



### **ADMISSIONS POLICY – 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. It is a comprehensive school with five forms of entry. It is an all ability school and children will be admitted without reference to their aptitude or ability. As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. At 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. All applicants are therefore expected to give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school.

The school's Published Admissions Number (PAN) is 155. This number is determined by reference to the actual teaching accommodation available. The governing body is not able to offer any further places. Where the number of applications exceed the number of places available, the oversubscription criteria listed after these notes will be used.

#### **Application Procedure:**

All applicants **must** complete a **Common Application Form (CAF)** which is available from and returnable to the local authority in which the family is resident. In addition, applicants should complete **St Mary's Supplementary Information Form (SIF)** which is supplied in the application pack. The CAF and the SIF are also obtainable from your local authority and are available on line. The CAF must be completed and submitted to the local authority by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2016. The Supplementary Information Form (SIF) is available from the school or the local authority and should be completed and returned to the school by the closing date. If you do not complete both the CAF and the SIF and return them by the closing date, the governing body may be unable to consider your application fully and it is very unlikely that your child will get a place at the school. Late applications will be considered after the initial allocation process has been completed.

Applications for criterion 1 must be accompanied by written proof of the child's status from the appropriate authority. Those wishing to be considered under criterion 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6, should also provide the School with a copy of the child's baptismal certificate. If the certificate is not available, applicants should indicate in writing the reasons for this being the case. Those applying under criterion 4 should obtain a Certificate of Catholic Practice form from the school or parish and hand it to their parish priest when completed. The Certificate of Catholic Practice is also available on the Diocesan website at [www.rcdow.org.uk/schools/parents/admissions](http://www.rcdow.org.uk/schools/parents/admissions) at the top right hand corner of the page.

Your local authority will write to you on behalf of the governing body with the outcome of your application on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017 and the information will also be available on line. You should indicate your acceptance of the place as soon as possible.

**Tie Break:** In cases where there are more applicants in any criterion than there are places available, the places will be offered to those living nearest the school, as measured 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 (see Note i), subject to the proportional distribution in Criterion 4 and Criterion 5 among the three designated areas. If one sibling from a multiple birth gains a place, the other(s) will be admitted automatically, even if this means the published admission number will be exceeded. Similarly if two children were eligible for the last place and they lived the same distance from the school, both would be admitted. In the case of a number of addresses in a block with the same geographical reference, priority will be given to those nearest to the main entrance of the block.

**Where the Supplementary Information Form is not completed by the applicant, or where the required documentation is not provided, the application will be dealt with under the lowest criterion.**

All procedures must be completed within the published time limits. Late applications will be processed using the procedures published by Hertfordshire County Council in its "Moving On" booklet. 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 in any of the following circumstances:

- the place is not accepted within the prescribed time scale;
- in the case of fraud or the deliberate supply of misleading information;
- supporting documentation is not supplied within the prescribed time scale.

**Catholic applicants should note that preference is given to Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice provided they live in one of the three areas designated in Criterion 4.** Catholic applicants who do not supply a Certificate of Catholic Practice should also note that they are required to produce a Certificate of Baptism with their application. Applicants who are practising Christians of other denominations will be required to produce evidence of regular church or chapel attendance from the appropriate priest or minister of religion.

*Kindly read the **notes** that are integral with the criteria (they are printed after them).*

*You are hereby advised that in the event that you do not gain admission, you have the right of appeal under the School Standards & Framework Act 1998 (as amended by the Education Act 2002). If you wish to exercise that right, you should advise the Admissions Officer at St Mary's School. Information concerning the Appeals Procedure will be sent out to those who are unsuccessful in obtaining a place. The school maintains a continuing interest list, ranked according to the published criteria, and places will be offered as and when vacancies occur. The continuing interest list will remain open for twelve months following the normal date of admission. If you wish your child's name to stay on the continuing interest list you must apply to the school in writing before the twelve month periods expires.*

#### **CRITERIA (ORDER OF PRIORITY IN THE EVENT OF OVERSUBSCRIPTION):**

When the number of applicants exceeds the admission number, offers of places are made using the following criteria in order of priority:

- 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 A Catholic child with a Certificate of Catholic Practice 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.'
- (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 oversubscribed. We received 671 applications for 155 places. All applicants in criteria 1, 2 & 4 were offered a place (criteria 4 above was previously criteria 3), in the proportions set out in our policy based on the distance criteria set out in our tie breaker. Applicants in criteria below the aforementioned were unable to be offered a place.
- (h) In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful applicants will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a continuing interest 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](http://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 continuing interest 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 continuing interest list. This continuing interest 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.

### **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.