



NURSERY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY

2027/2028

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INTRODUCTION TO OUR SCHOOL

St Joseph's Catholic Infant and Nursery School is a part of the St. Joseph's Catholic Federation. We are committed to educating our children to achieving their full potential in order that they make a positive difference in their community and the world. We strive for excellence so that every child develops spiritually, socially, academically and morally. Our Federation exists to educate our children with the gospel values, traditions and beliefs of the Catholic faith in partnership with the parents and parish communities. This ethos is central to everything we do. We 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 and from those who have no faith but who support the religious ethos of the school.

We are 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 Governing Body has responsibility for all admissions to the school. The Governors intend to accept up to 39 children (morning sessions) and up to 39 children (afternoon sessions) in the Nursery Class.

We are able to provide wrap around care from 7.30am- 6pm, for children in the Federation from Nursery to Y6.

Having consulted with the Local Authority, the Diocese and other admission authorities, the governors intend to amend their admission criteria in alignment with Diocese guidance and current legalisation.

**Prospective parents are welcome to come and visit our school,
please contact the school office should you wish to do so.
We have tours every Wednesday morning at 9.30am.**

ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR ST JOSEPH'S INFANT SCHOOL

Where the number of applications exceeds 39 per session (AM/PM), the Governors will offer places using the following criteria in the order stated below: -

1. Looked after Catholic children and all previously looked after Catholic children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. 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. A baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church must be provided.
3. Looked after children and all previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. 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 enrolled in the catechumenate. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required.

5. Children who are members of Eastern Orthodox Catholic Churches. Evidence of Baptism will be required.
6. Children who are members of other Christian Churches and denominations. Evidence of Baptism/dedication or evidence of membership required.
7. Children who are members of other faiths. Evidence of Baptism/dedication or evidence of membership required.
8. All 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. A brother or sister on the Federation roll at the time of admission. Evidence of the relationship may be required. The governors will, where logistically possible, admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the last child ranked within the school's published admissions number.
- ii. Social, pastoral and medical needs which make the school particularly suitable for the child in question. Strong and relevant evidence must be provided, at the time of application, by an appropriate professional authority (e.g. qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker or priest).
- iii. Proximity to the school of the child's home address, the distance measured in a straight line from the school entrance by the local authority using a geographical computerised 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 the drawing of lots.

Important 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. 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). Archdiocese of Southwark – Guidance on School Admissions Revised May 2023
- c. Home refers to the permanent home address at which the child lives for the majority of his/her time and with the parent who is in receipt of child benefit.
- d. A looked after child has the same meaning as in section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989 that is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents) at the time of making an application. A previously looked after child is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order. This

will include children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.

Admissions procedure

You will need to fill in a Nursery Application Form if your child will be 3 years old by 1st September 2027. **The closing date will be 15th January.**

Completion of the schools administration document is not mandatory, but it will help the school admissions team to manage the admissions process.

Application forms must be completed and signed by a parent or legal guardian and the child named on the application must be resident with the person signing the form at the time of application. There is no automatic transfer from Nursery to Reception classes – you must apply again next year for a place in the Infant School.

A Certificate of Practice should be completed and received at the school by 15th January. The Certificate of Practice is not mandatory and is only required for those applying under Criteria 2 of the policy. You are advised to retain a copy of the certificate.

Applications received after the closing date are 'Late Applications' and will be processed after the admissions cycle is complete.

Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan

The admission of pupils with an EHC Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of 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 an EHC plan naming the school will be admitted without reference to the above criteria.

Appeals

Parents/Carers whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with section 94 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.

The Nursery class is restricted to 39 children in each session. Parents should be aware that an appeal against refusal of a place in the Nursery class may only succeed if it can be demonstrated that: -

- a) the admission of additional children would not breach legal requirements for staffing ratios/space requirements; 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.

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 will be maintained until at least 31st December of each

school year of admissions. The waiting list will be operated using the same admissions criteria listed above. 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. It is possible that when a child is directed under the local authority's fair access protocol they will take precedence over those children already on the list.

We look forward to welcoming you and your child into our school family.