



POLICY STATEMENT

St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School is a Voluntary Aided School in the Diocese 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. However, the Governors also welcome applications from parents of children of other denominations and faiths who support the religious ethos of the school, and subject to the availability of places, from other families. The Governors will require proof of baptism and evidence of practice from the relevant Parish Priest or equivalent.

Responsibility for admissions to the school rests with the Governors. Following consultation with the Local Authority and the Diocese and other admission authorities, the Governors intend to admit the standard number of thirty pupils into the Reception Class in September 2015 and to do so without reference to ability or aptitude.

PRINCIPLES

Where the number of applications exceeds thirty the Governors will offer places using the following criteria in the order stated:

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 who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.
2. Baptised Catholic children, who have a sibling in the school at the time of admission, where one or both parents/guardians are practising members of the Catholic faith.
3. Baptised Catholic children where one or both parents/guardians are practising members of the Catholic faith.
4. Other Baptised Catholic children with a sibling in the school at the time of admission.
5. Other Baptised Catholic children.
6. Other looked after children and other previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.
7. Children who are members of other Christian denominations with a sibling in the school at the time of admission. Evidence of membership of the Church should be provided.
8. Children who are members of other Christian denominations. Evidence of membership of the Church should be provided.
9. Any other child with a sibling in the school at the time of admission.
10. Any other applicant.



In the case of over-subscription in each of the categories 1 -10 above, places will be awarded in the following order of priority:

1. Children with special medical needs or social grounds for attending the school. A letter from a doctor or other appropriately qualified professional, stating the reason why the school is necessary for the child, must accompany the application.
2. Children living closest to the school by road and publicly maintained footpath, as measured by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Geographical Information System.

Notes

By “practising members of the Catholic faith” we mean at least one parent/carer and the children attend mass on Sundays and Holy days of Obligation as a central part of their lives.

Missing mass more than once a month would not be deemed as regular practice.

Evidence of the level of the family's Mass attendance on Sundays over a period of 3 years must be provided by the parents/carers and be endorsed by a priest at the church(es) where the family normally worship.

“Looked after child” has the same meaning as in section 22 of the Children’s Act 1989 and means any child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by them (e.g. children with foster parents).

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order) immediately following having been looked after.

“Catholic” means a member of a church in full communion with the See of Rome. Catholics include members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome.

“Sibling” by which is meant full, half, step, fostered and adopted siblings living in the same household.



Admissions Procedure

To apply for a place at this school you must complete and return the following forms:

1 The Common Application Form, available from the school or your Local Authority, must be returned, or completed on-line, to the local authority where the child lives. The form must be returned by 15th January 2015.

2 The Supplementary Information and Priest's Declaration Form, available from the school, should be completed and returned to the school by 15th January 2015.

Completion of a Supplementary form is not mandatory; however, if one is not received the Governors will not be able to apply their admission criteria and the application will be considered under the 'any other applicants' category.

You are advised to make two copies of the forms. You should retain one copy and ensure you return the Supplementary form to the school or your priest as indicated and the Common Application form to Richmond Education Authority.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application by letter, which will be sent out by your Local Authority on 16th April 2015 on behalf of the school.

If you are unsuccessful (unless your child gained a place at a school you ranked higher on your Common Application Form), you may ask the school for the reasons, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above, and you have the right of appeal to an independent panel.

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 with or had been correctly and impartially applied; or
- c) 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.



Appendix A

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 criteria listed above. Placing a child's name on a waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against a decision not to offer a place. The waiting list will be updated annually or as places become available.

Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs

The admission of pupils with Special Educational needs is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of statements by the pupil's home local authority. Details of this separate procedure is set out in the Special Educational Needs code of practice.

Late Applications

Any late applications will be considered by the Governor Admissions Committee, in the event of there being any available places using the criteria above. If all places have been filled 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 a decision not to offer a place.

The Governors review the Admissions Policy annually.