

ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, MARPLE BRIDGE 2016-17

This admission policy has been adopted by the Governing Body and will operate from September 2016. It applies to all applications for the school year 2016-2017. St Mary's Catholic School is under the Trusteeship of the Diocese of Nottingham and belongs to the Nottingham Diocesan family of schools. The school is founded by and is part of the Catholic Church and seeks at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ. Religious education and worship are in accordance with the teachings and doctrines of the Catholic Church. This does not affect the right of parents or carers who are not of the faith of the school to apply for and to be considered for places. We ask all parents or carers applying for a place to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community.

Our school is principally provided to serve the Catholic community of St Mary, Marple Bridge and Annunciation, New Mills (Nottingham Diocese) and Holy Spirit, Marple (Shrewsbury Diocese). The Governors also welcome applications from all parents and carers, regardless of faith or background, who would like their children to be educated in a Christian environment.

The school's published admission number is 30.

The Governing Body is the admission authority and is responsible for determining the admissions policy and for all decisions relating to admissions. The admissions process is coordinated by Stockport Local Authority on behalf of the school governors.

Parents should consult the Local Authority website www.stockport.gov.uk which gives full details of the admissions process, including information on the admissions cycle.

How and when to apply

The Common Application Form

Applications must be made on the Common Application Form provided by your home Local Authority. Applications must be made to your home local authority by the closing date set by your home Local Authority.

The Supplementary Form and Supporting Evidence

In addition all applicants wishing to apply for a place under faith criteria should complete the Supplementary Form. This form can be downloaded from the Local Authority website where the school is located and is also available from the school website. The completed form, together with any required evidence, (see below), should be returned to the school by the same closing date set by your home Local Authority for the return of the Common Application Form.

Parents / carers of Catholic children should also supply one of the following documents:

- A copy of the child's baptism certificate
- If the child has been received into the Catholic church, written verification, signed by a Catholic priest and stamped with the parish stamp.
- If the child is participating in a course of preparation leading to baptism or reception into the Catholic church, written verification signed by a Catholic priest and stamped with the parish stamp should be provided.

Parents/carers whose children are members of other Christian denominations should supply a baptism certificate or certificate of dedication.

If the Supplementary Form or any of the required documents are not provided, the child might be ranked in a lower admissions category.

Deferred Admission

If your child is offered a full time place before s/he reaches compulsory school age, you have the option of deferring the child's entry up until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age (a child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following his/her fifth birthday or on his/her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day. The prescribed days are 31st December, 31st March and 31st August). A place will be held and will not be offered to another child provided the place is taken up within the same academic year.

Parents can request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Admission of children outside the normal age group

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of the normal age group for example if the child is exceptionally gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

In addition, the parents of summer born children may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted outside of their normal age group to Reception rather than Year 1.

The school anticipates that children will be educated out of their normal age group in only a small number of very exceptional circumstances. However should you wish to seek a place for your child outside of their normal age group you should still make an application for a school place for your child's normal age group but you should also submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time and follow the procedure set out by your home local authority.

A decision will then be made on which age group the child should be admitted taking into account the circumstances of each case and the best interests of the child. Once that decision has been made the oversubscription criteria will be applied to determine if a place can be offered at the school.

The school is not required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group.

Your statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which you have applied is unaffected. However the right to appeal does not apply if you are offered a place at the school but it is not in your preferred age group.

Late Applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with your home Local Authority Primary Coordinated Admissions Scheme. You are encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.

Applications during the School Year

Details of the application process are available from the school and from the Local Authority within which the school is located. Once an application has been made, it will be passed to the Admissions Committee of the Governing Body for consideration. If the respective year group total is below the published admission number for that year group, the child will be offered a place.

Decision letters will be issued in writing. Offers of places may be withdrawn if they are offered in error, a parent has not responded within 10 school days or it is established that an offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

In cases involving school transfers that do not require a house move or where there is no need for an immediate move, arrangements may be made for the child to start school at the beginning of term to minimise disruption to their own and other children's education.

If your application is refused, you have a statutory right to appeal (see 'Appeals' below). Your appeal should be lodged within twenty school days after the date of your decision letter.

Attendance at Nursery

Attending a nursery, or a pre-school setting on the site of the school, does not give any priority within the oversubscription criteria for a place in the school.

Waiting Lists

Parents whose children have not been offered their preferred school in the normal admissions round will be added to their preferred school's waiting list. Waiting lists for admission will normally remain open until the end of the Autumn Term in the admission year but schools may maintain waiting lists after this date and for year groups other than the intake year. Please contact the school to request further details.

Waiting lists are ranked in the same order as the oversubscription criteria listed below. Your child's position on the waiting list may change. This means that a child's waiting list position during the year could go up or down.

Any late applications will be added to the list in accordance with the order of priority for allocating places. Inclusion on the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

Appeals

If a child is not allocated a place, parents/carers have a statutory right to appeal. The appeal will be arranged on behalf of the governors by Stockport Local Authority Democratic Services Department and will be heard by an independent panel. Appeals should be submitted via the LA's online form at www.stockport.gov.uk no later than twenty school days after the offer letter has been received. The decision of the appeal panel will be binding on the school.

Fair Access Protocols

Local Authorities are required to have Fair Access Protocols in order to make sure that unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. This includes admitting children above the published admissions number to schools that are already full. Children without a school place will take precedence over children on a waiting list attending another school when considered by IYFAP. You can find out more information by contacting the Local Authority Inclusion Team Tel: 0161 474 3972 or 3971.

Infant Class Size Regulations

Infant classes of may not, by law, contain more than 30 pupils with a single qualified teacher. Parents/carers should be aware that when the Governing Body is considering applications for places, they must keep to the 30 limit. Parents/Carers do have a right of appeal in accordance with the Infant Class Size Regulations if the school is oversubscribed and their child is refused a place.

Applications for twins / multiple birth children

Where a place available is offered to a child from a twin or multiple birth the Governors will normally offer places to both twins, triplets etc even if this means exceeding the published admission number.

Fraudulent Information

If the allocation of a place has been made on the basis of fraudulent or intentionally misleading information, the governors reserve the right to withdraw the place.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where schools have more applications than places available, Governors will draw up a ranked list based on the criteria listed below and will allocate places accordingly.

Children who have an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or a Statement of Special Educational Needs which names the school will be admitted. This will reduce the number of places available.

1. Catholic looked after or previously looked after children (*see notes 1 and 2*) who will have a sibling attending the school at the time of admission (*see Note 4*)
2. Catholic looked after or previously looked after children (*see notes 1 and 2*)
3. Catholic (*see note 2*) children living in the parish(es) served by the school who will have a sibling attending the school at the time of admission (*see Note 4*)
4. Catholic (*see note 2*) children living in the parish(es) served by the school
5. Catholic (*see note 2*) children living outside these parish(es) who will have a sibling attending the school at the time of admission (*see Note 4*)
6. Catholic (*see note 2*) children living outside these parish(es)
7. Other children who are classed as looked after or previously looked after children (*see note 1*) who will have a sibling attending the school at the time of admission (*see Note 4*)
8. Other children who are classed as looked after or previously looked after children (*see note 1*)
9. Children who are baptised or dedicated members of other churches which belong to 'Churches Together in England' (*see Note 3*) who will have a sibling attending the school at the time of admission (*see Note 4*)
10. Children who are baptised or dedicated members of other churches which belong to 'Churches Together in England' (*see Note 3*)
11. Other children and those for whom no Supplementary Form has been received who will have a sibling attending the school at the time of admission (*see Note 4*)
12. Other children and those for whom no Supplementary Form has been received

Tie Breakers

This distance 'tie breaker' will be used in any of the categories, if two or more applicants are equal in all other respects. For the purpose of allocating school places, distance will be measured in a straight line, using Stockport Council's computerised measuring system as follows:

- Property point – Eastings and northings of the centre of the property as defined within the Council's Local Land and Property Gazetteer
- School point - Eastings and northings of the centre of the school as defined within the Council's

Local Land and Property Gazetteer

Applicants will be ordered starting with those living closer to the school

In a very few cases, it may not be possible to decide between the applications of those pupils who are the final qualifiers for a place (e.g. children who live at the same address or have the same distance measurement). In this exceptional situation, if there is no other way of separating the applications then the governors will admit the additional child above the published admission number. If however, admission would result in the legal limit of 30 children being exceeded, then the place will be allocated the drawing of lots supervised by someone independent of the school.

Note 1 – Definition of 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 the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

A “previously looked after child” is a child who:

(a) ceased to be looked after because they were adopted or
(b) became subject to a residence or child arrangements order (under the terms of the Children Act 1989 Section 8 - an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live), or
(c) became subject to a special guardianship order (see Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 - an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian (or special guardians)).

Note 2 - Definition of Catholic

- A child baptised in the Catholic Church (Roman or Eastern rites) whose members are in full ecclesial and canonical communion with the Bishop of Rome, (Pope Francis). (see footnote* below). Further advice available from Diocesan Education Service.
- A child baptised in another Christian denomination who has been received into full ecclesial and canonical communion with the Catholic Church
- A child who, with his or her family, is participating in a recognised course of preparation leading to baptism or reception into the Catholic church (parishes are requested to keep appropriate records).

*Full ecclesial and canonical communion with the Catholic Church requires the recognition that the Bishop of Rome has full, supreme, and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered (Catechism of the Catholic Church, §882). For Christians baptised outside of the Catholic Church, the restoration of full ecclesial and canonical communion requires reconciliation and a formal act of reception into full communion. Full communion with the Catholic Church is not established by the reception of Holy Communion alone.

Note 3 – Churches Together in England

See www.cte.org.uk for details of ‘member churches of Churches Together in England’

Note 4 - Definition of brothers and sisters

The governors of the school use the same definition as used by the Local Authority within which the school is located.

Place of Residence

The governors of the school use the same definition as used by the Local Authority within which the school is located.

Parents / Carers

The governors of the school use the same definition as used by the Local Authority within which the school is located.