

ADMISSION POLICY FOR ST MARY'S CATHOLIC NURSERY AND INFANTS' SCHOOLS

For Admission Year 2016-2017

St Mary's Voluntary Aided Nursery and Infants' Schools are situated in the Archdiocese of Southwark. It was opened to serve the Catholic community, in particular, the children of practising Catholic families living in the parishes of Holy Cross, Carshalton; Our Lady of the Rosary, Sutton; St Margaret's, Carshalton Beeches; and Holy Family, Sutton Green.

A substantial amount of funding for the upkeep of the school is donated by regular churchgoers in these parishes through their regular weekly contributions at Mass. The Catholic community support the school because they value a distinctive Catholic Education for their children. For the remainder of this policy, the word Catholic refers to those baptised or formally accepted into the Catholic faith as defined in the section Further Information.

Parents elect to apply for this school in order to ensure that the Catholic values and way of life are passed on to their children at home, in the parish and at school.

The Governors, having consulted with the London Borough of Sutton Education Authority, intend to admit 90 children per year.

APPLICATION FOR PLACES AT THESE SCHOOLS

Before Governors can consider the allocation of places, the application process has to be complete.

For applications for Reception, parents **must** complete their home local authority's Common Application Form and return it to their home local authority by 15th January 2016. This application form will be available from September 2015. If you wish to apply for a place at this school you **must** list it as one of your preferences on the application form.

For applications for Nursery, parents **do not** need to complete their local authority's Common Application Form but must complete a Supplementary Application Form for Nursery. The same timescales apply.

1. A St Mary's Catholic Nursery & Infants' School supplementary application form should be completed by parents and returned to school by 15th January preceeding the September intake. These are available from the school office.
2. Proof of residence, e.g. a copy of a utility bill or council tax statement from within the last 3 months.
3. A copy of the child's Baptismal Certificate must be submitted with the supplementary application form. A copy of your child's shorter Birth Certificate must be submitted by successful applicants after offers are made.
4. If you are applying on the basis of your faith the application should be supported by a reference from a priest or minister. If you have recently moved into the area, then we need a reference from your previous Parish Priest or minister. The level of Mass attendance by the family will be used to rank children when offering a place.

5. Completion of a Supplementary Application Form is not mandatory; however, if one is not received with the application, the Governors will rank the application in accordance with the admission criteria based on the information available to them.

ADMISSION CRITERIA

Governors will allocate places available as follows:

Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHP) that names the school will be considered for a place before other applicants. In this way, the number of places to be offered, as set out in the Section above, will be reduced by the number of children with a statement that has named the school.

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 or guardianship order.
2. Baptised Catholic children who have a brother or sister in St Mary's Infants' or Junior Schools at the time of admission. (**see further information, Siblings*)
3. Baptised Catholic children from practising Catholic families, as verified by a reference from their priest where they regularly worship, living within the parishes of Holy Cross, Carshalton: Our Lady of the Rosary, Sutton: St Margaret of Scotland, Carshalton Beeches: Holy Family, Sutton Green. Applications will be ranked in the order shown on the Supplementary Form in the section of the Priest's reference.

When criteria 3 is oversubscribed by applicants, remaining places will be allocated to baptised children equated to the size of the parish using percentages. These percentages are calculated using Mass statistics collected in a census by each parish which are submitted to the diocese annually. These statistics are published in the Southwark Catholic Directory. The percentages will be published on our Website.

Where the number of places available within a parish is oversubscribed, priority will be given in the following order:

- a. Children whose family attends Mass either every Saturday (evening Vigil Mass) or Sunday.
- b. Children whose family attends Mass at least either one Saturday (evening Vigil Mass) or Sunday every month.
- c. Children whose family attends Mass less than once a month.

Where there are insufficient applicants within a parish, remaining places will be split between the other parishes on an equal basis in the order of parish size, starting with the largest.

4. Baptised Catholic children from practising Catholic families who do not live within the four parishes of Holy Cross, Carshalton: Holy Family, Sutton: St Margaret of Scotland, Carshalton Beeches: Our Lady of the Rosary, Sutton.

Where criterion 4 is oversubscribed, priority will be given in the following order:

- a. Children whose family attends Mass either every Saturday (evening Vigil Mass) or Sunday.
- b. Children whose family attends Mass at least either one Saturday (evening Vigil Mass) or Sunday every month.
- c. Children whose family attends Mass less than once a month.

5. Baptised Catholic children whose parents may not be practising at the time of application.
6. Other looked after children or previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.
7. Other children who have a brother or sister at St Mary's Infants' or Junior schools at the time of admission. (**see further information, Siblings*)

8. Children who are members of other Christian denominations, (including Catholic Churches not in Union with the See of Rome). Evidence of membership of the church verified by a minister will be required.
9. Children of other faiths. Evidence of membership of the faith should be provided by a priest/ minister/faith leader.
10. Any other children.

Tie-breaks

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

- a) Medical or Social grounds which make the school particularly suitable for the child in question. Catholic refugees and asylum seekers will also be considered under this category. These would require verification by an appropriate authority such as a medical practitioner or social worker.
- b) Distance from home to school. All distances will be measured in a straight line by the London Borough of Sutton computerised Geographical Information System from the School entrance. 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.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Catholic* In the context of school admissions Catholic children are defined as Children who are baptised or received into the Catholic Church, children baptised or received into the Eastern Churches in union with Rome and children of members of the Ordinariate.

Sibling* Sibling is defined as a full brother or sister, half brother or sister living at the same address, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner and in every case who is living as part of the family unit at the same address, Monday to Friday.

****** Siblings in Year 6 in St Mary's Junior school at the time of application to start school will not qualify.

Other factors

1. The maximum class size is 30 pupils.
2. Parents can request that their child attends part-time until they reach compulsory school age. Paragraph 2.65 of the new School Admissions Code.
3. The Governors will provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents of children who are not yet of compulsory school age can defer their child's entry until later in the school year, but not beyond the date that the child reaches statutory school age. Paragraph 2.69 of the new School Admissions Code.
4. The maximum number of pupils in the Nursery will be 26 for the morning session and 26 in the afternoon session. Nursery places are offered in accordance with the stated Admissions Policy.
NB. A place in the Nursery does not guarantee a place in the main school.

Home Address Clarification

The child's home address excludes any business, relative's or childminder's address, and must be the applicant's normal place of residence by the closing date. If there is a genuine equal share custody arrangement between the two parents, the address that will be used will be the address of the parent who

is closest to the school as described in section b of Tie Breaks. All distances will be measured **in a straight line** by the London Borough of Sutton computerised Geographical Information System. Any offer of a place under this criterion is conditional on the child being resident at the address provided, at the closing date for application. The address to be used for waiting lists, after the initial allocation will be the child's current address.

The address to be used for the initial allocation of places in Reception will be the child's address at the closing date of application. Changes of address at the closing date of application. Changes of address up to **18th February 2015** may be considered if there are exceptional reasons behind the change, such as the family has just moved to the area, or has returned from abroad. The address to be used for waiting lists, after the initial allocation and for mid-term admissions will be the child's current address. Any offer is conditional upon the child living at the appropriate address on the relevant date. Parents have a responsibility to notify the school and the Local Authority of any change of address.

Mid Term Admissions

Parents must complete the application form for their home Local Authority. In order to be considered fully for the school, parents should also complete the school Supplementary Form which should be accompanied by the Baptismal Certificate. If a vacancy arises, applicants will be considered in accordance with the school's Admissions criteria. Any offer of a place will be sent by the school to which the application is made. The shorter birth certificate will be requested after an offer has been made.

Waiting List

The Governors will automatically place the names of all unsuccessful applicants and late applications on to a waiting list. However, this does not prevent unsuccessful applicants the right of appeal. The waiting list is based on the oversubscription criteria and not on the length of time on the waiting list. Waiting lists for Reception will be managed in accordance with Sutton's coordinated scheme and will be maintained until the last day of the Autumn term. The school will write to everyone on the waiting list before the end Autumn term and parents wishing to remain on the list must inform the school by 31st December 2015 stating their wish and providing their child's name, date of birth and name of current school. 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.

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 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.

PROCEDURES

PLEASE NOTE children who attend St Mary's Nursery and Infants' Schools do not have automatic right to a place in St Mary's Junior School. A separate application must be made for a Junior School place. A separate application must be made for a place at the Infant and Junior schools.

APPEALS

Parents whose applications for places at the infant school 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 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.*

Statutory appeals can not be made against the Governors decision not to offer a place at the nursery

Date of review: February 2015