



The Federation of Sacred Heart & St Mary's RC Primary School, Battersea

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Approved By	Governors
Reviewed On	March 2024
Review Due	March 2025
Review Cycle	Annually

Sacred Heart and St Mary's RC Primary Schools Battersea are voluntary aided schools in the Archdiocese of Southwark located in the Parish of Sacred Heart, Battersea West and the Parish of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St. Joseph, Battersea Park respectfully.

They are in the trusteeship of the Diocese. The schools are conducted by its Governing Board 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 is the admissions authority and is responsible for ranking applications received via Wandsworth Council for places in the reception class in respect of children who will be five years old in the forthcoming academic year (1 September – 31 August). The Governing Body returns the applications ranked according to its published admissions criteria so the Council can make offers to parents following the coordination process across the borough.

The Governing Body will rank all applications according to the criteria set out below; first according to the main categories (1-9) and, within each main category, by subsidiary categories (i-iii) as they apply on the closing date for application.

Having consulted with the Local Authority and other admission authorities, the Governors intend to admit into the reception class, in September 2025, up to:

Sacred Heart RC Primary School Battersea:	60 pupils without reference to ability or aptitude.
St Mary's RC Primary School:	30 pupils without reference to ability or aptitude.

The Governors will offer places using the following criteria in the order stated:

1. Baptised Catholic Looked After Children* and previously looked after children who ceased to be so because they were adopted, or because they became subject to a residence order, child arrangements order or a special guardianship order*
2. Baptised Catholic children** who have one or two parents who are practising Catholics+ and who have a sibling*** who will be on the roll of the school at the time of admission.
3. Baptised Catholic children who have one or two parents who are practising Catholics.
4. Children enrolled in the catechumenate. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required.
5. Any other Looked After Children or Previously Looked After Children.
6. Children who are members of Eastern Orthodox Churches. Evidence of Baptism will be required. Evidence of religious attendance provided by a priest, minister or religious leader of a designated place of worship will be required.
7. Children of families who are members of other Christian denominations that are part of Churches Together in England. Evidence of Baptism will be required. Evidence of religious attendance provided by a priest, minister or religious leader of a designated place of worship will be required.
8. Children of other faiths. Evidence of religious attendance by a priest, minister or religious leader of a designated place of worship will be required.
9. Any other children.

Note:

*A child looked after is a child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by that authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989. An adopted child is defined by section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 or section 12 of the Adoption Act 1976. A residence order is defined by section 8 of the Children Act 1989. A child arrangement order is defined by section 8 of the Children Act 1989 as amended by section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014. A special guardianship order is defined by section 14A of the Children Act 1989.

**A Baptised Catholic child is a child who has been baptised as a Catholic or has been received into Full Communion with the Catholic Church or is baptised into a Church that is in union with the Bishop of Rome.

***A sibling is defined as a full brother or sister, a step/half brother or sister living at the same address, a child who is living at the same address as part of the family by reason of a court order, or a child who has been placed with foster carers as a result of being looked after by a Local Authority.

**** The straight-line measurement used to prioritise applicants for admission to schools in Wandsworth commences in all cases at the location of the property determined by the National Land Planning Gazetteer and terminates at the central point of the school site as determined by Wandsworth Council's Geographical Information System. Measurements by alternative systems and/or to other points will not be taken into account in any circumstances. Where applicants have identical distance measurements, priority amongst them will be determined at random.

+Catholic practice is as defined by the Catholic Church in Doctrine and Canon Law, in essence: baptism and attendance at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. The Governing Body requires those parents that wish to be considered under categories 2 and 3 to supply information on the family's religious practice over the last three years via a Certificate of Catholic Practice Form. The Governing Body will then seek verification of that information from the appropriate parish priest(s). Applications will be ranked in the order shown on the Certificate of Catholic Practice Form, i.e., families who attend Mass regularly will get priority over families who attend occasionally, who will get priority over families who attend irregularly. The tie break criteria will be applied firstly to families who attend regularly, then families who attend occasionally and then families who attend irregularly.

Tie-breaks

If there is over subscription in any of the above categories, the Governing Body will allocate places in accordance with the following sub-categories in the order of priority set out below:

- I. Children who have a sibling attending the school at the time of admission. (if it is necessary to decide between siblings with equal priority, places will be allocated in each instance by drawing lots before an independent person).
- II. Children with a professionally supported acute medical need or exceptional social need for a place at the school, as decided by the governing Body Applications made on acute medical grounds must be supported by a current letter from a specialist health professional. Applications made on exceptional social grounds must be supported by a current letter from a social worker or other care professional working with the family. The letters must give the reason why the child's condition or circumstances make it necessary for the child to attend this school, and the difficulties that would be caused if they had to attend an alternative school. If this information is not provided by the application closing date the application will not be considered under this criteria.
- III. Children in order of straight-line distance from home to school, as measured by Wandsworth Council's Geographical Information System. (The straight-line measurement used to prioritise applicants for admission to schools in Wandsworth commences in all cases at the location of the property determined by the National Land Planning Gazetteer and terminates at the central point of the school site as determined by Wandsworth Council's Geographical Information System. Measurements by alternative systems and/or to other points will not be taken into account in any circumstances. Where applicants have identical distance measurements, priority amongst them will be determined at random.) Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan the admissions of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or with an EHC Plan are dealt with by a completely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of statements and 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 a statement or EHC plan naming the school will be admitted without reference to the above criteria.

Nursery Pupils

Pupils currently attending the Sacred Heart or St Mary's Nursery do not have the automatic right of a place in the school's Reception class. Parents of children in the Nursery must follow the application procedure and places will be awarded by the local authority under Pan London arrangements.

Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan

The admissions of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or with an EHC Plan are dealt with by a completely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of statements and 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 a statement or EHC plan naming the school will be admitted without reference to the above criteria.

Date of Admission/Deferred Entry

Children will normally be admitted to the reception year in the September following their fourth birthday. In line with the Admissions Code, parents can defer their child's entry to the reception year until later in the school year, where they have been offered a place at a school to start before they are of compulsory school age. Where entry is deferred, the school will hold the place for that child and not offer it to another child. However, entry cannot be deferred beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the beginning of the final term of the Reception Year. Parents can also request that their child attends part-time until he/she reaches compulsory school age. Children will not normally be admitted to Reception prior to the September following their fourth birthday.

Delayed Admission of Summer Born Children to Reception to the following September [1]

Children will normally be admitted to the reception year in the September following their fourth birthday and the vast majority of pupils are educated within their normal chronological age group. However, if there are exceptional reasons, parents can request that the child is admitted outside his/her age group. Such requests would normally apply to children that are summer born [2] and there are significant reasons that would benefit the child's academic, social and emotional development by starting Reception a year later. Parents considering delaying entry to Reception to the following September discuss this with their preferred schools before making a formal request. The school may wish to discuss how your child's could be met within their actual age group and the impact of being educated with children of a different age group.

If, following this discussion, parents wish to proceed with the request they should apply for a school place in your child's actual age group by the closing date of 15 January 2025 and include a written request with the application. The Council will then write to you to confirm the request has been received and that your current application has been cancelled.

It will be necessary to reapply for a Reception place in the following year. There can be no guarantee that there will be a place available at the school as this will depend upon the number of applications and pattern of admissions in that year. If the preferred school(s) are oversubscribed, the application will be considered in accordance with the schools' admission criteria. It is not possible to reserve a place for the following year.

Admission of children outside their normal age group to other year groups¹

Any request for admission outside of the child's chronological year of entry will be considered in accordance with paragraphs 2.17-2.17B of the Admissions Code.

The governing body, as the admission authority for the school, will consider requests on 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; 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. The headteacher's views will also be taken into account. Each case should be supported by a letter from a professional (e.g. GP, Hospital Consultant, and Social Worker) that provides the reasons for admission outside of the chronological year group. If the request is approved, the application will then be considered in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria in the event of oversubscription.

Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at the school but this right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

Children will not normally be admitted to Reception prior to the September following their fourth birthday.

[1] This is interim guidance on the consideration of requests to be admitted outside a child's normal year group following the government's announcement in September 2015 to make changes to the Admissions Code. This may be superseded by the publication of a new Admissions Code.

[2] For admission purposes, summer born children are defined as born between 1 April and 31 August.

Late Applications

Applications received by Wandsworth Council after the relevant deadline are ranked by the school after the first round of offers has been made. An application may be deemed "late" by the Council if it is not complete – including verification of address – by the deadline. After the first round of offers has been made, all outstanding applications are ranked on the register of continuing interest according to the admissions criteria.

Appeals

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Parents should contact the Wandsworth Appeals Service (educationappeals@wandsworth.gov.uk or 020 8871 7554). Information on the deadline for appeals will be available on the council's website at: www.wandsworth.gov.uk/admissionsappeals.

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; or c) the panel decides that the decision to refuse admission was not one which is reasonable.

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 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.