



## **St. Joseph's RC Primary School, George Row, London SE16 4UP**

**2024/25**

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School was founded by the Sisters of Mercy to provide education for children of Catholic families; it is in the trusteeship of the Diocese of Southwark. The school is conducted by its governing body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its Trust Deed and Instrument of Government.

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. At a Catholic school, Catholic doctrine and practice permeates 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.

We ask all parents applying for a place here to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community. This does not affect the rights of parents who are not of the faith of this school to apply for and be considered for a place here.

The governing body has responsibility for admissions to this school and, having consulted with the local authority and other admission authorities, intends to admit 45 pupils to the Reception class and 30 FTE to the Nursery class

*(NB. Admissions to the nursery are based on the same criteria as admissions to the main school). Please note that the closing date for Reception applications is 15th January 2024 and the closing date for Nursery applications is 25th February 2024. Any supplementary forms received after this date will be treated as late applications.*

### **Admission Number**

The number of pupils to be admitted into each year group is 45.

### **Application Procedure**

The process to be followed is that as set down under Southwark's "Co-ordinated admission schemes" and according to the timetable set down by Southwark as the Local Authority. Southwark residents must apply for their child's primary place online at [www.southwark.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/schooladmissions)

Applications should be made to the Local Authority by the national closing date 15 January 2024 for admission to the following September 2024. Applications can only be made online. This may be completed before this date but the Admissions Panel does not take account of the order in which they were received.

In addition, the school also asks that a Supplementary Form is completed by each applicant and this is available from the school. Completed supplementary forms should be returned to the school NOT the Local Authority by the same closing date, 15 January 2024. Completion of a Supplementary Form is not mandatory; however, if one is not received then the Governors will not be able to apply their admission criteria and the application will be considered under the "other children" category.

The Governors will ask the parish priest, where applicable, for details of parental church attendance.

Applicants will be notified by the local authority of the outcome of their application on the national common offer date of 16 April 2024.

## **Late Applications**

All late applications will not be considered for a place until after the initial offer of places on “offer day”.

If any applications are made after “the offer date” but before the 31<sup>st</sup> August then they will need to be made through the LA.

## **In Year Applications**

Applications for places outside the normal round of admissions (in year admissions) can be made directly to the school and will be allocated in accordance within the school’s admissions criteria and processed as per Southwark’s agreed protocol.

In accordance with Southwark Council’s in year protocol any child who wishes to transfer from one Southwark school to another Southwark school must complete Southwark’s in year application form. The applicant must then return the completed in year application form directly to the school they are applying to.

If a child is currently not attending a Southwark school and the family would like to apply for an in-year place at a Southwark school, they must complete Southwark LA’s in year application form and return it to Southwark Council’s school admissions team.

## **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 by application to the Headteacher that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the 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 their normal age group**

Parents who are seeking a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, 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.

Southwark Council’s school admissions team co-ordinates the process for the admission of children outside of their normal age group on behalf of all schools in the borough. This also means that the process is simplified for families in that they are not completing multiple forms for each school they are making such a request to.

Families residing in the borough must complete and return Southwark Council’s ‘Request for admission outside of the normal age group’ form alongside any supporting documentation to Southwark’s school admissions team. The request form is available on the website at

[www.southwark.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/schooladmissions).

Once the request is logged by Southwark, they will forward the request form to this school in order to make a decision.

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 parental 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.

### **Fair Access Protocol**

The school participates in the local authority's Fair Access Protocol to allocate places to vulnerable and other children in accordance with the School Admission Code. Admitting pupils under the protocol may require the school to admit above the planned admission number for the relevant year group.

### **Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan**

The admissions of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or with an EHC Plan are dealt with by a completely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and the 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 criteria below.

### **Oversubscription Criteria Priorities**

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, the Governors will offer places using the following criteria in the order stated:-

1. The following children will take precedence over all other applicants - Baptised Catholic children who are designated as 'looked after children' (LAC) by the Local Authority and non-Catholic children who are in the care of Catholic families: or any of these who have become adopted or become subject of a residence or guardianship order immediately after being looked after 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. Baptised Catholic children whose family attends Sunday Mass weekly. A baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Roman Catholic Church is required AND evidence of the frequency of attending Mass must be provided by the parent(s)/carer(s) and be endorsed by a priest at the church(es) where the family normally worship, both of which must accompany the supplementary information form.

- Priority will first be given to children where one or both parents/guardians live within the boundary of The Most Holy Trinity Parish, Dockhead, and for which St Joseph's (George Row) is the nearest Catholic school.
- Then, where one or both parents/guardians live outside the boundaries of The Most Holy Trinity Parish, Dockhead but within the Cathedral Deanery boundaries (*parishes – St George's Cathedral, St Gertrude's' South Bermondsey, Precious Blood Borough, Our Lady of La Salette Melior Street, St Peter and the Guardian Angels Rotherhithe, Immaculate Conception, Surrey Docks, English Martyrs Walworth, St Wilfrid's Kennington Park, St Patrick's Waterloo, St Anne's Vauxhall*) and for which St Joseph's (George Row) is the nearest Catholic school.
- Then, where one or both parents/guardians live outside the boundaries of the Cathedral Deanery and for which St Joseph's (George Row) is the nearest Catholic school.

3. Baptised Catholic children whose family attend Sunday Mass at least two or three times per month. A baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Roman Catholic Church is required AND evidence of the frequency of attending Mass must be provided by the parent(s)/carer(s) and be endorsed by a priest at the church(es) where the family normally worship, both of which must accompany the supplementary information form.

- Priority will first be given to children where one or both parents/guardians live within the boundary of The Most Holy Trinity Parish, Dockhead, and for which St Joseph's (George Row) is the nearest Catholic school.
- Then, where one or both parents/guardians live outside the boundaries of The Most Holy Trinity Parish, Dockhead but within the Cathedral Deanery boundaries and for which St Joseph's (George Row) is the nearest Catholic school.
- Then, where one or both parents/guardians live outside the boundaries of the Cathedral Deanery and for which St Joseph's (George Row) is the nearest Catholic school.

4. Baptised Catholic children whose family attend Sunday Mass occasionally. A baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Roman Catholic Church is required AND evidence of the frequency of attending Mass must be provided by the parent(s)/carer(s) and be endorsed by a priest at the church(es) where the family normally worship, both of which must accompany the supplementary information form.

- Priority will first be given to children where one or both parents/guardians live within the boundary of The Most Holy Trinity Parish, Dockhead, and for which St Joseph's (George Row) is the nearest Catholic school.
- Then, where one or both parents/guardians live outside the boundaries of The Most Holy Trinity Parish, Dockhead but within the Cathedral Deanery boundaries and for which St Joseph's (George Row) is the nearest Catholic school.
- Then, where one or both parents/guardians live outside the boundaries of the Cathedral Deanery and for which St Joseph's (George Row) is the nearest Catholic school.

5. All other baptised Catholic children. A baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Roman Catholic Church must accompany the supplementary information form.

6. Other children who are designated as LAC by the Local Authority and any of these who have become adopted or become subject of a residence or guardianship order immediately after being looked after and other 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.

7. Children enrolled in the catechumenate. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required.

8. Children who are members of Eastern Orthodox Churches. Evidence of Baptism will be required.

9. 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.

10. Children who are members of other faiths. Evidence of membership of the faith provided by a priest, minister or religious leader of the designated place of worship will be required.

11. Any other children.

## **Tie Breaks**

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 applicants.

- 1) A brother or sister on the school roll at the time of admission. Evidence of the relationship may be required.
- 2) Social, pastoral and medical needs which make the school particularly suitable for the child in question. Strong and relevant evidence in the form of a letter must be provided by an appropriate professional authority (e.g., qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker or priest)
- 3) Proximity to the school from the Candidates home address, the distance measured in a straight line from the School entrance. Evidence of residence may be required. The home address is where the parent or carer lives and the child permanently resides for the majority of school nights (Sunday to Thursday) are spent unless otherwise directed by a "Court Order"

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 the drawing of lots.

## **Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)**

- a). Catholics include members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome. Reference to other Christian denominations refers to denominations that are full members of Churches Together in England.
- b). For categories 2, 3 and 4 above – The level of the family's attendance at Mass (at least one parent/carer and the child) on Sundays as provided by the evidence from the parent(s)/carer(s) must be endorsed by a priest at the church(es) where the family normally worship. This will determine which of these categories the application will be allocated to as shown on the Supplementary Form
- c). A "brother or sister" means children who live as brother and sister including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers or sisters. It would not include other relatives (e.g., cousins).
- d). Home refers to the permanent home address at which the child lives for the majority of his/her time.
- e). "Looked after child" is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school. This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).

Child arrangements orders are defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence orders in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.

Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

Any references to previously looked after children in the School Admissions Code 2021 means such children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangement orders or special guardianship orders) immediately having been looked after.

## **Waiting List**

If the school is oversubscribed, those applicants not offered places will automatically be put on the waiting list if the School is named as a higher preference on their application. The waiting list will be kept by the governing body in the order of the oversubscription priorities set out above and be maintained until the 30<sup>th</sup> December.

Looked After and Previously looked After Children as well as those children directed under the local authority's "fair access protocol" will take precedence over those children already on the list.

## **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.