

**ADMISSION POLICY FOR ST CECILIA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**For Admission Year 2020/2021.**

**Background Information**

St. Cecilia's is a Voluntary Aided Primary School in the Archdiocese 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 and from those who have no faith who support the religious ethos of the school.

It was built to serve the local Catholic community, in particular, the children of practising Catholic families in the parishes of St Cecilia's, St Matthias and St Christopher. *A copy of a map showing the Parish Boundaries is available from the school office.* The Catholic community support the school because they value a distinctive Catholic Education for their children. For the remainder of this policy, the word Catholic refers to the Catholic faith.

Parents elect to apply for this school in order to ensure that the Catholic values and way of life are passed on to their children at home, in the parish and at school. Governors have full regard for these factors in the framework of this policy.

**Governors will consider the allocation of places in the school:**

1. As part of the intake process for the Reception classes (rising 5s).
2. As individual cases where existing pupils move away and create spaces for others on the waiting lists or where pupils move into the area and make a late application to R-Y6.

**APPLICATION FOR PLACES IN RECEPTION**

Parents of children born between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016 must complete the Local Authority Common Application Form (CAF) and return it to the local authority where the child lives by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020 for consideration for the September 2019 intake. The CAF for the London Borough of Sutton is available online at [www.sutton.gov.uk/education/admissions](http://www.sutton.gov.uk/education/admissions). Parents applying for a place at St Cecilia's must put the school as one of the preferences on the CAF.

If you are expressing a preference for a place for your child at this school and wish to apply in connection with one of the faith criteria you need to complete the Supplementary Information Form and enclose the child's Baptismal Certificate or for children of other faiths, a reference from the minister/faith leader. The Supplementary Information Form is available from the school and online at [www.sutton.gov.uk/education/admissions](http://www.sutton.gov.uk/education/admissions) and should be returned direct to the school by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

If a parent names the school on the CAF but does not return the Supplementary Information Form and supporting information to the school by the due date, it will not be possible to consider the application fully, and is likely to result in the applicant being ranked beneath other applicants.

If a parent completes a Supplementary Information Form but does not name the school on the CAF, it will not be treated as a valid application.

Late applications will be considered in accordance with Sutton's coordinated scheme.

**ENTRY TO RECEPTION**

The school will offer full time education to children from the September before the fifth birthday. Parents can defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age or, for children born between 1 April and 31 August, not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made.

Where parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

Where the child is attending the school nursery, a separate application must be made for entry into Reception Class. Places are allocated according to the admissions criteria shown below; no automatic entry or priority is given to children attending the school nursery.

### **ADMISSION OF CHILDREN OUTSIDE THEIR NORMAL AGE GROUP**

Children are educated in school with others of their age group. However, parents may request that their child is exceptionally admitted outside their age group. The governors will decide whether or not the individual child's circumstances make this appropriate, taking into account of the child's individual needs and abilities and considering which year group these needs can best be met. Such requests will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances.

Teachers are skilled at differentiating the curriculum to meet a diverse range of needs. Before deciding to apply to submit a request, parents should visit the school prior to an application being made. The teachers will be able to explain the provision on offer to children in the year of entry, how it is tailored to meet the needs of all pupils and how the needs of these pupils will continue to be met as they move up through the school. They may also be able to allay any concerns the parent may have.

Decisions will be made on the basis of 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; the views of school staff; 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.

All requests should include recent professional evidence of the child's circumstances which make education outside the age group necessary. Evidence must be of the individual child's need, rather than general factors which relate to a wider group of children born at a similar time.

Parents requesting admission to an age group below the child's actual age should submit an application for the child's actual age group before the relevant closing date. The request for later admission should accompany the application. This enables the application to be processed and a school place secured in the child's actual age group if the request is refused by the governors. Parents will be informed of the outcome of their request prior to national offer day.

### **MID-TERM ADMISSIONS**

In year applicants should contact Sutton Admissions by visiting [www.sutton.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.sutton.gov.uk/admissions) to enquire about potential vacancies and the application process.

Before the Governors can consider the allocation of places, the application process has to be complete.

1. A Local Authority Mid-Term application form should be completed by parents.
2. If you are expressing a preference for a place for your child at this school and wish to apply in connection with one of the faith criteria you need to complete the Supplementary Information Form and enclose the child's Baptismal Certificate or for children of other faiths, a reference from the minister/faith leader. The Supplementary Information Form is available from the school and online at [www.sutton.gov.uk/education/admissions](http://www.sutton.gov.uk/education/admissions) and should be returned direct to the school.
3. If a vacancy arises applications will be considered in accordance with the stated oversubscription criteria and any offer will be sent out by the LA on the school's behalf.
4. The shorter Birth Certificate will be requested after the offer has been made

### **OVERALL FACTORS TO BE OBSERVED BY GOVERNORS IN THE ALLOCATION OF PLACES.**

1. The Governors intend to admit 60 children into F2 (Reception) for the academic year 2020/2021.

2. The maximum class size in Key Stage 1 is 30 pupils and in Key Stage 2 is 32 pupils.
3. Governors will automatically place the names of all unsuccessful candidates and late applications on to a waiting list. After one year, if parents still require a place, they should re-apply.
4. Children with an Education Health & Care Plan naming the school will be admitted. These pupils will be included in the total admission numbers above.

### **OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA**

Governors will allocate places available in the following order:

1. Looked after Catholic children or looked after children in the care of Catholic families. (See notes)
2. Baptised Catholic children or children enrolled in the catechumenate who have a Supplementary Information Form stating that the family attend Mass on a weekly basis and who have a sibling in St Cecilia's at the time of admission.
3. Baptised Catholic children or children enrolled in the catechumenate who are resident in the three parishes of St. Cecilia's, St. Matthias' and St. Christopher's and who have a Supplementary Information Form stating that the family attend Mass on a weekly basis.
4. Baptised Catholic children or children enrolled in the catechumenate who are resident in other parishes who have a Supplementary Information Form stating that the family attend Mass on a weekly basis.
5. Baptised Catholic children or children enrolled in the catechumenate, not so far accounted for. Priority will be given to those children where the family attend Mass at least once a month then to those who attend less often.
6. Other looked after children. (See notes)
7. Children who are members of Eastern Christian Churches including Orthodox Churches. Evidence of Baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church will be required.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. Any other applicants.

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. Social, pastoral and medical needs which make the school particularly suitable for the child in question. Strong and relevant evidence must be provided by an appropriate professional authority (e.g. qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker or priest).
- ii. A brother or sister on the school roll at the time of admission. Evidence of the relationship may be required.
- iii. Children of teaching staff where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made.
- iv. Proximity to the school from the child's home address, the distance measured in a straight line from the school front gate 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.

The admission of pupils with an Educational Health Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational Needs is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of EHC Plans and Statements 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 or Statement of Special Educational Needs naming the school will be admitted without reference to the above criteria. However, if admitted during a normal admission round, they will be taken into account when applying the school's admission number. Children with EHC Plans or Statements already admitted to the school will be counted towards the admission number when considering whether there is still a place available for another child with either an EHC Plans or Statement.

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 a waiting list. The waiting list will be operated using the same admissions criteria as above. Any offer of a place is conditional on the parents' current address. Placing a child on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available. Waiting lists for entry to Reception in September 2019 will be maintained until the last day of the Autumn term. Parents wishing to remain on the waiting list after this date must write to Sutton Local Authority by 31 December 2019, stating their wish and providing their child's name, date of birth and the name of their current school. After 31 December 2019, parents whose children are not already on the waiting list but who wish them to be so must make an application through the mid-term admission process. Waiting lists for other year groups will be reviewed at least once a year.

### **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 Appeals 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;
- c) or 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.

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

Looked after children or previously looked after children. (A 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). A previously looked after child is a child who was adopted, or subject to a child arrangement order, or special guardianship order, immediately following having been looked after.

In the context of school admissions Catholic children are defined as Children who are baptised or received into the Catholic Church, children baptised or received into the Eastern Churches in union with Rome and children of members of the Ordinariate'. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of Baptism in a Catholic church or a certificate of reception into full communion of the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy, it includes a looked after child who is part of a Catholic family where a priest's reference demonstrates that the child would have been baptised or received if it were not for their status as a looked after child (e.g. a looked after child in the process of adoption by a Catholic family).

Reference to other Christian denominations refers to other denominations that are full members of Churches Together in England.

Eastern Christian Churches including Orthodox Churches refers to those Churches which are not in communion with the Holy See but possess valid orders and sacraments.

'Catechumen' means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic church. This will normally be evidenced through the parish priest, for example with a letter confirming enrolment.

A family is defined as being the child's natural or adoptive parents or officially designated carers including single parent families. It does not include grandparents or other relatives unless they are officially designated carers.

A sibling is defined as a full brother or sister or step/half/adopted brother or sister living at the same address, a child who is living as part of the family unit by reason of a Court Order or a child who has been placed with foster carers as a result of being 'looked after' by the authority. Sibling priority will only be considered when a child has a brother or sister at St Cecilia's at the proposed date of admission. Siblings in Year 6 at the time of an application to start school will not qualify. To demonstrate an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the governing body will normally require written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.

The child's home address excludes any business, relative's or childminder's address, and must be the applicant's normal place of residence. If there is a genuine equal share custody arrangement between the two parents, the address that will be used will be the address of the parent who is claiming Child Benefit for the child. All distances will be measured **in a straight line** by a computerised Geographical Information System maintained by Sutton Admissions team. All measurements will be made from the school's front gate. The address to be used for the initial allocation of places to F2 (Reception) will be the child's address at the closing date for application. Changes of address up to dates stated in the scheme may be considered if there are exceptional reasons behind the change, such as if a family has just moved to the area, or has returned from abroad. The address to be used for waiting lists, after the initial allocation, and for mid-term admissions will be the child's current address. Any offer is conditional upon the child living at the appropriate address on the relevant date. Parents have a responsibility to notify the Local Authority of any change of address.