

# **Our Lady of Victories RC Primary School**

## **Admissions Policy 2017-18**

### **Introduction**

Our Lady of Victories 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 in accordance with the Code of Canon Law promulgated by the Apostolic See. It seeks at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ. The school is the Parish School for Our Lady of Pity and St Simon Stock, and exists primarily to serve the local Catholic community, with first priority going to Catholic parents who are committed to a Catholic upbringing and education for their children.

Having consulted with Wandsworth Council and other admissions authorities, the governors intend to admit to Reception Class, in September 2017, up to 30 pupils without reference to ability or aptitude.

### **Oversubscription Criteria**

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic applicants, in strict accordance with the over-subscription criteria set out below. They are based on three Articles of Canon Law that require Catholic parents to attend Mass weekly, baptise their children and send them to Catholic schools. These criteria must be read together with the notes that follow:

#### **Catholic Applicants**

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, child arrangements order or guardianship order. See note 4.

2. Baptised Catholic children, with at least one Catholic parent who is a regular worshipper, where there are special circumstances which can be met by this school rather than any other. See note 6.

3. Baptised Catholic children, with at least one Catholic parent who is a regular worshipper, having a sibling at the school at the time of admission.

**There is no automatic right of admission for siblings. Confirmation of continuing weekly worship is required.** Catholic siblings who do not fall within this category will be ranked within category 7.

4. Baptised Catholic children with at least one Catholic parent who is a regular worshipper, having a parent who is a member of the teaching staff who has been employed at the school for three or more years at the time at which the application is made.

5. Baptised Catholic children with at least one Catholic parent who is a regular worshipper, living within the Parish of Our Lady of Pity and St Simon Stock.

6. Baptised Catholic children with at least one Catholic parent who is a regular worshipper, living outside the Parish of Our Lady of Pity and St Simon Stock.

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7. Other baptised Catholic children. Children in this category will be ranked according to frequency of Mass attendance; i.e. fortnightly, monthly, occasionally.

### **Non-Catholic Applicants**

8. Looked after children and previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.

9. Children of catechumens.

10. Non-Catholic children where there are special circumstances which can be met by this school rather than any other.

11. Non-Catholic children having a parent who is a member of the teaching staff who has been employed at the school for three or more years at the time at which the application is made.

12. Children from families practising other faiths in the following order

- a) the Eastern Orthodox Churches
- b) children of families who are members of other Christian denominations that are part of Churches Together in England
- c) Non-Christian faiths

13. Other children

### **Tie break for all categories**

In the event of oversubscription within each category after the above criteria have been applied and it is necessary to decide between applications of equal ranking, priority will be determined by ballot allocation within each category.

The ballot will be conducted independently of the school with the assistance of the Local Authority.

### **Notes on the Oversubscription Criteria (these form part of the Admission Arrangements)**

1. Any reference to Canon Law is a reference to the Code of Canon Law promulgated by the Apostolic See.

2. A **Catholic, in the context of admissions**, is an individual who is baptised or received into the Catholic Church or into one of the Oriental Rite Churches in communion with Rome or a member of the Ordinariate. (see Appendix).

3. **Regular worshipper** for Catholics is defined as someone who attends weekly Mass, and has done so for at least the preceding three years. For non-Catholic faiths similar proof of worship at the interval designated by their faith will be required.

4. A **looked after child** is a child in the care of the Local Authority or provided with accommodation by that authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.

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A **previously looked after child** is a child who was looked after, but **immediately** after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order.

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 arrangements 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.

5. **Parent** means any person who has parental responsibility for a child.

6. **Special circumstances** are defined as an acute medical, social or pastoral need on the part of the prospective pupil, which can be met by this school rather than any other. The governors do not consider reasons such as convenience for the parents' place of work or childcare arrangements to be valid reasons for consideration under this criterion. The governors do not consider a common medical condition such as asthma or any other allergy, which can be accommodated by all schools, as a reason for giving priority on medical grounds.

The School is spread over four floors and currently has no lift access.

7. **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 at the same address 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 the local authority.

8. **A member of the teaching staff** is defined as a fully qualified teacher. If there is an issue of retention, children of teaching staff will be granted sufficient priority to ensure a place. This provision does not extend to any other staff.

9. **Living within the Parish** means living within the boundary of the Parish of Our Lady of Pity and St Simon Stock, as canonically erected in 1970 and amended in 2001; or for applications for children of UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces) and Crown Servants means the intention to take up residence in the Parish ( ref Supplementary Information 2. Supporting Documentation). A copy of the boundary document is included in the Appendix. A map is available on request from the school.

10. **Home** refers to the permanent address at which the child lives for the majority of his/her time during the school terms.

### **Supplementary Information**

#### **1. Making an Application**

All applicants must complete the Common Application Form, which is available from the child's home Local Authority together with the school's own Supplementary Information Form. Completion of the Supplementary Information 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 'other children' at category 13.

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**Parents must ensure that the criteria and the Supplementary Information Form 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.**

Only one application for each child may be made in one academic year.

### **2. Supporting Documentation**

Copies of the parent(s) and child's baptismal certificate or evidence of reception to the Catholic Church or equivalent evidence as appropriate for other faiths are required. Parents are also required to provide a copy of the most recent current council tax statement plus two current utility bills.

For previously looked after children a copy of the adoption order, residence order or special guardianship order, and a letter from the local authority, that last looked after the child, confirming that he/she was looked after **immediately** prior to that order being made, is required.

Special circumstances applications must be substantiated to the satisfaction of the governing body with appropriate documentation. It must be recent and provided by an appropriate professional authority such as a qualified medical practitioner, educational welfare officer, social worker or priest.

Applications for children of UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces) and Crown Servants returning from overseas must be accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a unit postal address or quartering area address, together with evidence of the intention to take up residence in the Parish.

**All necessary supporting documentation must be provided at the time of application. Failure to do so will mean that the governors will not be able to fully consider the application and will result in a lower priority being allocated.**

### **3. Allocation of Places**

The parents of those children whom the Admissions Committee have agreed to admit as pupils at the school will be informed in writing by the home Local Authority and shall be required to confirm or otherwise their acceptance of a place within 14 days of the date of the offer letter.

#### **Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan**

The admission of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or with an EHC Plan is 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

The parents of those children whose application for a place in the school is unsuccessful will be informed initially by Wandsworth Council. Details as to why the application was unsuccessful may be obtained by contacting the Clerk to the Governors at the school.

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### **4. Deferred Entry**

#### **4.1 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 be 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.

#### **4.2 Admission of children outside their normal age group**

Parents who are seeking a place for their child outside of their normal age group, e.g., the child has experienced problems such as ill health or the parents of a summer born child preferring not to send their 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 will 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.

### **5. Waiting Lists**

For those parents who wish it, children who have not been offered a place will be put on a waiting list until the end of the academic year in which the application is made; after that time applicants who wish to join the new list must apply in writing to the school. Priority on the list will be determined strictly in accordance with the admissions criteria and not in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Positions on the waiting list are, therefore, subject to change; applicants can move up or down the list. Placing a child's name on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available.

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.

Placing a child on the waiting list does not prevent parents exercising their right of appeal against the decision not to offer them a place.

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### **6. Appeal Arrangements**

1. Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with sections 85(3) of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998.
2. Appeals must be made in writing and **must set out the reasons on which the appeal is made.**
3. For an appeal to be accepted it must be lodged with the Clerk to the Governors at the school. Notification of appeal should be lodged with the school within 25 school days of the date of the letter notifying parents that the governing body has been unable to offer their child a place.
4. 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 Appeals Clerk at the school address. Parents/Carers have the right to make oral representations to the Appeal Panel. Infant classes are restricted by 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;
  - b) 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;
  - c) 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.

### **7. In-Year Admissions**

Applications for in year admissions must be made to Wandsworth Council on the Council's in year application form. The Council will refer the application to the school. The school's Supplementary Information Form should be completed and returned to the school to enable the governors to rank the application in the event of there being more than one application for a place. The governors will use the same criteria to rank the application as that listed above. The governors will inform the applicant whether or not a place can be offered and advise the Council of the outcome. In the event of the governors deciding that a place cannot be offered 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.

#### **7.1 Admission of children outside their normal age group to other year groups**

(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.)

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.

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The Governors 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 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.

**Parents should be aware that in the case of non-Catholic in year admissions, there is no guarantee of a place for a subsequent sibling.**

### **Previous Years' Admission Trends**

Places were allocated as follows:

#### 2015-16

The school received 171 applications on or before the Wandsworth deadline

Places were allocated as follows:

15 practising Catholic siblings

15 practising Catholics living within the Parish

No appeals

#### 2014/15

The school received 160 applications on or before the Wandsworth deadline

Places were allocated as follows:

1 Catholic applicant with special circumstances

12 practising Catholics siblings

17 practising Catholics living within the Parish

No appeals

#### 2013/14

The school received 173 applications on or before the Wandsworth deadline

Places were allocated as follows:

16 practising Catholic siblings

12 practising Catholic living within the Parish

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3 appeals two unsuccessful

### 2012/13

Places were allocated as follows:

The school received 165 applications on or before the Wandsworth deadline

Places were allocated as follows:

15 practising Catholic siblings

13 practising Catholics living within the Parish with Baptismal dates within one year

2 appeals, one unsuccessful

### 2011/12

The school received 171 applications on or before the Wandsworth deadline.

Places were allocated as follows:

14 practising Catholic siblings

14 practising Catholics living within the Parish with Baptismal dates within one year.

4 appeals, none successful

### 2010/11

The school received 135 applications on or before the Wandsworth deadline.

Places were allocated as follows:

3 Catholic children with special circumstances

16 practising Catholic siblings

9 practising Catholics living within the Parish with Baptismal dates within one year.

4 appeals, none successful



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**APPENDIX**

**Oriental Rite Churches in Communion with the See of Rome**

Alexandrian (Coptic, Ethiopian)

Antiochean( Malankrese, Maronite, Syrian)

Armenian

Constantinopolitan (Albanian, Byelorussian, Bulgarian, Greek, Melchite, Italo-Albanian, Romanian, Russian, Ruthenian, Slovakian, Ukranian, Hungarian)

Chaldean(Malabar)

**Personal Ordinariate**

Baptised children of parents who are members of the Ordinariate established under The Apostolic Constitution *Anglicanorum Coetibus* of November 4<sup>th</sup> 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.

**Eastern Orthodox Churches not in Communion with the See of Rome**

Coptic Orthodox, Greek Orthodox and Russian Orthodox Churches.

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BOUNDARY OF PUTNEY PARISH

- WEST From the point where Beverley Brook enters the River Thames the boundary follows Beverley Brook across Barnes Common and then south along the Wandsworth-Richmond Borough Boundary. Then down the middle of Lower Common South, Dyers Lane, Upper Richmond Road and south along Putney Park Lane.
- SOUTH Thence east along Putney Heath, to its junction with Portsmouth Road and Putney Hill.
- EAST South along Putney Hill, east along Putney Heath Lane, Rusholme Road, Holmbush Road, across Lytton Road, and by the road connecting it to the Railway and Keswick Road. Thence along and including the Railway to the River Thames
- NORTH Along the centre of the Thames to the point where Beverley Brook flows into it.

N.B. This boundary runs along the middle of all roads, rivers, and paths unless otherwise stated.

Date 4<sup>th</sup> October 2001

Signed Richard Quinlan

Boundary Canonically erected 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1970  
Correction to West Boundary made 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2001.

Michael Bower  
Archbishop of Southwark