



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, South Oxhey

NURSERY ADMISSIONS POLICY 2024-2025

This document outlines the Nursery Admissions Policy for St Joseph's Catholic Primary School which has been agreed by the Governing Body in October 2022

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 school offers 26 places for up to 30 hours a week, morning and/or afternoons term time only for 38 weeks per year. Applications are invited for September 2024 for a place in Nursery for those children who will be four in the academic year. Please note that application to the Nursery and Reception classes are two separate procedures and attendance at Nursery does not guarantee admission to the Reception Class.

Parents/Carers should apply directly to St Joseph's Catholic Primary school if they wish their child to attend the school's Nursery class from September 2024.



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If there are fewer applications than the 26 places available, all applicants will be admitted. Over recent years, the school has been oversubscribed with Catholic children, however, applications will be welcomed for children who are not Catholic.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

Where the number of children put forward by applicants exceeds the number of places available, priority will be given in the following order:

- 1 **Baptised** Catholic looked after and **Baptised** Catholic children who were previously looked after, including those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England, and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted or became subject to a Child Arrangements Order or a Special Guardianship Order. with a **Certificate of Baptism**.
- 2 **Baptised** Catholic children with a **Certificate of Baptism** with siblings within the school at the time of admission.
- 3 **Baptised** Catholic children with 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.
- 4 Other **baptised** Catholic children with 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.
- 5 Other baptised Catholic children **with a Certificate of Baptism**.
- 6 Other looked after and children who were previously looked after, including those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England, and ceased to be in state care as a



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result of being adopted or became subject to a Child Arrangements Order¹ or a Special Guardianship Order.

- 7 Children of catechumens **with evidence of participation in Catechumen Programme or members of an Eastern Christian Church with a Certificate of Baptism.**
- 8 Christian children of other denominations whose application is supported by a **letter from their minister** confirming membership of the faith community.
- 9 Children of other faith communities and whose application is supported by a **letter from their minister** confirming membership of the faith community.
- 10 Any other applicants.

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

- 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 2-11, the attendance of a sibling at the school at the time of enrolment will increase priority of application within the category;
- next, for categories 3-11, children of staff at the school (as defined in the conditions stipulated in **Category 3**) will be given priority within the category.

Children from Multiple Births



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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. The distance is measured in a straight line. Where there is a need for a tie-break when two different addresses measure the same distance from the school, the tie-break will be random. If the addresses are in a block of flats, the lower door number will be deemed nearer as this will be on the lower floor and, therefore, closer to the school.

The Nursery allocation process will be administered by St Joseph's Primary School. Distances will be calculated using the 'Find My Nearest School website:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/servicecs/schools-and-education/schooladmissions/research-a-school/measuring-home-to-school-distance.aspx>

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

- **All parents/carers should complete** the St Joseph's Primary School Nursery Application Form by the published deadline (**16th February 2024**).
- Parents/Carers wanting their application to be considered under any of the **Oversubscription Criteria except criterion 11** or because of exceptional social, medical pastoral or other needs **should also complete** the Supplementary Information Form (**SIF**).



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If you do not complete the necessary paperwork and submit the appropriate forms [**as highlighted within the Oversubscription Criteria**] by the closing date **16th February 2024**) 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.

As there is no statutory requirement for children to attend Nursery, there will be no right of appeal.

On receipt of an offer on **1st March 2024**, parents/carers should ensure they reply by **15th March 2024**. The school will make every effort to contact applicants before this date as a reminder that a response is required. However, should the school not receive notification of acceptance by **15th March 2024**, the offer will be withdrawn and the place made available to other applicants on the waiting list.

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.

Timeline for September 2024 Admissions

- Parents are invited to visit the school from September 2023. Appointments can be made by calling the School Office on **020 8428 5371**.
- Applications open on **2nd October 2023**
- Applications close on **16th February 2024**
- Offers are made to applicants on **1st March 2024**. These offers are made via e-mail or, if there is no e-mail address, by telephone and, if there is no response to telephone calls, by letter.
- The deadline for applicants to accept offers is **15th March 2024**.



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Eligibility for Early Admission to Nursery

If the Nursery Class is not full during the academic year 2024-2025, the school will admit children in the term following their 3rd birthday.

This means that children who are three between 1 September 2024 and 31 December 2024 can be admitted to the Nursery from January 2025

Children who are three between 1 January 2025 and 31 March 2025 can be admitted from 1 April 2025.

In-Year Admissions

If a place becomes available during the school year, this will be offered to the applicant at the top of the waiting list. This list is subject to the Admissions Oversubscription Criteria as stated and any additional applications during the course of the academic year will be placed on the list in accordance with the Admissions Oversubscription Criteria.

Waiting Lists

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.

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



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set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice¹. 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.

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.

¹That Code of Practice can be accessed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sendcode-of-practice-0-to-25>; click on the link on that page to download the Code. Paragraphs 9.78 to 9.87 (pages 172-174) deal with requests for a specific school to be included in the Educational Health and Care Plan; the Code sets out the factors, including the necessary consultations that the local authority must take into account in reaching a decision.

'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/carer': 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.]



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'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 will normally be evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism in a Catholic Church or a Certificate of Reception into the 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.

'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



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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 creedal 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.



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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.

'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.



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Fraudulent applications

Hertfordshire County Council will 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:
 - 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.