

Good Shepherd Catholic
Primary School

Admissions Policy and Procedures
2017-2018



Light, Life, Love

The Good Shepherd 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 welcomes all applications, particularly from those of other denominations and faiths who support the religious ethos of the school.

Having consulted with the Local Authority and other admission authorities, the Governors intend to admit into the reception class in September 2017, 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 foster carers and Catholic children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order. A looked after child is a child who is a) in the care of a local authority, or b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).
2. Baptised Catholic Children. Evidence of Baptism will be required. Catholics include members of the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome.
3. Children enrolled in the catechumenate. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required.
4. Other Looked After Children. Non Catholic looked after children or children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order. A looked after child is a child who is a) in the care of a local authority, or b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).
5. Children who are members of Eastern Orthodox Churches. Evidence of Baptism will be required.
6. A child who is baptised (or dedicated) in another Christian denomination that is a full member 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. Written confirmation that your church is part of Churches Together in England will also be required.
7. Children of other faiths. Evidence of religious commitment provided by a priest, minister or religious leader of a designated place of worship will be required.
8. 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.

1. For category 2 above – the strength of evidence of commitment to the faith as demonstrated by the level of the child's mass attendance on Sundays. This evidence must be provided by the parents/carers and be endorsed by a priest at the church(es)

where the child normally worships. Applications will be ranked in the order shown on the Supplementary Form; firstly those who attend Mass weekly, then three times a month, then twice a month etc.

2. A sibling on the school roll at the time of admission (siblings include all blood or adoptive siblings or half-siblings, and foster or step-siblings. Siblings must all be living at the same address as the child. Proof of the sibling relationship may be required. Older children on roll in Year 6 and who will have transferred to secondary school by the time the younger child is due to be admitted to school do not qualify.
3. 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).
4. Distance from home to school. Evidence of residence may be required. All distances will be measured to a central nodal point in the school premises, using digitised mapping software of the area, from a nodal point in the applicant's permanent home address. Lewisham LEA provides distances from their mapping system.
5. In the event of two or more children being equidistant, the Governing Body will draw lots.

Notes:

Reception Applications

Reception Class applications for our school will be dealt with by Lewisham's Co-ordinated Admission Scheme. Applications for the Reception Class 2017/18 should be made online at www.eadmissions.org.uk. Guidance for this is in the Starting School Booklet. A supplementary form, which is available from the school or which can be down loaded from the school's website, should also be completed and signed by the priest and returned to the school office **no later than the closing date of 15th January**. Completion of a Supplementary Form is not mandatory; however, if one is not received the Governors will not be able to apply their admission criteria and the application will be considered under the 'any other applicants' category. Unsuccessful applicants will be given reasons related to the oversubscription criteria listed above and advised of their right of appeal to an independent appeal panel. Application forms for casual admissions are available from the school. The onus is on the parents to provide up-to-date information to support the application at the time of consideration.

Pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs or Educational, Health and Care (EHC) Plan

The admission of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an EHC Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. This procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of Statements and EHC Plans by the pupil's home Local Education Authority. Details of this separate procedure is set out in the *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*.

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.

Out of the normal age group applications to Reception

In very exceptional circumstances the Governors of the school will consider a request for admission out of cohort for an older child, including those born in the summer term. The application may be supported by the child's nursery/primary Headteacher and/or an educational psychologist/specialist confirming that the child has learning delay or difficulty or their social maturity is well below that of his or her peers. In coming to a decision the Governors will consider the grounds presented by the parent to support their request as well as the views of the Headteacher and any evidence s/he provides. Parents must consider the implications of a deferred transfer as primary/secondary schools are not required to continue to keep the child out of year group and may decide to later educate the child in the correct year.

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 will be operated using the same admissions criteria listed above. The child will remain on the waiting list for one academic year after which time the parents of the child would need to complete another waiting list form for the next year. 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.

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 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:-

- a. the admission of additional children would not breach 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.

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.

Nursery Applications

Applications for the Nursery must be made on the school's Nursery application forms which can be collected from the school or down loaded from the school's website. The application form should be returned to the school, together with a completed Supplementary Form. Parents will be advised of the outcome of their applications.

The onus is on the parents to provide up-to-date information to support the application at the time of consideration.

Please be advised that there is no right of appeal against the refusal of a place in the Nursery

Children attending the Nursery school must make a separate admission application for Reception class.

Please note that admittance to the Nursery Class does not guarantee admission to Good Shepherd Reception class. The Reception places are offered using the published criteria.

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), applies also to succeeding years, subject to availability of places.