

Admissions Policy 2016-17

St Scholastica's Catholic Primary School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. At a Catholic school, 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 fully supported 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 Published Admission Number (PAN) for the reception class at St Scholastica's is 30. The Governing Body has sole responsibility for admissions to this school and intends to admit 30 children in the school year which begins in September 2016. Applications are welcome from families whose child reaches his/her 4th birthday between 1st September 2015 and 31st August 2016.

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic applicants in accordance with the criteria listed below.

In this policy *applicant* refers to the person making an application on behalf of a child; *candidate* refers to the child on whose behalf the application is being made.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

Where there are more applications than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority: -

1. Catholic looked after children and Catholic children who have been adopted or made subject to Child Arrangements Orders or Special Guardianship Orders.
2. Baptised Catholic children who have a sibling at the school at the date of admission into the school and whose parents reside in the Parish of St Scholastica's at the proposed date of admission.
3. Baptised Catholic children who have a sibling at the school at the date of admission into the school and whose parents reside in the Parish of St Jude, Clapton Park or Our Lady of Good Counsel, Stoke Newington at the proposed date of admission.
4. Other baptised Catholic children who have a sibling at the school at the proposed date of admission
5. Baptised Catholic children from practising Catholic families whose parents/legal guardians are resident in the Parish of St Scholastica's.
6. Baptised Catholic children from practising Catholic families whose parents/legal guardians are resident in the Parish of St Jude, Clapton Park or Our Lady of Good Counsel, Stoke Newington.
7. Other baptised Catholic children from practising Catholic families
8. Other baptised Catholic children.
9. Other looked after children and children who have been adopted or made subject to Child Arrangements Orders or Special Guardianship Orders.
10. Children of families who are Catechumens or members of an Eastern Christian Church.
11. Christians of other denominations whose application is supported by their Minister of Religion.
12. Children of other faiths whose application is supported by their Religious Leader.
13. Any other applicant.

EXCEPTIONAL NEED

The Governing Body will give top priority, after the appropriate category of looked-after children, to an application where compelling evidence is provided at the time of application, from an appropriate professional such as a doctor, priest or social worker, of an exceptional social, medical, pastoral or other need of the child, which can only be met at this school.

MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS

Where the final place is offered to a child who has other siblings applying for a place in the same school year, these siblings will also be admitted.

APPLICATIONS IN PREVIOUS YEARS

Each year the school is heavily oversubscribed. For Reception places in September 2014 we received 92 applications for 30 places. Applicants from category 1 [0], category 2 [3], Category 3 [1], Category 4 [5] and category 5 [11], category 6 [2], category 7 [2] category 8 [0], category 10 (1), category 11 (2) were offered a place, along with 3 in category 13 in accordance with the distance criteria set out in our tie-breaker. As the school is usually oversubscribed by Catholic candidates, it is unlikely that applicants who are not Catholics will obtain a place. In the past 5 years, the governing body has only been able to offer seven places to any applicant who is not a Catholic.

TIE BREAK

Where the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the sub-categories listed above would still lead to oversubscription, those living closer to the school will be given priority. For the purpose of calculating distances, the home address is identified by using the property geographical reference as determined by Hackney Learning Trust. In the case of a number of addresses in a block with the same geographical references, the children's ranking will be determined by the Governing Body; who will draw lots in the presence of an independent witness.

For families living on boats, distance will be measured from the authorised mooring points. If the family is itinerant, the nearest mooring point will be used on the closing date for the receipt of applications.

FAIR ACCESS

The school is committed to taking its fair share of children who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as set out in locally agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal admissions round, the Governing Body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol that has been agreed by both the local authority and the Diocese for the current school year. The Governing Body has this power even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS

In Year Applications are made to Hackney Learning Trust. If a place is available and there is no waiting list the child will be admitted. If there is a waiting list, then applications will be ranked by the Governing Body in accordance with the oversubscription criteria, with the following modifications: Catholic children without an offer of a school place elsewhere are given priority immediately after Catholic 'looked-after' children; similarly, other children without an offer of a school place are given priority immediately after other 'looked-after' children. If a place cannot be offered at this time then you may ask us for the reasons and you will be informed of your right of appeal. You will be offered the opportunity of being placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained by the Governing Body in the order of the oversubscription criteria and not in the order in which the applications are received. Names are removed from the list at the end of each academic year. When a place becomes available the Governing Body will decide who is at the top of the list so that an offer can be made.

RECEPTION YEAR 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 then the deferral is requested. The place will then be held until the first day of the spring or summer term as applicable. Applicants may also request that their child attend part-time until statutory school age is reached. Entry may not be deferred beyond statutory school age or beyond the year of application. Applicants whose children have birthdays in the summer term should be aware that, if they wish to defer until the following September, they will need to apply again and that there may no longer be spaces in Year 1.

SUMMER BORN CHILDREN

Any application for a child to be educated out of his/her age group will be considered by governors on an individual basis and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE 2016 - 2017

In order to make an application, you **must** complete a **Common Application Form (CAF)** from your local authority and return it to them. You **should** also complete the **School's Supplementary Information Form (SIF)**. The information on the SIF enables the Governing Body to assess your application fully against the School's criteria in the event of oversubscription. Please return the SIF (in person or by post) to the school together with all other relevant paperwork required for your application. If you do not complete both of the forms described above and return them by 15th January 2016, the Governing Body will be unable to consider your application fully and it is very unlikely that your child will be offered a place. Applications received after the closing date will be dealt with after the initial allocation process has been completed.

Applicants applying under criteria 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7 must submit a priests' reference form (PRF) by the closing date. This form is available from the school or from the diocesan website at www.rcdow.org.uk/schools/governors/admissions

Applicants applying under criteria 11 and 12 must also submit the PRF to be completed by their religious leader by the closing date.

The local authority will write to you on behalf of the Governing Body with the outcome of your application on or about Monday 18th April 2016. This information will also be available online. Parents/carers should accept the place as soon as possible.

NURSERY CHILDREN

Attendance at the nursery **does not** guarantee a place in reception. Parents of children attending St Scholastica's nursery **must** make a fresh application for reception.

RIGHT OF APPEAL

If you are unsuccessful you may ask us for the reasons for the refusal of a place. These reasons will be related to the oversubscription criteria listed in the policy and you will have the right of appeal to an independent panel. Should you wish to appeal please contact the school or Hackney Learning Trust as soon as possible for an appeal form on which you must list your reasons for making an appeal. Schools are obliged to give applicants a minimum of 20 school days in which to appeal. Therefore you would need to submit your appeal no later than 20th May 2017.

WAITING LIST

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out in the policy and not in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Names are removed from the list after one year, unless applicants request in writing to remain on the list.

PUPILS WITH A STATEMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS/EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLAN (EHC)

The admission of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs or 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. If your child has a Statement of SEN or EHC plan you must contact your local authority SEN officer.

CHANGE OF DETAILS

If any of the details on either of your forms changes between the date of application and the receipt of the letter of offer or refusal, you **must** inform the School and the local authority immediately. If misleading information is given or allowed to remain on either of your forms, the Governing Body reserves the right to withdraw the place, even if the child has already started at the School.

NOTES (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

'Adopted'. An adopted child is any child who has been formally adopted and whose parent/ guardian can give proof of adoption.

'Catechumen' means a child who is a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a Certificate of Reception into the Order of Catechumens.

'Catholic' means a member of a 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.

'Child Arrangements Order'. A Child Arrangements order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.8 settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live. Children 'looked after' immediately before the order is made qualify in this category.

'Christian' for the purposes of this policy, means a member of one of the Churches affiliated to 'Churches Together in Britain and Ireland'.

'Distance from school' means distance as measured by a straight line on a map or using the Hackney Learning Trust's GIS computerised mapping system from the child's home address to the main entrance of the school.

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

'Looked after child' has the same meaning as in S.22 of the Children Act 1989, and means any child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by them (e.g. children with foster parents at the time of making an application to the school).

'Parent' means the adult or adults with legal responsibility for the child.

Parish Boundaries – for the purposes of this Policy, parish boundaries are shown on the attached map

'Practising Catholic' means a Catholic child from a practising Catholic family where this practice is verified by a reference from a Catholic priest in the standard format laid down by the Diocese. 'Family' includes the Catholic or Catholics who have legal responsibility for the child.

'Resident' – A child is deemed to be resident at a particular address when he/she resides there for more than 50% of the school week.

'Special Guardianship Order'. A special guardianship order is 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). Children 'looked after' immediately before the order is made qualify in this category.

'Sibling' means brother or sister, to include adopted brothers and sisters, half brothers and sisters or step brothers and sisters, or the child of the parent or carers' partner, living as a family unit at the same address. A sibling must live permanently at the address as the child for whom the application is being made. A sibling relationship does not apply when the older child(ren) will leave before the younger one starts.