

Archdiocese of Westminster

**St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School**



**Reception Admissions Policy**

**September 2021 to July 2022**

## Admissions Policy for 2021/2022

### Reception

#### **St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School, Puckeridge, Ware, Herts SG11 1RZ**

St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School is a Voluntary Aided School in the Trusteeship of the Diocese of Westminster. The school provides a distinctive Catholic education. The Governing Body is responsible for admissions and is guided in that responsibility by the requirements of law, by advice from the Diocesan Trustees and its duty to the Catholic community and the common good.

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. It is essential that the Catholic character of the school's education be fully 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.

In the last three years governors have been able to admit in all the categories of the oversubscription criteria.

The Published Admission Number (PAN) for 2021/2022 is 15. It is this number because we are a half form entry per year. The Governing Body has sole responsibility for admissions to this school and intends to admit 15 children in the school year which begins in September 2021. Applications are welcome from families whose child reaches his/her 5<sup>th</sup> birthday between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022.

#### **Oversubscription Criteria**

**Within each category priority will be given to children with a sibling attending the school at the time of admission.** This rule will be applied prior to distance criteria.

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

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 including those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England.
2. Baptised Catholic Children.

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 including those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England.
4. Children of families who are members of other Christian faith backgrounds.
5. Children of families who are members of other faith backgrounds.
6. Any other children.

For criteria 4 and 5 a letter from the minister/faith leader confirming membership of the faith community will be required.

### **Exceptional Need**

Governors will give priority within a category to an application where there is proof of a particular medical or social reason which can only be met at this school. To demonstrate an exceptional social or medical need of the child which can only be met at this school, the governing body will require compelling written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or a priest.

### **Multiple Applications**

Where the final place is offered to a child who has other siblings applying for a place in the same school year, these siblings will also be admitted.

### **Tie Break**

If there are more applications received that fulfil the criteria in any of the categories than there are places available, the school will offer places up to the admission number to those living nearest the school. **Hertfordshire County Council's** 'straight line' distance measurement is used for all home to school distance measurements for admission allocation purposes. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences. If distances are identical, the Governing Body will draw lots in the presence of an independent witness.

### **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 the 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 local authority and the Governing Body for the current school year and children may also be admitted before children on the Continuing Interest List if necessary. The Governing Body has this power even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

### **Pupils with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan**

The admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. (This used to be called a Statement of Special Educational Needs). Details of this separate procedure are set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice – January 2015. If your child has an EHC plan you must contact your local authority SEN officer. Children with this school named in their EHC Plan will be admitted.

### **Change of Details**

If any of the details on your forms change between the date of application and the receipt of the letter of offer or refusal, you **must** inform the School and the local authority immediately. If misleading information is given or allowed to remain on either of your forms, the Governing Body reserves the right to withdraw the place, even if the child has already started at the School.

### **Notes and Definitions of Terms**

**Catholic:** 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. This also includes a looked-after child in the process of adoption with a Catholic family, who would have been baptised were it not for his/her status as a child looked after child.

**Children Looked After** (Children in public care): A “child looked after” is a child who is:

- a) in the care of a local authority, or
- b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions e.g. children with foster parents at the time of application to the school (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989)

All children adopted from care who are of compulsory school age are eligible for admission under Rule 1 and Rule 3.

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after, providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under Rule 1 and Rule 3.

Children who were not “looked after” **immediately** before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order, **will not** be prioritised under Rule 1 and Rule 3.

Children previously looked after abroad and subsequently adopted will be prioritised under Rule 1 and Rule 3 if the child’s previously looked status and adoption is confirmed by Hertfordshire’s “Virtual School”.

The child's previously looked after status will be decided in accordance with the definition outlined in The Children & Social Work Act 2017:

- i. to have been in state care in a place outside England and Wales because he or she would not otherwise have been cared for adequately, and
- ii. to have ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted.

A child is in "state care" if he or she is in the care of, or accommodated by –

- (a) a public authority,
- (b) a religious organisation, or
- (c) any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

### **Child Arrangements Order.**

Under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders which settle the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

### **Special Guardianship Order.**

Under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians.

**Parent:** means the adult or adults with legal responsibility for the child.

**Sibling:** A sibling must be on the roll of the school at the time the younger child starts. A sibling means the sister, brother, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent/carer or partner or a child looked after or previously looked after and in every case living permanently in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of this application.

Where a place is obtained and the child admitted to the school and it is subsequently identified that this place was gained fraudulently, there will be no sibling connection available to subsequent children from that family.

**Children of other Christian denominations:** for the purposes of this policy, means: children who belong to other Churches and ecclesial communities which, acknowledging 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 witness to in the Scriptures and is committed to working in the Spirit of the above.

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

**Children of other faiths** means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of “Other Christian denominations” 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 a belief in more than one God
- 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.

**Baptised:** By this we mean baptised into the Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism in a Catholic church or a Certificate of Reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

**Resident:** A child is deemed to be resident at a particular address when he/she resides there for more than 50% of the school week.

**Home to school distance measurement**

Hertfordshire County Council’s ‘straight line’ distance measurement is used for all home to school distance measurements for admission allocation purposes. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child’s house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURE 2021/2022**

In order to make an application, you **must** complete an **Online Application Form (OAF)** or paper application using the **Common Application Form (CAF)** from your local authority (LA). Please refer to the Hertfordshire published information and Application Form which can be accessed at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions) for either online or paper application and return it to them. You **should** also complete the school’s **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)** available on our website. The information on the SIF enables the Governing Body to assess your application fully against the School’s criteria in the event of oversubscription. **Please return the SIF (in person or by post) to the school at the address above** together with all other relevant paperwork required for your application.

The Hertfordshire Primary Application form (**OAF or CAF**) and **SIF** must be completed and submitted by **15 January 2021** and if a SIF is not received by the school by the closing date the Governors will apply the school’s admission arrangements using only the information supplied on the OAF or CAF, which may result in the application being considered under a much lower criteria, and you may be less likely to be successful in being allocated a place.

## **Offers**

**The local authority** will email you the school you've been allocated, if you applied online and confirmed your email address. The online allocation system will be updated with allocations and be available only after allocation emails have been sent. Notification emails will be posted first class only to parents or carers who applied on paper. If you applied online, you can use online facilities including appeals and continuing interest. Parents/carers should accept or decline the place offered as soon as possible. *See timetable available from the LA or school website.*

**Please contact us if you need help in applying for admission to our school:- telephone : 01920 821450**

**e-mail : [head@stcanterbury.herts.sch.uk](mailto:head@stcanterbury.herts.sch.uk)**

## **In-Year Admissions**

Applications for In-Year admissions are made directly to the Local Authority (LA) and the School's Supplementary Information Form (SIF) should be provided directly to the school. Parents can fill in the form online at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions) or they can access a hard copy of the form from the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043. Parents should return the application form direct to the County Council (address on the form). If a place is available and there is no waiting list the LA 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. If your application is unsuccessful the county council will write to you with registration details to enable you to login and appeal online at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals). 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. After places have been offered, the school's continuing interest (waiting) list will be maintained by Hertfordshire County Council. A child's position on the Continuing Interest (CI) list will be determined by the admission criteria outlined above and a child's place on the list can change as other children join or leave it. The county council on behalf of the school's governing body, will contact parents/carers if a vacancy becomes available and it can be offered to a child. Continuing interest lists will be maintained for every year group until the summer term. HCC advise parents of the closing date in writing at a later date and ask parents to make an In Year application if they wish to be on the list for the following year. When a place becomes available the Governing Body will decide who is at the top of the list, in accordance with the oversubscription criteria, so that an offer can be made. The LA will inform parents whether or not a place is to be offered.

## **Reception Year Deferred Entry**

Applicants may defer entry to school up until compulsory school age i.e. the first day of term following the child's fifth birthday. Application is made in the usual way and then the deferment is requested. The place will then be held until the first day of the spring or summer term as applicable. Entry may not be deferred beyond compulsory school age or beyond the year for which the

application has been made. Therefore applicants whose children have birthdays in the summer term may only defer until the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022.

### **Part-time attendance**

Applicants may request that their child attend part-time until compulsory school age is reached.

### **Summer Born Children**

If a parent wishes his/her summer born child to start school in Reception in the September following his/her 5<sup>th</sup> birthday i.e. a child born between 1<sup>st</sup> April – 31<sup>st</sup> August being admitted to Reception at 5 years of age, they should make the school aware of this by writing a letter to the Chair of Governors at the time of application. Parents must then submit an application in the normal way. This application will be treated in the same way as all other applications and there is no guarantee that an offer will be made.

### **Children Educated Outside their Chronological Age Group (except Reception applications for summer born children)**

Parents may apply for their child to be educated outside his/her chronological age group i.e. a year behind or a year ahead. Application should be made to the Chair of Governors at the time of application and any supporting evidence should be submitted at the same time. Governors will consider each case on its own merits and permission will only be given in exceptional circumstances.

### **Nursery Children**

Attendance at the nursery **does not** guarantee a place in reception. Parents of children attending St Thomas of Canterbury nursery **must** make a fresh application for reception.

### **Waiting List**

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list (our Continued Interest List). This list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out in the policy and not in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Names will be removed from the list on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022, unless applicants request to remain on the list.

### **Appeals**

Parents have the right to express their preference for a particular school but this preference must be expressed in accordance with our admission arrangements as above. Parents applying for places for the Primary school have the right to appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel, if they are unsuccessful in gaining a place.

Parents wishing to appeal who applied through Hertfordshire's online system should log in to their online application and click on the link "register an appeal". Out of county residents and paper applicants should call the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request their registration details, log into [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals) and click on the link "log into the appeals system".



## Proposed Timescales for 2021/2022

<b>Primary Key Dates</b>	<b>Date</b>
Closing date for online applications to be submitted to the LA	15 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
Statutory deadline for receipt of paper applications	15 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
Applications available to VA Schools	10 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
VA Schools provide LA with ranked list of applicants	26 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
Allocation information despatched to parents	16 <sup>th</sup> April 2021
Date by which parents/ carers may accept or reject place offered	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2021
Date by which parents / carers return appeal forms	May 2021



**Diocese of Westminster**

**Catholic Primary Schools**

**Supplementary Information Form 2021/22**

**Name and Address of School:**

**St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School, Puckeridge, SG11  
1RZ**

**Child's Details**

Child's surname:	
Child's first name:	
Home Address:	Date of Birth:
	Postcode:

**Parent/Carer Details**

Parent/ Carer's name:	
Address (if different from above):	
Telephone number:	

**Details of Religion**

Religion of child: (Please tick)	Catholic	Other Christian (name of denomination )	Other faith (name of faith)
Catholic Parish you live in:			

Church where child was baptised and date of baptism: <b>(baptism certificate required)</b>	
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**I confirm that I have read and understood the Admissions Policy and that the information I have provided is correct. I understand that I must notify the school immediately if there is any change to these details and that should any information I have given prove to be inaccurate that the governors may withdraw any offer of a place even if the child has already started school.**

Signed.....

Date.....

Please note:

- Applicants from other Christian denominations and other faiths may attach a letter confirming membership of the faith community from their minister or religious leader.
- You **must** complete your local authority's **online or paper application form** and return it to the council offices by the closing date. If you do not do this you will not be offered a place.

**Checklist:**

**Have you enclosed** : Copy of baptism certificate?

Evidence of exceptional need (where appropriate)

**Have you completed** your local authority's online or paper application form?