



# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, South Oxhey

## ADMISSIONS POLICY 2021-22

### MISSION STATEMENT

Let it be known to all who enter here that Christ is the reason for this school, the unseen but ever present teacher in all its classes, the model for its children, the inspiration for its staff.

### Love and Learn in the Footsteps of Christ

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School was founded by the Church to provide education for Catholic children. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic applicants in accordance with criteria listed below.

The aim of the school is to provide a Catholic education for all its pupils. Therefore, 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 supported fully 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 Governing Body has sole responsibility for admission to this school and intends to admit 30 pupils (to the Reception Class) in the school year which begins in September 2021. The Published Admissions Number (PAN) for the school is 30.

Applications are invited for September 2021 from families whose child attains 4 years of age between 1 September 2020 and 31 August 2021. Parents/carers of children born between 1 April – 31 August 2016 who, in the 2020-21 Admissions round decided to defer entry until this Admissions round, may apply.

Over recent years, the school has been oversubscribed with Catholic children, however, applications will be welcomed for children who are not Catholic.



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## OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

Where the number of children put forward by applicants exceeds the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority.

- 1 **Baptised** Catholic 'looked after' children' and baptised Catholic children who were 'looked after' children and who ceased to be 'looked after' because they were adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders **with a Certificate of Baptism.**
- 2 **Baptised Catholic children who appear to have been in State care outside of England and ceased to be in State care as a result of being adopted, with a Certificate of Baptism.**
- 3 **Baptised** Catholic children with a **Certificate of Catholic Practice and a Certificate of Baptism** with siblings within the school at the time of admission.
- 4 **Baptised** Catholic children with a **Certificate of Catholic Practice** and a **Certificate of Baptism** whose parent is a member of staff employed by St Joseph's and where either or both of the following conditions are met: (i) that member of staff has been employed for two or more years at the time the application is made; (ii) the Governors can demonstrate that the member of staff has been recruited to fill a vacant position for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage. In addition to (i) and/or (ii) the child must live at the same permanent address as the member of staff.
- 5 Other **baptised** Catholic children with a **Certificate of Catholic Practice and a Certificate of Baptism** resident in the Parish of St Joseph's, Carpenders Park. A map outlining the Parish boundary is available on the school website, is displayed within school and copies are also available from the School Office.
- 6 Other **baptised** Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice and a Certificate of Baptism resident in local and neighbouring Parishes. Maps of the local and neighbouring parishes are available on the school website, are displayed within the school and copies are also available from the School Office.
- 7 Other **baptised** Catholic children **with a Certificate of Baptism.**
- 8 Other 'looked after' children and children who ceased to be 'looked after' because they were adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders.
- 9 Other children who appear to be in State care outside of England and ceased to be in State care as a result of being adopted.
- 10 Children of catechumens **with evidence of participation in Catechumen Programme or members of an Eastern Christian Church with a Certificate of Baptism.**



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- 11 Christian children of other denominations whose application is supported by a **letter from their minister** confirming membership of the faith community.
- 12 Children of other faith communities and whose application is supported by a **letter from their minister** confirming membership of the faith community.
- 13 Any other applicants.

Where the offer of places to all the applicants **in any of the categories** listed above would lead to oversubscription, priority will be given in the following order:

- the Governing Body will give priority to an application where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical, pastoral or other need of the child which can only be met at this school. Compelling, written, professional evidence from a doctor, social worker or priest must be supplied. A panel of Governors will determine whether the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet the requirements for this rule; the evidence must relate specifically to St Joseph's and will clearly demonstrate why it is the only school which can meet the child's needs;
- for categories 4-13, the attendance of a sibling at the school at the time of enrolment will increase priority of application within the category;
- next, for categories 5-13, children of staff at the school (as defined in the conditions stipulated in **Category 4**) will be given priority within the category.

## Multiple Births

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

## Tie Break

Where the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the sub-categories listed would still lead to oversubscription, the places up to the admissions number will be offered to those living nearest to the school.



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## Home to school distance measurement for purposes of admissions

A 'straight line' distance measurement is used in all home to school distance measurements for schools in Hertfordshire. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

In the event where two different addresses are the same distance from a school, in the case of a block of flats, for example, the lower door number will be deemed nearest as, logically, this will be the closest to the ground and, therefore, closer. If there are two identical addresses of separate applicants, the tiebreak will be random allocation. Every child entered onto the Hertfordshire County Council Admissions database has an individual, random number assigned between 1 and 1 million against each preference school. When there is a need for a final tie break, the random number is used to allocate the place, with the lowest number given priority.

## FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOL

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is committed to taking its fair share of vulnerable children who are hard to place, in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council's Fair Access Protocol. Accordingly, outside the normal round of admissions, the Governing Body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol which carries the agreement of both the Governing Body and the Diocese for the current admissions year. The Governing Body has this power even when admitting such a child would exceed the normal admissions number. A Fair Access Protocol child will be admitted above those on the school's waiting list.

## ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

**All parents/carers should complete** the On-Line or eAdmissions Form from Hertfordshire Local Authority. Full information and the application form are available at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions) closing date 15 January 2021 (tbc). Parents wanting their application to be considered under any of the **Oversubscription Criteria except criterion 13** or because of exceptional social, medical pastoral or other needs **should also complete** the Supplementary Information Form (SIF).



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Parents/carers wanting their application to be considered under any of Oversubscription **Criteria 3-6** should also obtain a **Certificate of Catholic Practice Form** from the Priest at the church normally attended or from the Diocesan website at:

<http://rcdow.org.uk/att/files/education/admissions/certificate%20of%20catholic%20practice.pdf>

The Priest will only sign the form if you are known to him and he is aware that you are a practising Catholic family. **It is the parent's/carer's responsibility to ensure that the completed and signed form is returned to the school by the closing date. Parents/carers should also submit a Certificate of Baptism.**

If you do not complete the necessary paperwork and submit the appropriate forms [**as highlighted within the Oversubscription Criteria**] by the closing date listed in the Common Application Form Guidance Booklet [15 January 2021] the Governing Body may be unable to consider your application fully and it is very unlikely your child will get a place at the school.

The Governors' Admissions Committee will consider all applications in accordance with the stated criteria. In compliance with the revised Statutory Framework, based on the December 2014 Schools Admissions Code, co-ordinated admissions arrangements are in place with the Hertfordshire Local Authority. Parents/carers are required to submit an application to the Local Authority. The deadline for submission of both forms – for the school and the Local Authority – will be listed in the County Admissions Handbook –the final date for applications is January 15 2021 (tbc). Offers of places will be dispatched to parents/carers by the County Council on behalf of the Governors of the school on 16 April 2021 (tbc). This is Primary National Offer Day. Applications received after the closing date will be dealt with after the initial allocation process has been completed.

Parents/carers of children attending the Nursery **must** make a fresh application for Reception. Attendance at the Nursery **does not** guarantee a place in Reception.

## **Right of Appeal**

If you are unsuccessful in your application, you may ask the Governors 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 to appeal to an independent panel. Parents/carers wishing to appeal who applied on line should log into their online application and click on the link 'register an appeal'.<sup>5</sup>



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Out of County residents and paper applicants should call the Hertfordshire Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request their registration details and log into [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals) and click on the link 'log into the appeals system.'

## **Deferred Entry**

Applicants may defer entry to school up until statutory school age, i.e. the first day of term following the child's fifth birthday. Application is made in the usual way and the deferment is requested. The place will be held until the first day of the Spring or Summer term. Entry may not be deferred beyond statutory school age or beyond the year of application. Therefore, applicants whose children have birthdays in the Summer term may only defer until 1 April 2022.

Applicants may also request that their child attends part-time until statutory school age is reached.

## **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 and not in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. In the event that supplementary information is made available to Governors whilst a child's name is on the waiting list that was not available at the time of original application, this will be taken into account should a vacancy arise; such information would be of an exceptional educational, social, medical or pastoral need (please refer to Notes). Compelling, written, professional evidence from a doctor, social worker or priest must be supplied. Names are removed from the list at the end of the academic year.

## **SUMMER BORN CHILDREN**

Parents/carers may now choose for their Summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1 April – 31 August 2017, to be admitted to Reception in the September following his/her 5<sup>th</sup> birthday, that is September 2022. Parents/carers making use of this option need not apply in the 2021-22 Admissions round. However, when such parents/carers do apply, they should inform the school of their decision, in writing, at the time of application. The application must then be made in the normal way and will be treated under the same procedure as all other applications and ranked in accordance with the Oversubscription criteria. There is no guarantee that an offer will be made.



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## **CHILDREN EDUCATED OUTSIDE THEIR CHRONOLOGICAL AGE GROUP** (except Reception applications for Sumer born children)

Parents/carers may apply for their child to be educated outside his/her chronological age group, i.e. a year behind or a year ahead. Application should be made to the Chair of Governors at the time of application and any supporting evidence should be submitted at the same time. Governors will consider each case on its own merits and permission will only be given in exceptional circumstances.

## **IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS**

In-year applications are made directly to the school. If a place is available and there is no waiting list, the Local Authority will be informed and the Governing Body will admit the child. If more applications are received than places available, applications will be ranked in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. If a place cannot be offered at this time, parents/carers may ask the Governing Body for the reasons, will be informed of their right of appeal and offered the opportunity to place the candidate's name on a 'waiting' list. For In-Year applications only, parents/carers wishing to appeal should contact the school directly in the first instance. [Should a place become available, the Governing Body will make an offer in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.]

## **Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan**

The admission of pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC) is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice<sup>1</sup>. If your child has an EHC Plan you must contact your local authority SEN Officer. Children with this school named in their EHC Plan will be admitted to the school.



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**NOTES** (these notes form part of the **oversubscription criteria**)

**'Child Arrangements' Order:** an order under the terms of Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989 and which defines it as an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

**'Adopted':** an adopted child is any child who has been formally adopted, having previously been in care and whose parent/ carer can give proof of this.

**'Special Guardianship Order':** 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).

**'Parent/carers':** the adult or adults with legal responsibility for the child.

**'Looked after Child'** according to Chapter 7, Section 2 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 any child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by them (e.g. children with foster parents). [Section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989.]

**'Certificate of Catholic Practice'** means a certificate issued by the family's Parish Priest (or the priest in charge of the Church where the family attends Mass) in the form laid down by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. It will be issued if the Priest is satisfied that at least one Catholic parent or carer (along with the child, if he or she is over seven years old) have (except when it was impossible to do so) attended Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation for at least five years (or, in the case of the child, since the age of seven, if shorter). It will also be issued when the practice has been continuous since being received into the Church if that occurred less than five years ago. It is expected that most Certificates will be issued on the basis of attendance. A Certificate may also be issued by the priest when attendance is interrupted by exceptional circumstances which excuse from the obligation to attend on that occasion or occasions. Further details of these circumstances can be found in the guidance issued to priests:

<http://rcdow.org.uk/education/governors/admissions/>





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The **Certificate of Catholic Practice** form can be obtained from the Priest at the church normally attended or from the Diocese of Westminster website at:

<http://rcdow.org.uk/att/files/education/admissions/certificate%20of%20catholic%20practice.pdf>

**It is the parent's/carer's responsibility to ensure that the completed and signed form is returned to the school by the closing date.**

'Family' includes the Catholic or Catholics who have legal responsibility for the child.

**'Catholic'**: a member of Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. This must be evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism in a Catholic Church or Certificate of Reception into full communion of the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy, this includes a Looked after Child in the process of adoption and living with a Catholic family, where a letter from a priest demonstrates that the child would have been baptised were it not for his/her status as a Looked after Child.

**'Sibling'**:

- 'brother or sister, to include adopted brothers and sisters, half, step or foster brothers and sisters;
- a 'looked after' child or previously 'looked after' and in every case living permanently in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of application.

A sibling link will not be recognised for a child living temporarily in the same house, for example, a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a 'looked after' child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.

A sibling relationship does not apply when the older child will leave before the younger one starts.

**'Catechumen'**: a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This would normally be evidenced by a Certificate of Reception into the Order of Catechumens.



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**'Christian children of other denominations'**: children who belong to other churches and ecclesial communities which, acknowledging God's revelation in Christ, confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures, and, in obedience to God's will and in the power of the Holy Spirit commit themselves: to seek a deepening of their communion with Christ and with one another in the Church, which is His body and to fulfil their mission to proclaim the Gospel by common witness and service in the world to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. An ecclesial community which, on principle, has no credal statements in its tradition, is included if it manifests faith in Christ as witnessed to in the Scriptures and is committed to working in the spirit of the above.

**'Christian'**: All members of Churches Together in England and of Churches together in Wales (CYTŪN) are deemed to be included in the above definition, as are all other churches and ecclesial communities that are in membership of any local Churches Together Group (by whatever title) on the above basis.

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

**'Children of other faith communities'**: children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of 'Christian children of other denominations' and which falls within the definition of a religion for the purposes of Charity Law. The Charities Act 2011 defines religion to include:

- a religion which involves belief in more than one god and
- a religion which does not involve belief in a god.

Case law has identified certain characteristics which describe the meaning of religion for the purposes of Charity Law, which are characterised by a belief in a supreme being and an expression of belief in that supreme being through worship.

Demonstrating **'exceptional social, medical, or pastoral need'** for a child which can only be met at this school: the Governing Body will require written, compelling, professional evidence from a doctor, social worker or priest.

**'Parish of St Joseph's, Carpenders Park'**: a map showing the boundaries of the parish of St Joseph's is available on the school website, is displayed within the school and is available from the School Office.



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**'Local and neighbouring parishes'**: maps showing the boundaries of the local and neighbouring parishes are available on the school website are displayed within the school and copies are also available from the School Office

**'Home address'** is where the child resides for 50% or more of the school week. The address provided must be the child's current, permanent address at the time of application.

'At the time of application' means the closing date for applications.

'Permanent' means that the child has lived at that address for at least a year and/or the family owns the property or has a tenancy agreement for a minimum of 12 months.

The application can only be processed using one address. If a child lives at more than one address (for example, due to a separation) the address used will be the one where the child lives for the majority of the time. If a child lives at two addresses, equally, the address of the parent/carer that claims Child Benefit/Child Tax Credit will be considered as the child's main residence. If a family is not in receipt of Child Benefit/Tax Credit alternative documentation will be requested.

If a child's residence is in dispute, parents/carers should provide Court documentation to evidence the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes.

## **Fraudulent applications**

The school works in close liaison with the Hertfordshire County Council to do as much as possible to prevent applications being made from fraudulent addresses.

Address evidence is frequently requested, monitored and checked and school places will be withdrawn when false information is deliberately provided. Hertfordshire County Council will take action in the following circumstances:

- when a child's application address does not match the address of that child at their current school;
- when a child lives at a different address to the applicant;
- when the applicant does not have parental responsibility;
- when a family moves shortly after the closing date of applications, when one or more of the following applies:



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- the family has moved to a property from which their application was less likely to be successful;
  - the family has returned to an existing property;
  - the family lived in rented accommodation for a short period of time (anything less than a year) over the application period;
  - Council Tax information shows a different residence at the time of application.
- When a child starts at the allocated school and their address is different from the address used at the time of application.