



## ST JAMES' RC PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICY 2023 - 2024

This policy is for the September 2023 intake.

Admissions to St James' RC Primary School are decided by the Governors. The number of children to be admitted to the Reception Class each year is 30. The published admission number is inclusive of students with an educational health care plan in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements.

**Applications will be considered from baptised children of committed and practising Roman Catholic parent(s). Written verification of this commitment and practice will be required by the Governors from the Parish Priest. Where incorrect information is used to unfairly gain a place then the Governors will immediately withdraw any place offered. However, in the event of places being available the Governing Body welcomes all applications, particularly from those of other denominations and faiths who support the religious ethos of the school. The Governors accept applications from all faiths or no faith but in the event of oversubscription the criteria below are applied.**

Catholics include members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome. Reference to other Christian denominations refers to denominations that are full members of Churches together in England.

**By applying the criteria below, in their given order, applications will be ranked. Each criterion is applied in turn to determine the candidates to whom places will be offered.**

1. Looked after Catholic children or looked after children in the care of Catholic families, looked after Catholic children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order and Catholic children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted. They must be able to prove sustained weekly attendance at mass.
2. Catholic children who will have a sibling on roll at the school when the younger child starts school. Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent's partner. It does not include other relatives e.g. cousins. The child must be registered as living in the same family unit at the same address and are able to prove sustained weekly attendance at mass.
3. Catholic children of permanent teachers who are able to prove sustained weekly attendance at mass. To satisfy this criterion the teacher must have been employed by St James' for 2 or more years prior to the closing date for applications.
4. Catholic children who live in the parish of St James the Great, Petts Wood and are able to prove sustained weekly attendance at mass.
5. Catholic children who live in a parish other than St James the Great, Petts Wood and are able to prove sustained weekly attendance at mass.
6. Children not falling within category (1, 2, 3 or 4) above who have been baptised into the Roman Catholic Faith. This includes siblings without sustained weekly Church attendance.

7. Looked after children, looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order and children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.
8. Children of parents committed to other Christian denominations. (Commitment of non-Catholics will be included in the Supplementary Form completed by the Minister of the denomination concerned.)
9. Other children.

**The above criteria will be applied in their given order when the number of places exceeds the number of applications.**

**Where the number of children in any of the above categories (applied in turn) exceeds the number of places available, the following tiebreakers will be applied, in the order shown, to decide which children to admit.**

Firstly:

- Frequency of Mass attendance of parents and children. Applications will be ranked in the order **shown on** the Supplementary Form with highest priority to those who attend Mass weekly, then at least once a month, etc.

Secondly:

- In exceptional circumstances there is discretion to admit children on the grounds of their or their family's acute medical or social need. The application **must** be supported by a letter from a hospital consultant, the special support service, social worker or similar professional, setting out the reasons why the school is the only one to meet the child's needs, before an admission decision is made. The admission decision will be considered in consultation with teaching and medical professionals. Medical professionals provide advice on applications made under medical conditions and teaching professionals advise on applications made for social or special reasons. Supporting evidence **must** be provided before the closing date for applications.

Thirdly:

- Proximity of the child's home to the school as measured in a straight line from the unique national grid reference (Easting and Northing) of the child's home address (including flats) to the main entrance of the school building, using the LA's computerised measuring system that identifies the unique national grid reference for the property. Those living closer to the school receive higher priority. The furthest distance reached is checked to confirm it is unique. Where the next applicant measures the same the system will go to further decimal places within a measurement to qualify who is nearer. Where applications are received from flats that have the same 'easting and northing' measurements, places will be allocated by door number; the lower the number the higher the priority. If there are two identical distance measurements for different addresses of separate applicants, the tiebreak will be done by drawing lots. 'Home' is where the child normally resides as their only or principal residence. Addresses involved in child minding (professional or relatives) will not be considered. Parents will be asked to provide documentary evidence to confirm an address and parental responsibility. Changes of parental responsibility, unless exceptional circumstances through a court order, will not be accepted during the coordinated admission process.

#### **In-year (casual) admissions.**

Applications for a place at the school in-year must be made using the common application form of the local authority (LA) where the child resides. This form must be returned to the LA. The school's supplementary 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 at the school will be made by the LA on behalf of the Governors. In the event of the Governors deciding that a place cannot be offered parents will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on the waiting list. The waiting list is held by the L.B. of Bromley Admissions Department and expires at the end of each academic year. Parents must therefore re-apply annually if they wish to remain on a waiting list. 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.

#### **Fair Access Protocol**

Children directed via the Fair Access protocol will take precedence over any child already on the school waiting list, and this includes admitting children over the published admission number.

#### **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 outside their normal age group.**

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child has experienced problems such as ill health. The school will consider applications outside of a child's normal age group on an individual basis taking into account any 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. Parents wishing to apply for a place outside of the normal age group should contact the Head teacher in writing in the first instance.

#### **Summer born children (deferring entry)**

The term 'summer born children' relates to all children born from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> August. These children reach compulsory school age on 31<sup>st</sup> August following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on 31<sup>st</sup> August). Parents of summer born children may request that their child is admitted the following year outside of their normal age range into Reception instead of Year 1, however there is no automatic right to this. Any place already achieved for the child in Reception in the usual way cannot be deferred for the duration of that school year and if deferral is agreed parents will need to re-apply for admission the following year. The school will make a decision, having taken into account the circumstances of each case, together with the opinion of the Head teacher. Where the request is agreed by the school, the application will be considered with all other applications in the usual way, applying the oversubscription criteria as necessary.

Parents of summer born, gifted and talented children, or those who have experienced problems or missed part of a year, for example due to ill health, can seek places outside their normal age group. This is not an automatic right to choose this option as decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parents' 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 views of the Head Teacher must also be taken into account. Applications should be made through London Borough of Bromley Admissions. A supplementary information form, available from St James' School, should also be completed and submitted directly to the school. When informing a parent of the decision which year group the child should be admitted to, the governors will set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

Where the governors agree to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school the local authority will process the application as part of the main admissions round, (unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible) and on the basis of the determined admission arrangements, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

### **Change of address**

It is expected that the child will still be resident at the same address when the child starts school. Evidence may be required to confirm that the child is still living at the application address on National Offer Day and when starting at the offered school. Places may be withdrawn if address details do not match the information given on the application. Changes of address after offers have been made will be investigated and applications will be reconsidered on the basis of the new home address. Applicants who retain ownership of a previous address cannot use a temporary address for applicants.

### **Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan**

Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan are dealt with under a separate process by the SEN team. The published admission number is inclusive of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan. Appeals for children with an Education, health and care Plan are dealt with by a SEN Tribunal.

### **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 held at L.B. of Bromley. The waiting list expires at the end of December of the first Reception term, and at the end of each academic year thereafter. Parents must therefore re-apply through L.B. of Bromley Admissions Department if they wish to remain on the 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.

### **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 sent to the Admissions Appeal Clerk at the school address. Parents 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:-

1. The admission of additional children would not breach the infant class size limit; or
2. 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
3. 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.

### **Admissions procedure**

In addition to the Common Application Form (CAF) required by the Local Authority, the Supplementary Information Form (available from the school and from the local authority), should be completed and sent to the school not later than the national closing date for primary schools. This should be done even if the CAF is completed online. If the Supplementary Information Form is not completed, the Governing Body of the school will only be able to consider the application after all applicants who have completed a

Supplementary Information Form. You are advised to make two copies of the forms. You should retain one copy and pass the second copy to the school or your priest, as indicated. Offers of places will be sent to parents by their home local authority on the common offer date.

**A map showing the Parish boundary is available from the school office.**