

St. Gildas' Catholic Junior School



ADMISSIONS CRITERIA 2016 - 2017

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. Catholic doctrine and practice permeate every aspect of the school's activity. It is essential that the Catholic character of the school's education is supported by all families in the school. All applicants are, therefore, expected to give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school.

Responsibility for the admission of pupils rests with the Governing Body, as the Admissions Authority. The Governors intend to admit a maximum of 60 pupils (the published admissions number) to year 3.

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

Oversubscription Criteria

1. Catholic 'Looked-After' children and Catholic children who have been adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders, immediately after having been looked after.
2. Baptised Catholic Children. Priority will be given to practising Catholics based on the information provided in the Priest's Reference Form (the standard Diocesan format);
3. Other 'Looked-After' children who have been adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders, immediately after having been looked after;
4. Any other applicant.

Priority will be given within each criterion to applicants from St Peter-in-Chains Infant School.

Exceptional Needs

The Governors will give top priority within each category/criterion where compelling documentary evidence is provided at the time of application, of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child (e.g. from a doctor/social worker) which can only be met at this school.

Siblings and Multiple Births

In each of the above categories, the attendance of a brother/sister (includes half, step, foster or adopted siblings) in Saint Peter's Infant School or Saint Gildas' Junior School at the time of application will increase priority.

In the case of a multiple birth, where one family apply for a single remaining place, the Governors will admit all children, therefore exceeding the agreed published admissions number of 30 children per class.

Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs/Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC)

The admission of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health and Care Plan (EHC) is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. If your child has a statement of SEN or EHC plan you must contact your local authority SEN officer. Children with this school named in their statement of SEN or EHC Plan will be admitted to the school.

Tie Break

The tie-breaker for all criteria is children living closest to the school measured by the Local Authority in a straight line from the address point for the child's home, to the address point of the school supplied by the Royal Mail, using a computerised mapping system.

Fair Access Protocols

The school is committed to taking its fair share of children who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as set out in locally agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal admissions round the governing body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol that has been agreed by both the Diocese and the governing body for the current school year. The governing body has this power even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

Admissions Procedure

To apply for a place you should complete and return two separate forms:-

- The Supplementary Information Form (SIF), which is attached to this policy. This should be returned to the Governors' Admissions Panel via St. Gildas' School office, together with all other relevant documents required for your application.
- The Common Application Form (CAF) available from your Local Authority to be completed and returned to them in accordance with their instructions.

Failure to complete these forms (SIF and CAF) will mean that your application cannot be properly considered and may result in your child not being offered a place.

- The Diocesan Priest's Reference form is available from the school, the Diocese of Westminster website www.rcdow.org.uk and from the Parish Priest. This should be completed and signed by the Parish Priest of the church where you worship and returned to the school office.

Please ensure that the following documents are submitted with your application forms:

- Proof of the child's date of birth
- Proof of address (e.g. current Council Tax and utility bill)
- The child's Baptism certificate (where applicable)

If you think you might not be able to obtain documents by the closing date, you should write a covering letter explaining the exceptional circumstances and attach it to your completed application form (SIF) to arrive by the closing date.

The final date for applications is January 15th 2016.

Notification letters will be sent out by the local authority, on behalf of the governors, on April 18th 2016.

Applications arriving after the closing date will be dealt with after all initial offers have been made.

Children Educated Outside Their Chronological Age Group

Any application for a child to be educated out of his/her age group will be considered by the governors on an individual basis and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Parents should write to the Chair of Governors during the autumn term in the (academic) year of application, giving reasons and providing compelling professional evidence.

In Year Admissions

Applications for In-Year Admissions are made directly to the school. Where a place is available and there is no waiting list, the Local Authority will be notified and the child will be admitted. If more applications are received than there are places available, then applications will be ranked by the governing body in accordance with the oversubscription criteria (with the following modifications: Catholic children without an offer of a school place elsewhere are given priority immediately after Catholic ‘Looked-After’ children and Catholic children who have been adopted (or subject to residence orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after; similarly, other children without an offer of a school place are given priority immediately after other “Looked After” children and children who have been adopted (or subject to residence orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after). If a place cannot be offered at this time, then you may ask us for the reasons and you will be informed of your right of appeal.

Notification

All applicants will be notified in writing of the Governors’ decision. Unsuccessful applicants will be told of the reason why they have not been offered a place.

Appeals

An unsuccessful applicant has the right to appeal.

Applicants seeking an appeal should do so in writing, setting out the grounds on which the appeal is made. The application should be addressed to the Chair of Governors, c/o the school.

An appeal must be made within 28 school days of the notification letter. **The deadline for submission of an appeal is Friday 27th May 2016.**

The hearing of an appeal will be arranged and at least 7 school days notice will be given of the date, time and place for hearing.

The decision and reasons underlying the verdict of the appeals panel will be sent to the appellant within 7 days of the hearing.

Waiting List

You will be offered the opportunity of being placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained by the governing body in the order of the oversubscription criteria (as modified above) and not in the order in which the applications are received. Names are removed from the list at the end of each academic year. When a place becomes available, the governing body will decide who is at the top of the list so that an offer can be made.

Definition of Terms

‘Catholic’ means a member of a church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes Eastern Catholic Churches. This will normally be evidenced for a child by a certificate of Baptism in a Catholic Church or a Certificate of Reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

‘Practising Catholic’ means a Catholic child from a practising Catholic family where this practice is verified by a reference from a Catholic Priest in the standard format set by the Diocese.

‘Adopted’ means a child who has ceased to be looked after having been adopted and whose parents can give proof of this status.

‘Looked after child’ has the same meaning as in S.22 of the Children Act 1989, and means any child in the care of the Local Authority or provided with accommodation by them (e.g. children with foster parents at the time of making an application to the school).

‘Special Guardianship Order’ A special guardianship order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.14A which defines it as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian(s).

‘Child Arrangements Order’ A Child Arrangements Order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.8 settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live. Children ‘looked after’, immediately before the order is made, qualify in this category.

‘Parent’ is defined as the person or persons who have legal responsibility for the child.

‘Sibling’ means brother or sister, to include adopted brothers and sisters, half brothers and sisters or step brothers and sisters. A sibling relationship does not apply when the older child(ren) will leave before the younger one starts.

‘Home address’ is defined as the address at which the child resides for 50% or more of the school week.