



St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School

Admissions Policy and Procedures 2023-24

St Elizabeth's 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 seeks at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ. The school exists primarily to serve the Catholic community and Catholic children always have priority of admission. However the Governing Body also welcomes applications from those of other denominations and faiths or of no faith who support the religious ethos of the school.

The Planned Admissions Number (PAN) for entry to the academic year 2023-24 is 30. This means that there will be places for up to 30 children to enter Reception in this year.

Where the number of applications exceeds 30 the Governors will offer places using the following over subscription criteria, applying them in the order stated below. This means that if all places are allocated by the end of any one of the categories, the subsequent categories will not be applied.

1. Looked After Catholic Children or Looked After Children in the care of Catholic families, Looked After Catholic Children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order, and Catholic children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.
2. Catholic children. A baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church must accompany the Supplementary Information Form which is available from the school website or upon request from the school.
3. Looked After Children, Looked After Children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order, and children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.
4. Children who are members of Eastern Orthodox Churches. Evidence of Baptism will be required.
5. Children with a sibling in the school at the time of admission.
6. Children of families who are members of other Christian denominations that are part of Churches Together in England. Evidence of Baptism (or Dedication) provided by a priest or minister of a designated place of worship will be required.
7. Children who are members of other faiths. Evidence of membership of the faith provided by a priest, minister or religious leader of a designated place of worship will be required.
8. Any other children.

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.

- i. For category 2 above - social, pastoral and medical needs requiring attendance at St Elizabeth's rather than any other school. Such needs must be supported, at the time of application, by reports or letters from suitable professionals such as GPs, consultants, social workers or priests. Circumstances cannot be taken into account unless information is provided at the time of application.
- ii. For category 2 above - the strength of evidence of commitment to the faith as demonstrated by the level of the family's Mass attendance on Sundays over a period of two years. This evidence must be provided by the parents/carers on the Supplementary Information Form and be endorsed by a priest at the church(es) where the family normally worship. Applications will be ranked according to the level of worship shown on the Supplementary Information Form. Therefore, first priority will be given to those whose families attend Mass weekly, then to those whose families attend Mass at least monthly and then to those whose families attend Mass less frequently.
- iii. A brother or sister on the school roll at the time of admission. A brother or sister includes step siblings, foster siblings and adopted siblings living at the same address as the child on roll. Evidence of the relationship may be required.
- iv. Living in the parishes of St. Elizabeth of Portugal (Richmond), St. Thomas Aquinas (Ham), St Winefride's (Kew), and Our Lady Queen of Peace (East Sheen). Where this category is oversubscribed, places will be offered to pupils in each of the four parishes mentioned, in proportion to Mass attendance in each parish, as shown in the most recently published Southwark Catholic Directory (this Directory is available in all parishes and Catholic schools of the diocese).
- v. Proximity to the school of the candidate's home address, the distance measured in a straight line from the school entrance by the Local Authority using a Geographical Computerized Information System. 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 drawing lots.

Notes:

- a. Catholics include members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome.
- b. Home refers to the permanent home address at which the child lives for the majority of his/her time. Guidance from the DfE (Department for Education) in 2015 is noted on the admission of children of Crown Servants.

- c. Looked After Children are looked after by a public authority and are in public care.
- d. Where the allocation of places according to Mass attendance in each parish results in a decimal number e.g. 3.6 places, the figure will be rounded to the next full number, in this example to 4, indicating an allocation of 4 places. If the total for proportions of places to the four parishes take the number fractionally over the PAN the number of places will be reduced by 1 for the parish gaining the most places and if necessary by 1 for the parish with the second highest number of allocated places.

Admissions procedure

- In addition to the application to the Local Authority, the Supplementary Information Form (available from the school website or upon request from the school), should be completed by the parent and the Parish Priest who will return the form to the school not later than the closing date published by the Local Authority.
- If the Supplementary Information Form is not completed, the governing body of the school will only be able to consider the application after all applicants who have completed a Supplementary Information Form. You are advised to make two copies of the forms. You should retain one copy and pass the second copy to the school or your priest, as indicated.
- Offers of places will be sent to parents by the Local Authority on the National Offer Date 16th April (or the next working day if 16th April falls on a Saturday, Sunday or Bank Holiday).

Fair Access Protocol

The Council and all primary schools including academies and free schools in the Richmond borough have agreed a fair access protocol to admit children who are currently without a school place and may have difficulty finding a suitable school place. The local authority's Fair Access Panel may make placements over the admission number if the school is full, for children who are deemed 'hard to place'. Children who are admitted to schools under this protocol take priority over any children on waiting lists.

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 in accordance with the Education Act 1996 and the Special Needs Code of Practice. 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.

Appeals

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 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.

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 is deferred until later in the same 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.

Admission of children outside of the normal age group

Parents who are seeking a place outside of their normal age group, eg, 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.

Parents seeking admission to an age group outside of their child's normal age group, must still make an application for a school place by the closing date of 15th January 2023. They will also need to submit a separate written request to the Governing Body and may provide supporting documentation should they wish to.

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.

Waiting Lists

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, which will be maintained until 1st July of the year of entry, e.g. 1st July 2024 for entry year 2023-24, will be operated using the same admissions criteria as listed above. At this time the school will write to the parents/carers of those remaining on the list to ask whether they wish to remain on the list for the coming academic year.

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. Priority will not be given to children based on the date their application was received or that their name was added to the list. Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children must take precedence over those on a waiting list. It is possible that when a child is directed under the local authority's fair access protocol they will take precedence over those already on the list.

Late Applications

Any late applications will be considered by the Governors' Admissions Committee, 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.

In-Year Admissions

This admissions procedure, although primarily relevant to children for whom a place is sought at the normal age of entry to primary education (Year R), will also apply to succeeding years, and be subject to the availability of places. For over-subscribed year groups, waiting lists will be maintained according to these criteria.

An application can be made for a place for a child at any time outside the admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. An application should be made to the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames by completing the in-year admission application form.

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out in the admission arrangements, will be applied.

If there are no places available, the child will be added to the waiting list.

Parents will be informed of the outcome of their application within 15 school days of receipt, but the aim is to notify applicants of the outcome of their application within 10 school days of receipt.

Parents have the right to appeal to an independent appeal panel if their application is unsuccessful.