

# St. Catherine's Catholic School

## Admissions Policy for entry in the academic year commencing September 2021

**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 2021 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 **31<sup>st</sup> October 2020**. 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 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020**. 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 religious 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. Looked after baptised Catholic children or looked after children in the care of Catholic families and previously looked after Catholic children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.
- 2.2. Baptised Catholic children and members of Oriental Rite Churches in Union with Rome.
- 2.3. Other looked-after children and other previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.
- 2.4. Girls who are baptised members of Eastern rite churches that are not in communion with the See of Rome.
- 2.5. Girls of other faiths, provided that they have a statement of membership from the appointed minister or leader.
- 2.6. 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, 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. Within each of groups 2.1. to 2.6 above, preference will be given to applicants who are the daughters or in the care of a member of staff who has been employed at the school for at least two years (except for new joiners in shortage subjects).
- 3.3. The shortest distance from the girl's home to the front entrance of the school as measured by the Local Authority. The distances are straight line measurements. 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.

### 4. *Notes for guidance*

- 4.1. Catholics include members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches are in union with the Bishop of Rome.
- 4.2. 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.
- 4.3. 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.
- 4.4. 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. 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.
- 4.5. 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.

- 4.6. 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.
- 4.7. 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. *Statements*

Any child who has a statement of special education needs (SEN) or an Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan that names the school must be admitted without reference to the oversubscription criteria.

#### 6. *In-year (casual) Admissions*

Applications for a place at the school in-year must be made by completing the school's supplementary form 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 Admissions Committee 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.

#### 7. *Fair Access*

The school participates in the local authority's Fair Access Protocol to allocate places to vulnerable and other children in accordance with the School Admission Code 2012. Admitting pupils under the protocol may require the school to admit above the planned admission number for the relevant year group.

#### 8. *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.

#### 9. *Admissions for September 2020*

For entry to Year 7 in 2019, 356 supplementary forms were received and 210 places offered and accepted. x of these were to Catholic girls. For September 2020, there were x appeals, of which x were heard. x was upheld.