

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
Windhill, Bishop's Stortford
Hertfordshire CM23 2NQ



Sixth Form Policy for EXTERNAL Admissions - September 2017-18

St Mary's is a Catholic School founded by the Catholic Church to meet the educational needs of Catholic children aged 11-18 who live within the Lea Valley Deanery. It is a comprehensive school with five forms of entry.

The school makes **every possible effort** to place all external applicants who fulfil the academic admissions criteria; we have a proud tradition over many years of being able to accommodate every external applicant who fulfils the entry criteria. The school currently offers at least 20 external places per year for pupils applying for places in Year 12. This number is determined by reference to the actual teaching accommodation available. In the case of oversubscription, the criteria below will be applied in the order listed below.

All applicants will be required to complete the school's application form. Without its completion, an applicant must be considered under the lowest criterion. The governors will first consider applicants who have completed and returned this form by the specified deadline.

Entry requirements for individual courses vary and are outlined in the Sixth Form Prospectus; the school does not have a minimum academic criteria for entry into the sixth form, but reserves the right to offer individual students the combination of courses that it judges appropriate, given their predicted grades, and therefore requires particular grades for specific courses, which are published in the sixth form prospectus. Official school statements of results which fulfil the entry requirements must be provided to St. Mary's by 5th September 2018 in order to commence study at St. Mary's Sixth Form.

All procedures must be completed within the published time limits. The governing body cannot be held responsible for any delays in submitting applications or responding to the offer of a place. The governors may withdraw the offer of a place if:

- the place is not accepted within the prescribed time scale
- information provided on the application form is incorrect or deliberately misleading.

Oversubscription criteria if required, for external applicants:

- 1 Catholic Looked After Children and Catholic children who have been adopted (or made subject to child arrangements orders, or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after.
- 2 Catholic applicants who have provided a Certificate of Baptism and who have a sibling who attends the school.
- 3 Baptised Catholic children of staff who have been in employment at the school for 2 years at the time of application, or 1 year if there is a demonstrable and acknowledged skill shortage. The child must live at the same address as the member of staff.
- 4 Catholic applicants with no sibling connection, who have provided a Certificate of Baptism and a Certificate of Catholic Practice, in the following proportions:
 - 42½% of the remaining places to those living in the Catholic parishes that are based in Bishop's Stortford, Sawbridgeworth and Much Hadham
 - 42½% of the remaining places to those living in other parts of the Lea Valley Deanery
 - 15% of the remaining places to those living in the Catholic parishes that are based in Dunmow, Bardfield and Thaxted, Saffron Walden and Stansted.

These areas are defined in the maps which accompany these criteria. They can be found at <http://www.stmarys.net/admissions/>

If any of the three designated areas is under-subscribed, the places will be redistributed among the designated areas in the relative proportions above, before any offers are made to applicants in Criterion 5.

- 5 Catholic applicants with no sibling connection, who have provided a Certificate of Baptism, who live in the three areas designated in Criterion 4. *The allocation of places between the three areas will be such that the cumulative number of places in Criterion 4 and Criterion 5 taken together are in the "42½-42½-15" proportions described in Criterion 4. If any of the three designated areas is under-subscribed, the places will be redistributed among the designated areas in the relative proportions above.*
- 6 Any other Baptised Catholic applicant
- 7 Non-Catholic Looked After Children and non-Catholic children who have been adopted (or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders, immediately after having been looked after.
- 8 Any applicant who is a catechumen or member of an Eastern Christian Church.
- 9 Any non-Catholic children of staff who have been in employment at the school for 2 years at the time of application, or 1 year if there is a demonstrable and acknowledged skill shortage. The child must live at the same address as the member of staff.

- 10 Any non-Catholic applicant with a sibling who attends the school.
- 11 Any applicant who is a practising Christian of another denomination. Evidence of regular church or chapel attendance will be required from the appropriate priest or minister of religion. This evidence should state that the priest or minister knows the applicant as a member of the faith community who regularly worships. A baptismal certificate is not required.
- 12 Any other applicant.

NOTES:

- (a) **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. For the purposes of this Policy it also includes a “looked after” child who is in the process of adoption by a Catholic family. Family is defined as those who live at the residential address of the parent or legal guardians who are submitting an application for a place on behalf of a child. **‘Catechumen’** means a child who is a member of the catechuminate of a Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a Certificate of Reception into the Order of Catechumens. **‘Eastern Christian Church’** includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism or Reception from the authorities of that Church. **‘Christian’** for the purposes of this policy, means a member of one of the Churches affiliated to ‘Churches Together in Britain and Ireland’.
- (b) Certificate of Catholic Practice means: A certificate given by the family’s parish priest (or the priest in charge of the church where the family practises) in the form laid down by The Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales in 2015. The priest will meet with the parent(s) to discuss their practise and it will be up to the parents to convince the priest that the child is eligible for a Certificate of Catholic Practice. Those who do not fulfil the Church’s precept of weekly Mass on Sundays (or Saturday evening) and Holy Days of Obligation will not obtain a signed form.
- (c) **Certificate of Baptism** means a certificate of Baptism in a Catholic church (or if the applicant was baptised in another Christian church and has been received into full communion with the Catholic Church, the certificate of Reception or a letter from a Catholic priest giving evidence of reception into full communion).
- (d) To qualify as a Sibling, the child needs to be a brother or sister which includes step brothers and step sisters, half brothers and sisters, or adopted brothers and sisters, who live at the same home as the child at the time of application. “At the time of application” means that the sibling must actually be on the roll of St Mary’s Catholic School at the school, or have been offered a place but not yet started at the school. Given the high staying on rate into the sixth form, and the desire of the Catholic community for 11-18 Catholic education provision, Year 11 students count as siblings as there is a reasonable expectation that they will wish to attend the school’s sixth form, and that they will be eligible to do so. Residential address is defined as where the child lives for more than 50% of the school week.
- (e) The admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. This procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of the plans by the pupil’s home Local Education Authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the *Special Educational*

Needs Code of Practice. 'Under the Education Act 1996 the governors are obliged by law to admit any child with an Educational and Health Care Plan where this school is named in the Plan.' See separate paragraph below for more details.

- (f) This Admissions Policy applies only to admissions in the academic year beginning in September 2017 and ending in July 2018. Admissions policies are subject to annual review by the governing body. Consequently no assurance is given or implied that this policy will continue wholly or in part beyond July 2018.
- (g) Last year the school was able to offer places to all external applicants.
- (h) In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful applicants will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This list will be maintained by the Governing Body's Admissions Committee; the list will follow the order of the oversubscription criteria set out above and *not* the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Parents will be contacted periodically to check that they wish for their applications to remain on the List. The Governing Body's Admission Committee meets twice a term to review the list and any new applications, and to admit pupils where a place becomes available.
- (i) Distance measuring is carried out using the home-school measurement system used by Hertfordshire County Council as outlined in the County's admission arrangements and application literature for the year of application: Home to school distances for admission allocation purposes will be measured along a straight line between a child's address and the relevant school or academy. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences. This is an objective method of measuring home to school distances consistently when applying admission rules. It does not take into account the actual or expected route a child will travel to school. a different method of measurement, using roads and pathways, is used for considering home to school transport entitlement. Where there is a need for a tiebreak where two different addresses measure the same distance from a school, in the case of a block of flats for example, the lower door number will be deemed nearest as logically this will be on the ground floor and therefore closer. If there are two identical distance measurements for different addresses of separate applicants not within the same block (which is dealt with above), the tiebreak will be random. Further details can be found on www.hertsdirect.org/admissions
- (j) An incomplete application is one where sections of the admission form have not been completed and/or the requested supporting documentation has not been provided.
- (k) A late application is one where the Common Application Form (CAF) fails to be submitted to the applicant's Local Authority by 31/10/16. The School Information Form (SIF) should be submitted by the same date(s). If the SIF is not submitted to the school until after the allocation of places has begun, then the application will fall into criterion 12. Applications received after 31/10/16 will be dealt with after all initial offers have been made.
- (l) Fair Access Protocols: The school is committed to taking its fair share of children who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as set out in locally agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal admissions round the governing body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol that has been agreed by both the Diocese and the Local Authority for the current school year. The governing body has this power even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.
- (m) In-Year Admissions: Applications for In-Year admissions are made directly to the school. If a place is available and there is no waiting list, the child will be admitted. If more applications are received than there are places available then applications will be ranked by the governing body in accordance with the oversubscription criteria above. If a place cannot be offered at this time then you may ask us for the reasons and you will be informed of your right of appeal. You will be offered the opportunity of being placed on the waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained by the governing body in the order of the oversubscription criteria and not in the order in which the applications are received. Names are removed from the list at the end of each academic year. When a place becomes available the governing body will re-rank the list and make an offer (see above).

- (n) 'Looked after child' has the same meaning as in Section 22 of the Children 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 at the time of making an application to the school).
- (o) 'Adopted': An adopted child is any child who has been formally adopted and whose parent/guardian can give proof of adoption.
- (p) 'Child Arrangements Order'. A Child Arrangements order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.8 settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live. Children 'looked after' immediately before the order is made qualify in this category
- (q) 'Special Guardianship Order': A special guardianship order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.14A appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s). Children who were 'looked after' immediately before the special guardianship order was made qualify for this category.
- (r) The address provided must be the child's current permanent address at the time of application. 'At the time of application' means the closing date for applications. The application can only be processed using one address. A child is deemed to be resident at a particular address when he/she resides there for more than 50% of the school week.
- (s) Hertfordshire parents wishing to appeal who applied on line should log on to their online application and click on the link "register an appeal". If you did not apply using Hertfordshire's on line application system please contact the Customer Service centre on 0300 123 4043 to request an appeal pack.
- (t) The Governing Body will determine whether there is a national demonstrable skills shortage for posts by applying the criteria that, for a post the same as or similar to that for the member of staff in question, there was just one appointable candidate at the final interview stage, or the post had been previously and unsuccessfully advertised for.

PUPILS WITH AN EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLAN (EHC)

The admission of pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC) is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. If your child has an EHC plan you must contact your local authority SEN officer. Children with this school named in their EHC Plan will be admitted to the school, although the admission is contingent on appropriate courses being available which can meet the needs of the child.

Change of details

If any of the details on your form change between the date of application and the receipt of the letter of offer or refusal, you must inform the School immediately. If misleading information is given or allowed to remain on the form, governors reserve the right to withdraw the place, even if the child has already started at the School.

Children educated outside their chronological age group

Parents who wish their child to be educated outside his/her chronological age group should write a letter, addressed to the Chair of Governors, at the time of application, giving reasons for their request.'

Applicant(s)

This refers to the parents and or legal guardians submitting an application for a place on behalf of a child. Or a young person of 16 years of over submitting their own application.

The families of children who are seeking admission to St Mary's, must be fully aware of the aims of the school in seeking to implement the Catholic Church's mission in Catholic Education and are expected to be fully supportive of the Christian ethos of the school.