past () years, the governing body has been unable to offer a place to any applicant who is not a Catholic [Will be completed when the outcome of the 2016/17 round is known]

Tie Break

Where the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the sub-categories listed above would still lead to oversubscription, the places up to the admission number will be offered to those living nearest to the school. Where two or more applicants for the last remaining space live an equal distance from the school, the Governing Body will draw lots in the presence of an independent witness.

Applications Procedure for Reception Admission

From September 2016 if you wish to make an application for a Reception place at this school, the procedure will be as follows:

1. Contact your local council or if a Hammersmith and Fulham resident, contact Hammersmith and Fulham Council's Admissions Service on 020 7745 6434 or visit www.lbhf.gov.uk/admissions or www.eadmissions.org.uk to complete the Common Application Form.
2. You should complete the school's Supplementary Information Form which you can download from our website or pick up from the school office.
3. The Certificate of Catholic Practice should also be completed (download from our website or the Diocesan website or pick up from the school office) for applicants who wish to be considered with a certificate of Catholic Practice.
4. Your on-line admission should be submitted or your completed Common Application Form should be returned to your local authority by 15th January 2017.
5. Completed Supplementary Forms and Catholic Certificate of Practice should be returned to the School by 3:00pm on 15th January 2017. It is important that those applying under the religious criteria complete both forms in order that the oversubscription criteria can be properly applied.
6. All parent/guardians will be informed of the result of their application on or about the 17th April 2017.

All applications will be considered in line with our published admission arrangements. Late applications (arriving after 15th January 2017) will be dealt with after all the initial offers have been made. Outcomes of applications will be sent to you by your local council on behalf of the Governing Body.

Right of Appeal

If you are unsuccessful you may ask us for the reasons for the refusal of a place. These reasons will be related to the oversubscription criteria listed above and you will have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel. Applicants have a **minimum** of 20 **school** days in which to appeal. The deadline in which to appeal is Thursday 26th May 2017.

In-Year Admissions

In-year applications are made directly to the school. If a place is available and there is no waiting list the child will be admitted. If more applications are received than there are places available then applications will be ranked by the governing body in accordance with the oversubscription criteria, with the following modifications: Catholic children without an offer of a school place elsewhere are given priority immediately after Catholic 'looked after' children; similarly, other children without an offer of a school place are given priority immediately after Catholic 'looked-after' children. Governors will inform parents whether or not a place is to be offered.

If a place cannot be offered at this time then you may ask for the reasons and you will be informed of your right of appeal. You will be offered the opportunity of being placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained by the governing body in the order of the oversubscription criteria and not in the order in which the applications are received. Names are removed from the list at the end of each academic year.

Children educated outside their chronological age group except Reception applications for summer born children

Any application for a child to be educated out of his/her age group will be considered by governors on an individual basis and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Parents should write to the Chair of Governors during the autumn term in the (academic) year of application, giving reasons and providing compelling professional evidence.

There is no automatic transfer from Nursery to Reception Class.

Fair Access Protocols

The school is committed to taking its fair share of children who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as set out in locally agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal admissions round the governing body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol that has been agreed by both the Diocese and the governing body for the current school year. The governing body has this power even when admitting the child would exceed the published admission number.

Deferment

Parents/carers may defer their child's entry to school up till the first day of the term following the child's fifth birthday (statutory school age). Application is made in the normal way, then the request for deferment made. The place will be held open until 1st Jan 2018 or 1st Apr 2018. Admission may not be deferred beyond statutory school age or beyond the academic year of application. Parents wishing to defer entry for summer born children should note that entry can only be deferred up until 1st April 2018.

Summer Born Children

Parents may apply for summer born children, i.e. born between 1st April – 31st August, to start Reception in the September following their 5th birthday. The Chair of Governors should be notified by 15th January 2017 and an application made in the usual way. The application will be ranked with all other applications and there is no guarantee that an offer will be made.

Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out above and **not** in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Names are normally removed from the list after 1 year.

Pupils with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHC)

The admission of pupils with Education, Health Care (EHC) Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. This procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of statements by the pupil's home Local Authority. Details of this separate procedure is set out in the *Special Educational Needs (EHC) Code of Practice*. If your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs (EHC) you must contact your local authority SEN officer. Where this school is named in an EHC Plan the child will be admitted.

Change of Details

If any of the details on either of your forms changes between the date of application and the date of the receipt of the letter of offer or refusal, you **must** inform the school and the local authority immediately. If misleading information is given or allowed to remain on either of your forms, the Governing Body reserves the right to withdraw the place, even if the child has already started at the school.

Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

'Adopted'. An adopted child is a child who is adopted under the terms of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 s.46 (adoption orders).

'Child Arrangements Order'. A Child Arrangements order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.8 settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live. Children 'looked after' immediately before the order is made qualify in this category.

'Special Guardianship Order'. A special guardianship order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.14A which defines it as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s).

'Looked after child' has the same meaning as in section 22 of the Children Act 1989, and means any child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by them (e.g. children with foster parents).

'Sibling' is defined as brother or sister, half brother or sister, stepbrother or sister, or foster child living with the same parent/carer at the same postal address.

'Parent' means the adult or adults with legal responsibility for the child.

'Catholic' means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of baptism in a Catholic Church or a certificate of reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

'Certificate of Catholic Practice' means a certificate given by the family's parish priest (or the priest in charge of the church where the family practises) in the form laid down by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.'

'Catechumen' means a person who is a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the Order of Catechumens.

'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism or Reception from the authorities of that Church.

'Christian' for the purposes of this policy, means a member of one of the Churches affiliated to 'Churches Together in Britain and Ireland'.

'Resident' – A child is deemed to be resident at a particular address when he/she resides there for more than 50% of the school week.

'Distance from school' means distance as measured by a straight line, from the front door of the child's residential address (including flats) to the address point at the school. **Distances are measured by the LA using a computerised system.** If distances are identical, the Governing Body will draw lots in the presence of an independent witness.

'Home address' is defined as the address at which the child resides for 50% or more of the school week.