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# ST FRANCIS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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## Admissions Arrangement Consultation for Admission Year 2025

The above mentioned school is a school in Maidstone and is part of the Archdiocese of Southwark.

We are required under the Archdiocese of Southwark Guidance on School Admissions 2023 to review our admissions policies annually and to consult on our arrangements from time to time. The code requires consultation in the following circumstances.

1. *When changes are proposed to admission arrangements, all admission authorities must consult on their admission arrangements (including any supplementary information form) that will apply for admission applications the following school year.*
2. *Where the admission arrangements have not changed from the previous year there is no requirement to consult, subject to the requirement that admission authorities must consult on their admission arrangements at least once every 7 years, even if there have been no changes during that period.*

The school is changing the admissions arrangements as changes have been made to the guidance on school admissions (*appendix 5: Archdiocese of Southwark: Guidance on School Admissions- revised May 2023*). The key changes are around how Catholic practice is evidenced. The diocese have moved away from a Supplementary Information Form and moved to a diocesan Certificate of Catholic Practice. The purpose of this is to achieve greater consistency across the diocese. Under the new arrangements, schools that are not or have no realistic possibility of being oversubscribed may drop this particular criterion and evidence Catholic applicants by way of baptism certificate. This is intended to reflect the current situation in the diocese, with particular regard to falling pupil numbers.

Please find the full policy and admissions arrangements attached. If you wish to comment on the policy please email [headteacher@stfranciscatholicprimary.com](mailto:headteacher@stfranciscatholicprimary.com)

This consultation will open on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 and any comments relating to the policy will need to be received by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024 for entry to school in September 2025. The Local Governing Body will meet soon after the closure of the admissions consultation to consider any comments. If no comments are received the policy will be considered at the next available meeting of the Local governing Body and recommended for determination by the Trust Board at their meeting in February 2024.

***Mission statement: A Community Growing in Love for Learning and Life – Rooted in God's Love***



## **St Francis Catholic Primary School**

### **Policy for Admissions 2024-25**

#### **We are St Francis Catholic Primary School – A community growing in love for learning and life.**

St Francis 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 the governing body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its Trust Deed and Instrument of Government, seeks to witness to Jesus Christ.

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. As a Catholic school, Catholic doctrine and practice permeates every aspect of the school's activity. It is essential that the Catholic character of the school's education is fully supported by all families in the school.

The school exists primarily to serve the Catholic community. However, the Governing Body welcomes applications, subject to the availability of places, from those of other denominations and faiths who support the ethos of the school.

The Governing Body has responsibility for admissions and, having consulted with the local authority and other admissions authorities, intends to admit 60 pupils to the Reception class in the school year which begins in September 2024.

#### **Oversubscription Criteria**

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following priority:

1. Baptised Catholic 'looked after' children.
2. Baptised Catholic children and those enrolled in the catechumenate.
3. Other 'looked after' children.
4. 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.
5. Children of families who are committed members of other Christian denominations. Evidence of Baptism (or dedication) and of religious commitment provided by a priest or minister where the family regularly worship, will be required.
6. Children of other faiths. Evidence of religious commitment provided by a priest, minister or religious leader where the family regularly worship, will be required.
7. Any other children.

Where the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the other categories listed

above would lead to oversubscription, the following provisions will apply.

1. The attendance of a sibling at the school at the time of admission will increase the priority of an application within each category.
2. For categories 2, 3, 4 above, the strength of evidence of commitment to the faith as demonstrated by the level of the family's Mass attendance on Sundays will increase the priority of an application within each category. This evidence must be provided by the parents or guardians and can be endorsed by a priest at the church(es) where the family normally worship.
3. For categories 5 and 6 above, the strength of evidence of commitment to the faith as demonstrated by the level of the family's attendance at services will increase the priority of an application within each category. This evidence must be provided by the parents or guardians and can be endorsed by a priest or minister from the place the family normally worships.
4. The governing body may increase the priority of an application within a category where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which makes the school particularly suitable for the child in question.
5. The distance from the child's home to school gate.

Children with a **statement of special educational need or Education (SSEN), Health and Care Plan (EHCP)** which names the school will be admitted. As a result of this, the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly.

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

*Oversubscription Priority (1)*

*'Children in Local Authority Care' – a child under the age of 18 years for whom the local authority provides accommodation by agreement with their parents/carers (Section 22 of the Children Act 1989) or who is the subject of a care order under Part IV of the Act. This applies equally to children who immediately after being looked after by the local authority became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. (As defined by Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 or Section 8 or 14A of the Children Act 1989) For the purposes of this policy, it includes a 'Child in Local Authority Care' 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 'Child in Local Authority Care' (e.g. a "Child in Local Authority Care' in the process of adoption by a Catholic family). Oversubscription Priority (2) 'Catholic' includes members of the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome.*

*Provision (ii)*

*A sibling is defined 'a brother or sister attending the school when the child starts. In this context brother or sister means children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers and sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters.*

*Provision (iii)*

*Medical, health, social and special access reasons will be applied in accordance with the school's legal obligations, in particular those under the Equality Act 2010. Priority will be given to those children whose mental or physical impairment means they have demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Equally this priority will apply to children whose parent's/carers', physical or mental health or social needs means that they have demonstrable*

*and significant need to attend a particular school. Such claims must be supported by written evidence from a suitably qualified medical or other practitioner who can demonstrate a special connection between these needs and a particular school.*

#### *Provision (IV)*

***Nearness of children's homes to school*** - we use the distance between the child's permanent home address and the school, measured in a straight line using the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) address point data. Distances are measured from a point defined as within the child's home to a point defined as within the school as specified by NLPG. The same address point on the school site is used for everybody. The school uses measurements provided by the local authority and further information on how distances are calculated is available in the Admissions Booklet, provided by the local authority. 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. A pupil's home address is considered to be a residential property that is the **child's only or main residence** and not an address at which your child might sometimes stay or sleep due to your own domestic or special arrangements. The address must be the pupil's home address on the day you completed your application form. If you live separately from your partner but share responsibility for your child, and the child lives at two different addresses during the week, we will regard the home address as the place where the child's lives for the majority of his or her time.

#### **Admissions procedure**

To apply for a place at this school, you must complete and return two separate forms.

**1. The Reception Common Application Form or an In Year Admission form** available from the Local Authority should be returned to the Local Authority.

**2. The Certificate of Catholic Practise available from the school must be completed and returned to St Francis Catholic Primary School, Queens Road, Maidstone**

You will be advised of the outcome of your application by a common offer date specified by the local authority. This will initially be by letter from the local authority 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 appeal panel.

**Both the Certificate of Catholic Practise and the Common Application Form MUST be completed if you wish your son/daughter to be considered for a place.** You are advised to make copies of the forms for your own records. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that they have a certificate of baptism or evidence of reception into the Church from the appropriate parish.

#### **Appeals**

Parents/carers 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/carers 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 a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

### **Admission of children below compulsory school age**

The governors will provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year; parents may also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

**Admission of children to be taught outside their expected year group** Requests for admission outside of the normal age group should be made to the Headteacher as early as possible in the admissions round associated with that child's date of birth. This will allow the school and admissions authority sufficient time to make a decision before the closing date. Parents are not expected to provide evidence to support their request to defer their application, however, where provided it must be specific to the child in question. This might include medical or Educational Psychologist reports. There is no legal requirement for this medical or educational evidence to be secured from an appropriate professional, however, failure to provide this may impede a school's ability to agree to deferral. Parents are required to complete an application for the normal point of entry at the same time, in case their request is declined.

This application can be cancelled if the school agrees to accept a deferred application for entry into Year R the following year. Deferred applications must be made via paper CAF to the LA, with written confirmation from each named school attached. Deferred applications will be processed in the same way as all applications for the cohort in the following admissions round, and offers will be made in accordance with each school's oversubscription criteria.

### **Waiting Lists**

Parents/carers 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. This does not prevent parents/carers from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

### **Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs**

*The admission of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Need or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are dealt with by a completely separate procedure. This procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of statements by the pupil's home local authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.*

*Before the application of oversubscription criteria, children with a Statement of Special Educational Need, who have named the school, will be admitted. As a result of this the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly.*

### **Late Applications**

Any late applications will be considered by the Governors' Admissions Committee, in the event of there being any available places, using the above criteria. If all places have been

filled, parents/carers will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on the waiting list. This does not prevent parents/carers from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

**In-year (casual) admissions**

Applications for a place at the school in-year must be made using the In-Year Casual Admission Form (IYCAF) of the local authority (LA) where the child resides. Parents/carers wishing to apply for more than one school must complete a separate form for each school. IYCAFs for St Francis Catholic Primary School should be returned to the school and will be processed within 5 school days of receipt. The school's Certificate of Catholic Practise form should also be completed to enable the governors to rank the application in the event of there being more than one application for a place. The governors will use the same criteria to rank the application as that listed above. The offer of a place will be made by the school. In the event of the governors deciding that a place cannot be offered parents/carers will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on the waiting list. This does not prevent parents/carers from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

**Review Date: January 2024**



## ARCHDIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK

### CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE

#### Details of child (for identification only)

Full name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

I am [the child's parish priest] [the priest in charge of the Church where the child practices] [delete as applicable]

I hereby certify that this child is known to me and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the child is a practising Catholic.

Priest's name \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_

Parish (or ethnic chaplaincy) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Priest's signature \_\_\_\_\_

*Parish stamp or seal*

Date \_\_\_\_\_