

# **St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School**

## **Admissions Policy and Supplementary Information Form for admission in the school year 2025 – 2026**

**'We come to school to live and learn happily together by loving ourselves and each other as Jesus teaches us.'**

St. Augustine's Catholic Primary 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 Published Admissions Number (PAN) for Reception Class at St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School is 30. The Governing Body has sole responsibility for admissions to this school and intends to admit 30 children in the school year, which begins in September 2025. Applications are invited from families whose child was born on and between 1st September 2020 and 31st August 2021.

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School provides full-time admission of all children offered a place in the Reception year group from the September following their fourth birthday. Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to school be deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year. Parents can also request that their child attend part-time until s/he reaches compulsory school age. In either situation, the school will 'hold' a child's school place until that child starts full-time within the academic year.

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.

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic applicants in accordance with the Trust Deed of the Diocese of Westminster. Applicants will be ranked using the oversubscription criteria listed later in this document.

Parents have the right of appeal to an independent panel in the event of a 'non-admission' decision. Details of the appeals procedure will be made available from the school, or Local Authority upon request.

In this policy *applicant* refers to the person making an application on behalf of a child; *candidate* refers to the child on whose behalf the application is being made.

## **Oversubscription Criteria**

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

1. Catholic children looked after and Catholic children, who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order) immediately after being looked after. Included in this criteria are those children who appear (to the governing body) to have been in state care outside of England and who ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
2. Baptized Catholic children, where there is a legal responsibility of qualified teaching staff employed at the school for a minimum of two full years at the time of application.
3. Baptized Catholic children with a sibling attending the school at the date of admission,
4. Other Baptized Catholic children.
5. Other children looked after and other children, who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order) immediately after being looked after. Included in this criteria are those children who appear (to the governing body) to have been in state care outside of England and who ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
6. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church
7. Other children of qualified teaching staff employed at the school for a minimum of two full years at the time of application.
8. Other Christians with a sibling at the school at the date of admission who can provide a baptismal certificate or a letter confirming membership from a minister.
9. Other Christians whose parents can provide a baptismal certificate or a letter confirming membership from a minister.
10. Any other children.

When considering applications, the Governing body will give preference, within each criterion, to any child who has a sibling at the school at the date of admission so that the application will be placed at the top of the criterion under which the application is made.

## **Exceptional Need**

**Within each of the categories listed above, the provisions below will be applied in the following order;**

The Governing Body will give top priority within a category, to an application where compelling written evidence is provided at the time of application, from an appropriate professional such as a doctor, priest or social worker, of an exceptional social, medical, pastoral or other need of the child, which can only be met at this school. Priority will not be given unless the aforesaid written evidence is produced by the closing date of applications, unless there has been a significant and exceptional change of circumstances within the family since the initial application was submitted.

## **Tie Break**

Where the offer of places to all applicants in any of the sub-categories listed above would still lead to oversubscription, the places up to the admission number will be offered to applicants living closest to the school. Home to school distance measurement for purposes of admissions follows the Hertfordshire County Council's procedure of a 'straight line' distance measurement from the address point of the child's home to the address point of the relevant school. Distances are measured and carried out by Hertfordshire County Council using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the Address Base Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. Address Base Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences. If the home to school distance measurement is identical for any applicants, the Governing Body will draw lots in the presence of an independent witness.

## **Application Procedure**

To apply for a place at this school, during the normal admissions round, applicants should complete and return two separate forms. Parents must apply on-line for Reception Class on their home Local Authority website [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions) or post the application form to their Local Admissions Team in the area that they live (the 'home authority'), by the closing date **15th January 2025**.

The St Augustine's Catholic School Supplementary Information Form (SIF), copy of the baptism certificate, if not Catholic for criteria 6, 8 and 9, a letter confirming membership from their priest or minister of religion should be submitted to the school office, by the closing date **15th January 2025**.

If you do not complete both of the forms described above and return them by **15th January 2025**, the Governing Body will be unable to consider your application against the oversubscription criteria and your child will be ranked under the lowest criterion. It is very unlikely that your child will be offered a place if a SIF is not supplied.

The Local Authority will inform you on behalf of the Governing Body with the outcome of your application on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025, the National Offer day.

## **Late Applications**

Late SIF's and/or accompanying paperwork will not be considered until continuing interest round 1.

Applications received after the closing date will be dealt with after the initial allocation process has been completed. If the school is oversubscribed it is very unlikely that late applicants will obtain a place.

## **Right of Appeal**

If you are unsuccessful, you may contact the school to ask us for the reasons for the refusal of a place. These reasons will be related to the oversubscription criteria listed in the Admissions Policy and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

Hertfordshire parents wishing to appeal who applied online should log on to their online application and click on the link 'register an appeal'. If you did not apply using Hertfordshire's online application system, please contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request an appeal pack.

## **Continuing Interest (Waiting lists)**

After places have been offered, Hertfordshire County Council will maintain a continuing interest (waiting) list on behalf of the school. A child's position on a 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 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 (date to be specified and confirmed to parents at the time of allocation). To remain on the CI (waiting) list after this time, parents must confirm they are still interested in a place by completing an In Year application form.

## **Additional information**

### **Applications in previous years**

Within the past three years the governing body has, at times, been unable to offer places to any applicants beyond oversubscription criterion 6. Whilst the school welcomes applications from all categories, it is usually oversubscribed by Catholic candidates.

### **Nursery Children**

Attendance at the nursery does not guarantee a place in reception. Parents of children attending St Augustine's nursery must make a fresh application for reception.

### **Non-Catholic Siblings**

Non-Catholic, Christian siblings will be considered under criterion 8. Governors are bound at all times to give priority to Catholic children and, as stated above, within the past 3 years they have been unable to admit children beyond criterion 6. This means that currently a non-Catholic sibling is highly unlikely to obtain a place in the school. Whilst we welcome applications from all families, parents should consider this very carefully when applying for a school place for a non-Catholic child or for a Catholic child whose sibling(s) are not baptized Catholics.

### **Twins, Triplets and Other Multiple Births**

In respect of children of multiple births, where only one twin has been offered the final place, the Governors will admit a second or subsequent twin, as an 'excepted pupil'.

In year applications for children of multiple births will be considered individually.

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

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 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.

### **Reception Year Deferred Entry**

Parents can request that their child be admitted to school on the first day of term after which their child reaches compulsory school age and parents may also request that their child attend part-time until compulsory school age is reached. Application is made in the usual way and then if parents are interested in taking up a part-time place or deferring entry, they should contact the school to discuss further. The place will then be held until the first day of the term following the child's fifth birthday and no later than April 2026.

### **Summer born children**

If a parent wishes his/her 'summer born' child to be educated outside his/her normal age group, they should make the school aware of this by writing a letter to the Chair of Governors at the time of application. Any child born between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 31<sup>st</sup> August can apply to start the year later. Applications will be considered individually.

If parents do not believe their child will be ready to start reception in the 2025/26 academic year, they may instead make an application the following year. 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.

### **Change of Details**

If any of the details on either of your forms changes 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.

### **In-Year Admissions**

The school have opted in to Hertfordshire County Council's scheme of In Year admissions coordination. Application forms can be accessed via [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions) or from the Customer Service Centre, 0300 123 4043. Additionally, where appropriate, applicants should complete and return the St Augustine's Catholic School Supplementary Information Form (SIF), copy of the baptism certificate (or if not of the Catholic Faith, a letter confirming membership from their priest or minister of religion) to the School Office.

Hertfordshire County Council will write to you with the outcome of your application and, if you have been unsuccessful, will include registration details to enable you to log in and appeal online at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schooleappeals](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schooleappeals).

### **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. Those allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol, must take precedence over those on the waiting list.

## Definitions

**'A Statement of Special Educational Needs'** is a statement made by the local authority under section 324 of the Education Act 1996, specifying the special educational provision for a child. 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.

**'Looked after child'** has the same meaning as in S.22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any child in the care of a local authority or 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 to the school.) A previously 'looked after' child is a child who was looked after, but ceased to be so because he or she was adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order. Included in this definition are those children who appear (to the governing body) to have been in state care outside of England and who ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

Children previously looked after abroad and subsequently adopted will be prioritised if the child's previously looked status and adoption is confirmed by Hertfordshire's "Virtual School".

The child's previously looked 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.

**'Adopted'** - An adopted child is any child who has been formally adopted, who has been previously looked after and whose parent/ guardian can give proof of this.

**'Parent'** - 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

**'Sibling'** – A sibling must be on the roll of the school at the time the younger child starts.

(i) all natural brothers and sisters, half brothers and sisters, adopted brothers and sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address, and

(ii) the child of a parent's partner where that child lives for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same home address as the child who is the subject of the application.

**'Home address'** – A child's "home address" refers to the address where the child usually lives with a parent or carer, and will be the address provided in the Common Application Form ("CAF"). Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives for part of the week with each parent, the home address will be the address given in the CAF, provided that the child resides at that address for any part of the school week.

**'Catholic'** means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. 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. 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). For a child to be treated as Catholic, evidence of baptism or reception into the Church will be required. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism should contact their Parish Priest who, after consulting with the Diocese, will decide how the question of baptism is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the laws of the Church.

**'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 CYTŪN 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.

**'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.

**'Eastern Christian Church'** includes Orthodox Churches and membership is normally evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism or Reception from the authorities of that church.

**'Children of Qualified Teaching staff'** - applies to children entering Reception class in the main admission process for whom the parent has legal responsibility and has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made. Governors will include children and stepchildren living at the same address. The Governing Body will also give priority, after the appropriate category of looked after children, to in-year admissions for children if a qualified teacher is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.