



St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

Where every child is special

ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR ADMISSION IN 2017-18

This Admissions Policy was determined by the Governing Body of St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School on 18th January 2016

MISSION STATEMENT

God's love is at the heart of our Catholic School Community. We show this in our respect, kindness and love for others and by treating other people as we wish to be treated ourselves. We will encourage everyone in our school family to do the best they can.

INTRODUCTION

St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School in Mellow, Guildford is a voluntary aided school in the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton. The school was founded by and is part of the Catholic Church and is in Trusteeship of the Diocese. The school is conducted as a Catholic school in accordance with canon law, the teachings of the Catholic Church and the Trust Deed of the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton. It seeks at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ.

The school offers a Catholic education. The governors ask all parents applying for a place here to respect the Catholic ethos of the school and its importance to the school community. This does not affect the right of parents who are not Catholic to apply and be considered for a place here. We welcome applications from those of other Christian denominations and faiths, or of none.

The school was set up primarily to serve the Catholic community in Guildford. The relevant parish map can be viewed at St Thomas of Canterbury School by arrangement.

Having consulted with the Diocese, Local Authority, other admission authorities and other relevant groups, the Governors intend to admit into the reception class, in September 2017, up to 60 pupils without reference to ability or aptitude.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA:

Where the number of applications for admission exceeds 60, and after the admission of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs / Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) where the school is named on the Statement / EHCP, the Governors will offer places using the following criteria in the order stated:

1. Looked after or previously looked after children (*see note a*)
2. Baptised Catholic children with a sibling on the school roll at the time of admission. Evidence of Baptism will be required (*see note b and d*).
3. Baptised Catholic (*see note b*) children living in the parish of Guildford.
4. Any other Baptised Catholic children (*see note b*).
5. Siblings of non-Catholic children who will be on roll at the date of admission (*see note d*).
6. Children who are members of other Christian denominations or other faiths. Evidence of membership will be required by providing a baptism certificate or a signature from priest, minister or religious leader of a designated place of worship.
7. Any other children.



PRIORITY WITHIN THE OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA:

The governors will apply the following cascading order of priorities within any of the above criteria when applications exceed the number of places available and it is necessary to decide between applications through a priority ranking:

- i. Exceptional social or medical need 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) (see note c)).
 - ii. For Oversubscription Criteria 2, 3 & 4 above, the strength of evidence of practice of the faith as demonstrated by the level of the family's attendance of services (see note (f)) over the 12 months prior to the application. This evidence must be provided by the parent/carer and be endorsed by a priest at the church(es) where the family normally worship. Applications will be ranked in the order shown on the Supplementary Information Form i.e. firstly those attending Mass at least 3 times per month, at least once per month, then less than once per month, then those who do not attend.
 - iii. Distance from home (the address at which the child resides) to the school (closest proximity receives highest priority) (*see note e*). Evidence will be required (council tax bill, utility bill).
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ADMISSION PROCEDURE

The governing body of St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School is responsible for determining the admission arrangements of the school, including the priority of admissions to the school when the school is oversubscribed. When the application deadline has closed, the Local Authority (LA) provides to the school a list of all applicants who have applied to the school. The school will then rank the applications in strict accordance with its published admission arrangements and provide the LA with the ranked list. The LA is responsible for coordinating the allocation of places in its area, offering individual places to parents on behalf of the school governors on the common offer date.

To apply for a place at this school, you should complete and return the following two forms:

The Common Application Form (CAF)

All applications for places must be made on the Common Application Form which is available either from the Local Authority (where the parent lives) or on that Local Authority's website. For a valid application, the CAF **must** be returned either in the paper form or online.

The school's Supplementary Information Form (SIF)

The SIF is available from the school and the school website and allows the governors to put all applicants in order of priority for admission in line with the published admission policy. Please note while completion of the SIF is not mandatory **if a completed SIF is not received**, the governing body will only be able to consider the application based on information provided to the Local Authority on the CAF. If you are applying under oversubscription categories 1, 5 and 7, the completion of SIF is not required.

The completed SIF must be returned to the school office by 15th January 2017.



Late Applications

All pieces of paperwork are required on or before the published closing dates referenced above. Late applications (those where it is reasonable that a parent could have submitted an application by the closing date) will only be processed when those applications have been dealt with.

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.

Waiting Lists

If the school is oversubscribed, 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. 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. The waiting list will be maintained until January 2018 where the parents/carers will be asked if they wish to be kept on the list. This process will be repeated in the following June. The waiting list will be ranked in line with the oversubscription criteria each time a child is added to the list.

Appeals

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with sections 88 and 94 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.

In Year Admissions

The oversubscription criteria in this admission policy will also apply to applications made outside the normal age of entry to primary education (Reception Year) i.e. in succeeding years or during the academic year.

In year applications must be made directly to the school.

Visiting the School

We encourage parents to visit our school in order to find out more about how we work and the education we offer. Parents are welcome to arrange a visit by contacting the school office. However, such visits do not form part of the process of deciding which children are to be offered a place at the school.

Giving us the wrong information

If a parent/carer is found to have supplied false or incorrect information to gain a place at this school, the governing body reserves the right to withdraw any offer of a place even if the child has already started school. An example of false or incorrect information would be the use of an address that is not the child's normal residence.



Notes (these form part of the admission arrangements):

- (a) **‘Looked after or previously looked after children’** will be considered to be: Children who are registered as being in the care of a Local Authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989(a), e.g. fostered or living in a children’s home, at the time an application for a school is made; and children who have left care through adoption (in accordance with Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002), a residence order (in accordance with Section 8 of the Children Act 1989) or special guardianship order (in accordance with Section 14A of the Children Act 1989).
- (b) **‘Baptised Catholic’** describes a member whose Church of Baptism is ‘in communion with the See of Rome’. The Catholic Church comprises the Latin Rite (Roman Catholics) and the Eastern or Oriental Rite (composed of Catholic (Uniate) Churches – see below). This will be evidenced by a certificate of Baptism in a Catholic Church or certificate of reception into full communion with the Catholic Church.

<i>Eastern or Oriental Rite Catholic Churches in Full Communion with Rome</i>	
<i>ALEXANDRIAN</i>	<i>Coptic, Ethiopian (Gheez)</i>
<i>ANTIOCHIAN</i>	<i>Malankrese, Maronite, Syrian</i>
<i>ARMENIAN</i>	<i>Armenian</i>
<i>CHALDEAN (EAST SYRIAN)</i>	<i>Chaldean, Syro-Malabar</i>
<i>CONSTANTINOPOLITAN (BYZANTINE)</i>	<i>Albanian, Belarusian, Bulgarian, Georgian, Greek (Hellenic), Greek-Melkite, Hungarian, Italo-Albanian, Krizevci, Macedonian, Romanian, Russian, Ruthenian, Slovak (Greek), Ukrainian (Greek)</i>

Notes: 1. Eastern Orthodox Churches, including the Coptic Orthodox, Greek Orthodox and Russian Orthodox Churches, are NOT in full communion with the See of Rome. 2. ‘Anglican Ordinariates’ are members of the Latin Rite 3. Anglicans, describing themselves as ‘Anglo Catholics’, are members of the Anglican Communion and therefore not in communion with the Holy See. Please refer any queries to the Catholic Schools Service.

- (c) **Exceptional medical need:** If the child has a serious medical condition/disability such that the parent feels the child must go to this school, this must be specified on the Supplementary Information Form. Governors can only consider applications under this category if supporting evidence is attached, e.g. a letter from a registered health professional, setting out the particular reasons why this school is the most suitable and the difficulties that would be caused if the child attended another school. Governors will make their decision based on the medical evidence provided by the child’s medical consultants. Governors will consult the LA’s medical advisers and only agree to a priority placement if the medical advisers consider it necessary for the child to attend this school. Governors will also take into account any information on exceptional medical need that is provided by the Local Authority from the Common Application Form.

Exceptional social need: If parents feel there are sensitive, individual and serious family circumstances, perhaps involving the support services (e.g. social care) these may be considered at the time of the application for a school place. This will need to be specified on the Supplementary Information Form and evidence provided, e.g. a report from social services or from a priest detailing why this school is the most appropriate placement for the



child given the circumstances of the case. Governors will also take into account any information on exceptional social need that is provided by the Local Authority from the Common Application Form.

- (d) **Siblings:** For admission to this school, a sibling is defined as a brother or sister (i.e. another child of the same parents, whether living at the same address or not), or a half-brother/ half-sister or a step-brother/ step-sister or an adoptive or foster brother/ sister, living at the same address. A child will be given sibling priority if they have a sibling at the school at the time of the child's admission. Governors will also take into account any information on exceptional siblings that is provided by the Local Authority from the Common Application Form.
- (e) **Distance:** Distance will be measured by a straight line from the **address point of the child's home, as set by the Ordnance Survey data used by Surrey's admissions team**, to the school gate.

A child's home address is considered to be a residential property that is the child's only/main residence and not an address that is sometimes used due to certain domestic/special arrangements. The address must be the pupil's home address that applies at the closing date for application and which is either owned by the child's parent, parents, or guardian OR leased or rented by the child's parent, parents or guardian under a lease or written rental agreement. If parents live separately but share responsibility for the child, and the child lives at two different addresses during the week, the 'home address' will be regarded as the one at which the child sleeps for the majority of weekday nights. In the case of formally shared custody it would be up to the parents to agree which address to use, in other cases it is where the child spends most of the time. Parents/carers must notify the school about any address changes during the application deadlines to ensure all applications are treated in the same way.

In some cases, applicants who live in the same block of flats may share the same address point. In such cases, applicants will be considered to be living equidistant from the school.

In the unlikely event that two or more children live equidistant from the school, and have equal eligibility in all other ways for the last available place, the names will be issued a number and drawn randomly to decide which child receives the place. This process will be witnessed and recorded.

- (f) **Parents/carers:** The terms 'parent' or 'carer' are used for all persons who legally have responsibility for the child. Where the admission arrangements refer to "family's attendance", it is defined as the attendance of the child and/or their parent/carers.
- (g) **Deferred entry:** Admission authorities are required to provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. The parent/carers has the following options where the governing body has offered such a child a place at the school. The parent/carers can decide either: a) that the child starts school full-time in the September following their fourth birthday with their natural academic cohort; or b) to defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made; or c) that the child starts school on a part-time basis until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. It is recommended that any decision about whether a child attends part-time or full-



time is reached in discussion with the headteacher (and, if appropriate, staff at the child's pre-school setting).

(h) Decelerated entry to reception:

Should a parent/carer request to have a decelerated entry to school i.e. to start later than other children in their chronological age group, they must initially apply for a school place in accordance with the deadlines that apply for their child's chronological age.

If the request is accepted, the application for the normal year group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. The parent/carer will be required to apply in the usual way the following year, along with the cohort of applicants for that year group. It should be noted that the application will not receive priority over or above any other applicant for this year group and the application will be considered in line with the published admission criteria applicable for that year of entry alongside all other applicants to the school.

In relation to the request, decisions are made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interest of the child. The governing body will expect the parent/carer to supply them with appropriate information and evidence. What the governing body will take into account will include:

- Views of parent/carer
- Information relating to the child's academic/social/emotional development, where relevant
- Medical history and the views of a medical professional
- Any previous history of being educated outside of their normal age group
- If the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- Views of the headteacher of the school.

Please note that parents/carers do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group. It is the governing body who, having considered the circumstances of each individual case, will make a decision. The governing body will set out clearly for the parents/carers concerned the reasons for their decision in each case. If the parent/carer is unhappy with a decision about which year group their child will be admitted to, the following applies.

Parents/carers who are refused a place at a school for which they have applied have the right of appeal to an independent admission appeal panel. However, there is not a right of appeal if the child has been offered a place and it is not in the year group the parent/carer would like. In such cases, the parent/carer could make a complaint through the school's complaint procedure.

Accelerated entry: If a parent/carer requests to have an accelerated entry to school i.e. to start earlier than other children in their chronological age group, they must initially apply for a school place at the same time that other families are applying for that cohort. If the governing body agrees for the child to have an accelerated entry, the application will be processed. If it is not agreed for the child to have an accelerated entry, they will be invited to apply again in the following year for the correct cohort.



- (i) **Infant Class sizes:** Current infant class legislation spells out that infant classes, (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2), must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single school teacher. Additional children may only be admitted under very limited exceptional circumstances.

In the case of multiple births, where children are ranked consecutively in their order of priority for a place and there are not sufficient vacancies remaining for each of them wherever it is logistically possible, each child will be offered a place as an “excepted child”. Where it is not logistically possible to offer each child a place, the child(ren) to be offered the last remaining place(s) will be determined by the parents’ choice or the drawing of lots.

- (j) **Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) / EHCP naming the school on the statement / EHCP:** These children are admitted under a separate procedure.

Reminder:

Please remember to

- 1) Complete the Local Authority’s Common Application Form (CAF) and**
- 2) Complete the School’s Supplementary Information Form (SIF) and**
- 3) Submit a copy of your child(ren)’s baptism certificate(s) if applicable**