



**ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
COOKHAM ROAD, MAIDENHEAD, SL6 7EG**



Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

ADMISSIONS POLICY 2025/2026

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is part of the Frassati Catholic Academy Trust. The admission authority for the school is the Board of Directors of Frassati Catholic Academy Trust who has responsibility for admissions to this school. The Board of Directors has delegated responsibility for the admissions process to the Local Board of Governors at St Mary's Catholic Primary School.

St Mary's Catholic Primary School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below. The school is conducted by The Board of Directors as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and articles of association, and seeks at all times to be a witness to Our Lord Jesus Christ.

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 be fully supported by all families in the school. We therefore hope that all parents will give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school. This does not affect the right of an applicant who is not Catholic to apply for and be admitted to a place at the school in accordance with the admission arrangements.

The Local Board of Governors is the Admissions Authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round. The Admissions Authority has set its admission number at 45 pupils to be admitted to the Reception year group in the school year which begins in September 2023.

The Admissions Authority 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 ("PAN").

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (see note 1)

The admission of pupils with a Statement of Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school must be admitted. Where this takes place before the allocation of places under these arrangements this will reduce the number of places available to other children.

Oversubscription Criteria Categories:

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 and previously looked after children (see notes 2 & 3)
2. Catholic Children who are resident in the Parish of St Joseph's Maidenhead with St Elizabeth's

Cookham (see notes 3 and 8)

3. Other Catholic Children (see note 3)
4. Other looked after and previously looked after children (see note 2)
5. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion (see note 4)
6. Children of other faiths evidenced by a religious leader (see note 5)
7. Any other children

Siblings:

The attendance of a brother or sister at the school at the time of first entry will increase the priority of an application within each category so that a sibling application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made (see note 6)

Tie Break:

When higher categories have all been accommodated a tie break will apply when there are no more places available. In the relevant category priority will be given to children living closest to school. Distances are calculated on the basis of a straight line measurement between the front door of the child's address and the main entrance of the school as calculated by the local authority. In the event of the distance being the same for two or more children the last available place will be allocated by casting lots carried out independently of the school by a representative of the local authority.

Application Procedure and Timetable:

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admissions round you must complete a **Common Application Form** available from the local authority in which you live. This should be submitted to the local authority. You are also strongly requested to complete the **Supplementary Information Form** attached to this policy. If you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria this information will assist in allocating the correct priority to your child's application. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to the School Secretary at St Mary's Catholic Primary School by 15th January 2023.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 16th April 2023 or the next working day - by the local authority on behalf of the school. If you are unsuccessful you will be informed of the reasons related to the oversubscription criteria listed above and you will have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

If you do not provide the information required in the Supplementary Information Form and return it by the closing date with all supporting documentation, your child will not be placed in the correct category and this is likely to affect your child's chance of being offered a place. All applications which are submitted on time will be considered and categorised at the same time after the closing date for admissions which is 15th January 2023 for first entry in September 2023.

Late applications will be administered in accordance with the local authority Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. Late applications will be ranked in category priority and considered after on time applications have been offered and accepted places. Parents are encouraged to ensure that applications are received on time.

Admission of Children below Compulsory School Age and Deferred Entry:

A child is entitled to a full time school place in the September following their fourth birthday. A child's parents may defer the date at which their child, below compulsory school age, is admitted until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age or beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made. A child may take up

a part-time place until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age. Upon the receipt of an offer of a place a parent should notify the school as soon as possible if they wish to defer the child's entry or take up a part-time place.

Admission of Children outside their Normal Age Group:

A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside their normal age group - for example if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition the parents of a summer born child (a child born between 1st April and 31st August) may request that the child be admitted outside of their normal age group. Any such request should be made in writing to the Headteacher at St Mary's Catholic Primary School at the same time as the application for admission is made. The governing body will make a decision about the request based on the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to considering the views of the Headteacher and the statutory responsibility of the Headteacher for the internal organisation and management of the school, the governing body will consider the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and educational professionals.

Waiting List:

In addition to the right of appeal, unsuccessful children will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained in the priority order of the oversubscription criteria above and distance from school within each category. The list is not in the date order in which applications were received. Late applications are added to the waiting list according to the oversubscription criteria. Names on the waiting list will be held open until the end of the academic year in July 2024 unless applicants request to be removed from the list. Inclusion on the waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

In-year Applications:

An application can be made for a place for a child at any time outside the admission round. Although usually fully subscribed a child will be admitted where there is an available space. Application should be made to the school by contacting the Headteacher in the first instance.

Where there are more applications than spaces the published oversubscription criteria will be applied. If there are no places available, the child will be added to the waiting list (see above).

You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing, and will have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

Fair Access Protocol:

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

Pre-School:

For applicant children attending St Mary's Nursery Pre-School application for first entry must be made in the normal manner - by submitting a Common Application Form to the local authority. Attendance at the pre-school does not give any increased priority for admission and the published oversubscription criteria will apply.

The offer of a place or an existing place at the school may be forfeited if it is established that the parents were fraudulent in securing the place, but not in any other circumstances.

Right of Appeal:

Parents have the right to appeal in the event of the Admissions Authority no being able to offer a place. Parents do **not** have the right to appeal if they have been offered a place but it is not in the year that they would like for their child. The timetable for appeals and other information is on the school website. An Appeals Form can be obtained from the School Office and when completed should be returned to the Chair of Admissions Committee at the school.

NOTES - these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria:

1. A Statement of Special Educational Needs is a statement made by the local authority under Section 324 of the Education Act 1996, specifying the special educational provision for a child. An Education, Health and Care Plan is a plan made by the local authority under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 specifying the special educational provision required for a child.
2. A "looked after child" has the same meaning as in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 and means any 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 function (e.g. children with foster parents). A "previously looked after child" is a child who has ceased to be looked after because he or she was adopted or became subject to a child's arrangement order or special guardianship order.
3. "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. For the purposes of this policy, it includes a looked after child in the process of adoption and living within a family where at least one of the parents is Catholic. For the child to be treated as Catholic, evidence of Catholic baptism or reception into the Church will be required. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of Baptism should contact their parish priest who can consult with the Diocesan Academies and Schools Office for further guidance.
4. "Children of other Christian denominations" means children who belong to other churches and ecclesial communities which acknowledge God's revelation in Christ, confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and in obedience to God's will and in the power of the Holy Spirit commit themselves: to seek a deepening of their communion with Christ and with one another in the Church, which is His body, and to fulfil their mission to proclaim the Gospel by common witness and service in the world to the Glory of one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. An ecclesial community which on principle has no credal statements in its tradition is included if it manifests faith in Christ as witnessed to in the Scriptures and is committed to working in the spirit of the above. All members of Churches Together in England and CYTUN are deemed to be included in the above definition, as are all other churches and ecclesial communities that are in membership of any local Churches Together Group (by whatever title) on the basis above..
5. "Children of other faiths" means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of "other Christian denominations" in 4 above and falls within the definition of a religion for the purposes of charity law. The Charities Act 2011 defines religion to include: A religion which believes in more than one God or a religion which does not involve belief in a God. Case law has identified certain characteristics which describe the meaning of a religion for the purposes of charity law, which are characterised by a belief in a supreme being and an expression of belief in that supreme being through worship.
6. "Siblings" - brothers or sisters includes - all natural brothers or sisters, half brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or stepsisters whether or not they are living at the same address and the child of a parent's partner where that child lives for at least part of the week at the same home address as the child who is the subject of the application.
7. A "parent" means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for a child or any person who has care of a child.

8. For the purposes of this policy - parish boundaries are as set out on the website for St Joseph's Catholic Parish, Maidenhead.
9. "Home address" refers to the address where the child usually lives with a parent, guardian or carer. This must be the address provided on the Common Application Form. Where parents have shared responsibility for a child and the child lives for part of the week with each parent the home address will be deemed to be as given on the Common Application Form, provided that the child resides at that address for any part of the week.

Reviewed date: December 2024

Rosemary Akehurst Headteacher

Marius Hopley Chair of Governors

Date to next to be reviewed: December 2025