

St. Catherine's Catholic School

Admissions Policy for entry in the academic year commencing September 2013

St. Catherine's Catholic School is a Catholic Academy in the Diocese of Southwark. The governors are fully committed to maintaining the status of the school and wish to encourage applications from girls of all abilities.

Admissions to the school are made by the Governing Body.

The planned number for admissions in September 2013 is 210.

Parents must make application for admission to Year 7 by completing the Common Application Form (CAF) provided by the Local Education Authority in which the applicant lives. The closing date set nationally for the return of the forms to the Local Education authority is **31st October 2012**. Applications for places in other year-groups can be made at any time.

The Governors will require parents to complete a supplementary form and return this to the school by the **Friday 25th October 2012**. The Supplementary Form will be to establish Catholic practice and commitment. It will seek information not available on the common Application Form relating to the evidence set out in Section 1 below. It will require a reference from a parish priest or other minister of religion. If a supplementary form is not received, the Governors will not be able to apply their admission criteria and the application will be considered under the 'other girls' category.

Criteria for admission.

Governors will give priority to Catholic girls with Catholic practice. Baptised Catholic girls whose practice is not within Catholic tradition will be considered after Catholic girls with Catholic practice. The evidence which governors will take into account will be:

1. Evidence

- 1.1. A self-assessment of Catholic or Christian practice and observance, to be counter-signed by the parish priest, chaplaincy minister or minister of religion;
- 1.2. The originals of the baptismal or First Holy Communion certificates of the applicants for places.

2. Oversubscription criteria:

Where more applications are received than there are places, applicants will be admitted in the following order:

- 2.1. Baptised Catholic 'Looked-after children' or 'Looked-after children' in the care of Catholic families, according to the Local Government and Children's Act 1989.
- 2.2. Baptised Catholic children and members of Oriental Rite Churches in Union with Rome.
- 2.3. Other 'Looked-after children'.
- 2.4. Girls who are baptised members of Eastern rite churches that are not in communion with the See of Rome.
- 2.5. Girls who are Christians (either baptised or preparing for adult baptism) who are in membership of *Churches Together in England* or the *Evangelical Alliance*, provided that they have a statement of Church membership from the appointed minister or leader.
- 2.6. Girls of other faiths, provided that they have a statement of membership from a faith leader etc
- 2.7. Other girls.

Where it is necessary to choose between applicants either within the category of 2.2. or that of 2.4., priority will be given to those girls whose applications show the greatest degree of religious practice. Applications will be ranked in the order shown on the supplementary form: highest ranking to those who attend Mass regularly, then those who attend Mass occasionally, etc. Evidence scrutinised will include: the priest's endorsement form showing degree of practice; evidence of baptism or First Holy Communion.

3. *Tie-breakers*

Where applicants are of equal standing within each of 2.1. – 2.6. above, the following sub-criteria will apply:

- 3.1. Within each of groups 2.1. to 2.6 above, preference will be given to applicants who have a named sibling attending St. Catherine's Catholic School for Girls, St. Columba's Catholic Boys' School or Christ The King: St Mary's at the time of the applicant's application;
[Note: siblings equals "brothers or sisters" which means children who live as brother and sister, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers or sisters. It would not include other relatives eg cousins.]
- 3.2. The shortest distance from the girl's home to the front entrance of the school measured by the Local Authority. The distances are by the nearest walking route (by public highway and lighted footpath) not 'as the crow flies'.

4. *Notes for guidance*

- 4.1. An applicant who has received sacramental baptism according to the rites of a church which is in membership of *Churches Together in England* and is either preparing formally for or has made her First Holy Communion in a Catholic church at the time of application shall be considered a Catholic for the purposes of these criteria, as will an applicant baptised into an Eastern rite church which is in communion with the See of Rome.
- 4.2. Applications made after the closing date will be processed once the allocation procedure for on-time applications has been finalised. Priority among applications will be given to those who have recently moved into the area, in accordance with the Admissions criteria.
- 4.3. The School will keep a Waiting List which will be reviewed annually. The order in which applicants appear on the waiting-list will be determined according to the same criteria as are the admissions.
- 4.4. If an applicant and her parents have lived in a parish for fewer than two months at the time of application, they may seek support from the parish priest of their previous parish.
- 4.5. In the event that a parish priest has been in post for fewer than two months before the time of signing or who is away from the parish long-term, the governors will accept a signature from the previous parish priest, or from a parish worker (such as a deacon or parish sister) who knows the applicant. In this case, the parish priest should countersign.
- 4.6. If a Christian, non-Catholic girl applies to the school, whose father or mother is the local minister/pastor, the 'priest's endorsement' should be counter-signed by another accredited pastor/minister.

5. *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. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

6. Waiting Lists

Parents of children who have not been offered a place at the school may ask for their child's name to be placed 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.

7. 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 Appeal Clerk at the school address. Parent/Carers have the right to make oral representations to the Appeal Panel.

8. Admissions for September 2012

For entry to Year 7 in 2012, 394 supplementary forms were received and 210 places offered and accepted. x of these were to Catholic girls. For September 2012, there were x appeals, of which x were heard. x were upheld.