JUNIOR SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY

2026/2027

Compliance statement

Every policy is reviewed at regular intervals and where applicable, as stipulated by law.

Each policy is also available in additional formats including Braille and in additional languages upon request, within reasonable timescales as stipulated by the school.

Reviewer/s:	Danielle Ashley
Last reviewed on:	March 2025
Next review due by:	March 2026
Approved by:	Full Governing Board

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INTRODUCTION TO OUR SCHOOL

St Joseph's Catholic Junior 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. St Joseph's Federation serves three parishes: Virgo Fidelis, St Matthew's and St Margaret Clitherow. 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 60 children per year group.

ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR ST JOSEPH'S JUNIOR SCHOOL

Admissions to the school are made by the Governors. The Governors intend to accept up to 60 children in each year group. St Joseph's serves three parishes namely Virgo Fidelis, St Matthew's and St Margaret Clitherow. St Joseph's is a Catholic School, which is normally very oversubscribed: The Governors therefore observe the following criteria precisely; they are in order of priority:

1. Looked After Catholic Children or Looked After Children in the care of Catholic families and previously Looked After Catholic Children who have been adopted or have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.
2. Baptised Catholic children being brought up in the Catholic faith who live within the parish boundaries of the three named parishes, who weekly worship at Catholic Mass.
3. Baptised Catholic children being brought up in the Catholic faith who live outside the parish boundaries of the three named parishes, who weekly worship at Catholic Mass.
4. Baptised Catholic children being brought up in the Catholic faith who live within the parish boundaries of the three named parishes, who worship intermittently at Catholic Mass.
5. Baptised Catholic children being brought up in the Catholic faith who live outside the parish boundaries of the three named parishes, who worship intermittently at Catholic Mass.
6. Baptised Catholic children who do not worship at Catholic Mass.

7. Other Looked After Children and other previously Looked After Children who have been adopted or have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.
8. Christian children of other Christian denominations whose application is supported by the Minister.
9. Children of other faiths whose application is supported by a minister or faith leader.
10. Any other applicants.

TIEBREAKER

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:

1. A child who is on roll, at the time of application, at St Joseph's Infant School will take priority over applications, within each criterion who are not currently on roll at St Joseph's Infants.

2. The attendance of a brother or sister at either St Joseph's Infant or St Joseph's Junior School at the time of entry will take priority over applications, within each criterion, who do not have siblings.

3. Social/Medical needs which make the school particularly suitable for the child in question. Strong 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.

4. The distance will be measured in a straight line from the child's home address to the designated entrance(s) of the school using a computerised measuring system and geographical reference points as provided by the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG). Those living closer to the school will receive higher priority. If a child lives in a shared property such as flats, the geographical references will determine the start point within the property boundaries to be used for distance calculation purposes. In the event of distance being equal the ultimate tiebreaker will be drawing of lots.

ADMISSION PROCEDURE FOR SEPTEMBER 2026

Our Junior School is traditionally oversubscribed; therefore, the criteria are strictly applied.

ADMISSIONS FOR YEAR 2 - YEAR 3

To make an application for your child you will need to complete the online Common Application Form (CAF) from your 'home' Local Authority (LA), via their website and a Supplementary Information Form for this school. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to the school with the Common Application Form CAF (in Year) being completed on line via your home LA's website.

Application forms must be completed and signed by a parent or legal guardian (The CAF may be completed online if this facility exists in your Local Authority and therefore may remain unsigned) and the child named on the application must be resident with the person signing the form at the time of application.

Children with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) that names a school will be admitted to the school before the admissions criteria are applied to all other applicants. Accordingly, children with Education, Health & Care

Plans (ECHPs) already admitted to the school must be counted towards the admission number when considering whether there is still a place available for another child without an EHCP. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the SEND code of practice.

Completion of the Supplementary Information Form is not mandatory; however, if one is not received by the school, the governors will not be able to apply their admission criteria and the application will be considered under criterion 10 – any other applicants.

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.

IMPORTANT NOTES

a. Looked After Children means: 'Children in public care' at the date on which application is made and must be supported by a letter from the relevant Local Authority (Children's Services) Department. If an application is made under the criterion "adopted children who were previously looked after" it must be supported by a letter from the relevant Local Authority (Children's Services) Department.
b. Class Size – we adhere to the statutory infant class size limit of 30 pupils per class.
c. Parish Boundaries are as defined by the Archdiocese of Southwark. Definitions are available in the school office. These can also be accessed via the school website or can be sent to an applicant upon request.
d. Catholics include members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome.
e. Weekly worship means: 'Fulfilling the obligation of attendance at a Catholic Mass each Sunday and Holy Day or on the eve of such days unless prevented so by serious reason'.
f. Intermittent worship means: 'Does not always fulfil the obligation of attendance at a Catholic Mass each Sunday and Holy Day or on the eve of such days unless prevented so by serious reason' (that is worship fortnightly, monthly or occasionally).
g. Catechumenate means families who are undertaking instruction which will lead to baptism. This must be verified by the Parish Priest.
h. Home means: 'The normal registered place of residence of the parents and children, not that of a relative or childminder'. Home Local Authority means the Local Authority in which your home is situated. The school and the Local Authority must be notified of any change of address immediately. Failure to do so could result in the child being denied a place at a preferred school.
i. Brother or sister means children who live as brother and sister, including natural brothers or sisters, half brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers or sisters whose main residence is at the same address as the applicant.

j. The distance will be measured in a straight line from the child's home address to the designated entrance(s) of the school using a computerised measuring system and geographical reference points as provided by the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG). Those living closer to the school will receive higher priority. If a child lives in a shared property such as flats, the geographical references will determine the start point within the property boundaries to be used for distance calculation purposes. In the event of distance being equal the ultimate tiebreaker will be drawing of lots.

APPEALS

Parents whose applications 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 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 panel.

ADMISSION OF CHILDREN OUTSIDE THEIR NORMAL AGE GROUP

Admission of children outside their normal age group: Parents who are seeking a place for their child outside of their normal age group, e.g. the child has experienced problems such as ill health or the parents of a summer born child choosing not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday, may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – Year 3 rather than to Year 4. Governors will make decisions on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking into account the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their relevant medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have been 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 Headteacher. When informing a parent of the decision which year a child should be admitted to the governors will set out clearly the reasons for their decision. Where 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 admissions arrangements including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. Parents have the statutory right to appeal 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 2014. Admitting pupils under the protocol may require the school to admit above the planned admission number for the relevant year group.

WAITING LIST

Parents of children who have not been offered a place at the school may ask for their child's name to be placed on the waiting list. The waiting list will be operated using the same criteria listed above, for one academic term in the year of admission. 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. When a place becomes available, all current applications for a place in the year group will be considered in accordance with the criteria of the Admissions Policy. Information can be provided to parents about the order of priority of applications being held at a particular time but no guarantee can be given that higher priority applications will not be received by the time a place becomes available.

PUPILS WITH AN EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLAN (EHCP)

The admissions of pupils with an EHCP are dealt with by a completely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of EHCP's by the pupil's home Local Authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the SEND code of practice. Pupils with an EHCP naming the school will be admitted without reference to the above criteria.

IN YEAR (CASUAL) ADMISSIONS

Applications for a place at the school in-year must be made using the Common Application Form (CAF) of Croydon Local Authority (LA). The school's Supplementary Information Form (SIF) should also be completed (online or in paper version) and returned to the school. In the event of a place being available this will enable the governors to rank the application in the event of their being more than one applicant for the place. The Governors will use the same criteria to rank the application as listed above. The offer of a place will be made by the governors. If no places are available 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.

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