

Draft Nursery Admissions Policy and Procedures 2025 – 2026

As a Catholic school community we work together to provide our children with a high quality education through a curriculum and in an environment which has Gospel values at its heart. We have shared responsibility for our Core Values which are Love, Trust, Teamwork and Ambition. We always try to follow the words of St. Teresa “Love Proves Itself by Deeds”

St Teresa's Catholic Primary School is a voluntary aided school in the diocese of Southwark. The school is conducted by its governing body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its Trust Deed and Instrument of Government and seeks at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ. The school exists primarily to serve the Catholic community and Catholic children always have priority of admission. However, the Governing Body also welcomes applications from those of other denominations and faiths and from those who have no faith who support the religious ethos of the school.

September Nursery Admissions

Having consulted with the Local Authority and other admission authorities, the Governors intend to admit up to 78 pupils into the Nursery at any one time, from September 2025 and the closing date for applications is **28th February 2025**.

Children with dates of birth **only** between **01.09.22 and 31.08.23** will be offered places to start in **September 2025**. This will be for either 15 hours in the morning, or for 30 hours (all day) extended childcare, if parents are able to provide an eligibility code, confirming their Entitlement or self-funded. This includes children with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP), so long as the school has the appropriate provisions and is able to meet the needs of the child.

January & April Nursery Admissions

The Governors intend to admit up to **40** pupils into the Pre-Nursery between January 2026 and April 2026 where the closing date for applications is 31 October **2025**. Children with dates of birth between **01.09.23 and 31.12.24** will be offered places to start in **January 2026** and children with dates of birth between **01.01.23 and 31.03.24** offered places to start in **April 2026**. This will be for either 15 hours in the morning, or for 30 hours (all day) extended childcare, if parents are able to provide an eligibility code, confirming their entitlement. This includes children with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP), so long as the school has the appropriate provisions and is able to meet the needs of the child.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the Governors will offer places using the following criteria in the order stated below: -

1. Looked after Catholic children and all previously looked after Catholic children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. 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.

2. Baptised Catholic children, in possession of a Certificate of Practice. (See Note A)
3. Baptised Catholic children. A baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church must be provided.
4. Looked after children and all previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. 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.
5. Children enrolled in the catechumenate. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required.
6. Children who are members of Eastern Orthodox Churches. Evidence of Baptism will be required.
7. Children who are members of other faiths, Churches and denominations. Evidence of Baptism/dedication or evidence of membership required.
8. Any other children.

Oversubscription Criteria

The following order of priorities will be applied when applications within any of the above categories exceed the places available and it is necessary to decide between applications.

1. A brother or sister on the school roll at the time of admission. Evidence of the relationship may be required. The governors will, where logistically possible, admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the last child ranked within the school's published admissions number.
2. A child whose parent is a member of staff, where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two years at the time at which the application for admission is made and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
3. Living in the parish of St Teresa's, Morden.
4. Social, pastoral and medical needs which make the school particularly suitable for the child in question. Strong and relevant evidence must be provided, at the time of application, by an appropriate professional authority (e.g. qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker or priest).
5. Proximity to the school of the child's home address, the distance measured in a straight line from the school entrance by the local authority using a geographical computerised information system. Evidence of residence may be required. 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.

Notes:

a. Catholics include members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome.

b. A "brother or sister" 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).

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c. Home refers to the permanent home address at which the child lives for the majority of his/her time and with the parent who is in receipt of child benefit.

d. A looked after child has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 that is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents) at the time of making application. A previously looked after child is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order.

e. A looked after child has the same meaning as in section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989 that is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents) at the time of making an application. A previously looked after child is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order. This will include children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.

Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan

The admission of pupils with an EHC Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of EHC plans by the pupil's home local authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the SEND code of practice. Pupils with an EHC plan naming the school will be admitted without reference to the above criteria.

Appeals

Please note that there is no appeals process for Nursery places.

Nursery to Reception

Please note that if your child attends St Teresa's Nursery this does not give them priority in obtaining a Reception place in the main school, for the September following their 4th birthday. Applying for a Reception place is a completely separate process.

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Governors will make decisions on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's 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. They will also take into account the views of the school's head teacher. 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.

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 a waiting list. The waiting list, which will be maintained until at least 31st December of each school year of admissions. 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.

Late Applications

Any late applications will be considered by the Governors' Admissions Committee, in the event of there being any available places, using the above criteria. If all places have been filled, 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.

This admissions procedure, although primarily relevant to children for whom a place is sought at the normal age of entry to primary education (Year R), will also apply to succeeding years, and be subject to the availability of places.

Signed off
Review date.....

Date.....
Provenance - Education Commission