the DIOCESE of EAST ANGLIA

Admissions Policy - Primary

ST MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ADMISSION POLICY 2026/2027

St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below. The school is conducted by its governing body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and articles of association of St John the Baptist Catholic Multi Academy Trust and seeks at all times to be a witness to Our Lord Jesus Christ.

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. At a Catholic school, Catholic doctrine and practice permeate every aspect of the school's activity. We hope that all parents will give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school. This does not affect the right of an applicant who is not Catholic to apply for and be admitted to a place at the school in accordance with the admission arrangements.

The governing body is the admissions authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round[1] . The governing body has set its admission number at 30 pupils to be admitted to the reception year in the school year which begins in September 2026.

The governing body will 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 ("PAN").

[1] This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (see note 1)

The admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school must be admitted. Where this takes place before the allocation of places under these arrangements this will reduce the number of places available to other children.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority.

1. Baptised Catholic looked after and previously looked after children (see notes 2,3&10)

2. Baptised Catholic Children of staff who have been employed by the school for at least two years or are in a position where there is a demonstrable skills shortage

3. Other Baptised Catholic children (see notes 3 &10)

4. Other looked after and previously looked after children (see note 2)

5. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church (see notes 4&5)

6. Children of staff who have been employed by the school for at least two years or are in a position where there is a demonstrable skills shortage

7. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion (see note 6)

8. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader (see note 7)

9. Any other children.

Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.

(i) The attendance of a sibling at the school at the time of enrolment will increase the priority of an application within each category so that the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made (see note 8).

(ii) Remaining priority will be determined within each category to children living closest to the school. Distances are measured on a straight line "*as the crow flies*" basis by the Local Authority, using Ordnance Survey data. In the event of distances being the same for two or more children where this would determine the last place to be allocated, a random allocation will be carried out and supervised by the Local Authority.

Application Procedures and Timetable

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round[2], you **must** complete a Common Application Form available from the local authority in which you live. You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form (SIF) attached to this policy, which is available from the school website at How to Apply – St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School (stmarysrcps.com) or from the school office. The Supplementary Information Form and any requested documentation should be returned to the School Office, St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Kirkley Cliff, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR33 0DG, by 15th January 2026.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 16th April 2026 or the next working day, by the local authority on our behalf. If you are unsuccessful (unless your child gained a place at a school you ranked higher) you will be informed of the reasons, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

If you do not provide the information required in the SIF and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child will be placed in the appropriate category based on the information available, and this is likely to affect your child's chance of being offered a place.

All applications which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time, and after the closing date for admissions which is 15th January 2026

Late Applications

Late applications will be considered but will be given a lower priority than preferences received by the closing date.

Admission of Children Below Compulsory School Age and Deferred Entry

A child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday. A child's parents may defer the date at which their child is admitted to the school, until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age, or beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which an offer was made. A child may take up a part-time place until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which

[2] This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

the child reaches compulsory school age. Upon receipt of the offer of a place a parent should notify the school, as soon as possible, that they wish to either defer their child's entry to the school or take up a part-time place.

Admission of Children outside their Normal Age Group

A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1st April and 31st August, may request that the child be admitted out of their normal age group, to reception rather than year 1.

Any such request should be made in writing to the Headteacher, St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Kirkley Cliff, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR33 0DG at the same time as the admission application is made. The governing body will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the headteacher, including the headteacher's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the governing body will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful children will be placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out above and ***not*** in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Waiting lists for admission will be maintained for the whole of the school year.

Inclusion on the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

In-Year Applications

An application can be made for a place for a child at any time outside the admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. Application should be made directly to the school. Please refer to our 'How to Apply Webpage' for more information.

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out above, will be applied.

If there are no places available, the child will be added to the waiting list (see above).

You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing within 5 working days, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

Fair Access Protocol

The school takes regard of agreed Fair Access Protocols with the Local Authority regarding vulnerable and/or hard to place children, including practising Catholic families moving into the area (see note 11).

The governing body reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place or, where a child is already attending the school, the place itself, where it is satisfied that the offer or place was obtained by deception.

Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

1. An Education, Health and Care Plan is a plan made by the local authority under section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014, specifying the special educational provision required for a child. The admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school must be admitted. Where this takes place before the allocation of places under these arrangements this will reduce the number of places available to other children.

2. A 'looked after child' has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any 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 to the school.

Previously looked after children also includes those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

3. 'Catholic' means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. This will be evidenced by a certificate of baptism in a Catholic Church or a certificate of reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy, it includes a looked after child who is part of a Catholic family where a letter from a priest demonstrates that the child would have been baptised or received if it were not for their status as a looked after child (e.g. a looked after child in the process of adoption by a Catholic family).

See note 10 for a list of Churches in full communion with the See of Rome.

4. ‘Catechumen’ means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens. Catechumens are children above the age of 7 who are undergoing a course of instruction to become baptised into the Catholic Church, or who have been baptised within another Christian denomination, and are undergoing a course of instruction in preparation for reception into the Catholic Church through the sacrament of Holy Communion.

5. ‘Eastern Christian Church’ includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.

6. “children of other Christian denominations” means children who belong to other churches and ecclesial communities which, acknowledge God’s revelation in Christ, confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures, and, in obedience to God’s will and in the power of the Holy Spirit commit themselves: to seek a deepening of their communion with Christ and with one another in the Church, which is his body; and to fulfil their mission to proclaim the Gospel by common witness and service in the world to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. An ecclesial community which on principle has no credal statements in its tradition, is included if it manifests faith in Christ as witnessed to in the Scriptures and is committed to working in the spirit of the above.

All members of Churches Together in England and CYTÛN are deemed to be included in the above definition, as are all other churches and ecclesial communities that are in membership of any local Churches Together Group (by whatever title) on the above basis.

7. “children of other faiths” means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of ‘other Christian denominations’ at 6 above and which falls within the definition of a religion for the purposes of charity law. The Charities Act 2011 defines religion to include:

- A religion which involves belief in one God
- A religion which involves belief in more than one God, and
- A religion which does not involve belief in a God.

Case law has identified certain characteristics which describe the meaning of religion for the purposes of charity law, which are characterised by a belief in a supreme being and an expression of belief in that supreme being through worship.

8. ‘sibling’ includes:

(i) all natural brothers or sisters, half brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, who are living at the same address; and

(ii) the child of a parent's partner where that child lives for most of the week in the same family unit at the same address as the applicant.

In all these cases, the child and their sibling will both be living at the same address in a single family unit. This means that children from different family units, where those are living together at the same address, are not considered siblings under this criterion.

9. A 'parent' means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for a child, and any person who has care of a child.

10. Churches in Full Communion with the Roman Catholic Church are the:

- Albanian Byzantine Catholic Church
- Armenian Catholic Church
- Belarusian Greek Catholic Church
- Bulgarian Greek Catholic Church
- Chaldean Catholic Church
- Coptic Catholic Church
- Eritrean Catholic Church
- Ethiopian Catholic Church
- Byzantine Church of Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro
- Greek Byzantine Catholic Church
- Hungarian Greek Catholic Church
- Italo-Albanian Byzantine Catholic Church
- Macedonian Greek Catholic Church
- Maronite Church
- Melkite Greek Catholic Church
- Romanian Church United with Rome, Greek-Catholic
- Russian Greek Catholic Church
- Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Church
- Slovak Byzantine Catholic Church
- Syriac Catholic Church
- Syro-Malabar Catholic Church
- Syro-Malankara Catholic Church
- Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

11. Fair Access Protocol: The school is committed to taking its fair share of children who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as set out in the locally agreed protocol. Accordingly, outside the normal admission round the governing body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The governing body has this power, even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number (subject to the infant class size exceptions).