St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

Admissions Policy 2016 – 2017

St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families in Fulham. 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.

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic applicants in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below.

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 is 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.

The Published Admissions Number (PAN) for the reception classes at St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School is 60. The Governing Body has sole responsibility for admissions to this school and intends to admit 60 pupils to the reception classes in the school year which begins in September 2016. Applications are invited from families whose child will reach their 4th birthday between 1st September 2015 and 31st August 2016.

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. Catholic looked-after children and Catholic children who have been adopted (or made subject to residence orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after.

2. Baptised Catholic children who have a sibling at the school at the time of admission.

3. Baptised Catholic Children from practising Catholic families who are resident in the parish of St Thomas of Canterbury.

4. Baptised Catholic Children from practising Catholic families who are not resident in the parish of St Thomas of Canterbury.

5. Other baptised Catholic children.

6. Other looked-after children and children who have been adopted (or made subject to residence orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following

7. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church.
8. Christians of other denominations whose parents or legal guardians wish for them to have a Catholic education and whose application is supported by their priest or minister.

9. Any other applicants.

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

Where the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the categories listed above would lead to oversubscription the following provisions will be applied.

The Governing Body will increase the priority, after the appropriate category of lookedafter children, to an application where compelling evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, Medical, pastoral or other need of the child which can only be met at this school. The evidence must include relevant documentation from an appropriate professional such as a doctor, priest or social worker.

Tie Break

Where the offer of places to all the 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 those living nearest to the school. Where two or more applicants for the last remaining space live an equal distance from the school, the Governing Body will draw lots in the presence of an independent witness.

Application Procedures and Timetable

In order to make an application, you must complete a Common Application Form (CAF) from your local authority. These are available from the LA office and the LA website. The LA application form must be received by the LA by 15th January 2016. You should also complete the Diocese of Westminster Supplementary Information Form and the Diocesan Priest’s reference form (if applicable) and return the form to the school by date to be confirmed. Forms will be accepted by fax, hand delivery or post.

If you do not complete the LA Common Application Form, the Diocese of Westminster Supplementary Information Form (SIF), and the Diocesan’s Priest’s reference form (if applicable) and return the forms by the respective closing dates, the Governing Body may be unable to consider your application fully and it is very unlikely that your child will receive a place at this school.

Late applications received after this deadline will be accepted and considered after the initial allocation process has been completed. Parents will be advised of the outcome of their applications on 18th April 2016.

Right of Appeal

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

In-Year Admissions

In-year applications are made directly to the school. If a place is available and there is no waiting list 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; similarly, other children without an offer of a school place are given priority immediately after Catholic ‘looked-after’ children. Governors will inform parents whether or not a place is to be offered. If a place cannot be offered at this time then you may ask for the reasons and you will be informed of your right of appeal. 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 and not in the order in which the applications are received. Names are removed from the list at the end of each academic year.

**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 exceed the published admission number.

**Deferment**
Parents/carers may defer their child’s entry to school up till the first day of the term following the child’s fifth birthday (statutory school age). Application is made in the normal way, then the request for deferment made. The place will be held open until 1 Jan 2017 or 1 Apr 2017. Admission may not be deferred beyond statutory school age or beyond the academic year of application. Parents should be aware that if their child has a summer birthday (i.e. 1st April – 31st August) and they choose to defer entry, then the parents must apply for a year 1 place and in an oversubscribed school they are unlikely to be successful. In such cases parents are advised to defer until April 2017 Applicants may also request that their child attend part-time until statutory school age is reached.

**Waiting Lists**
In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity to 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. Names are normally removed from the list after 1 year.

**Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs**
The admission of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. This procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of statements by the pupil’s home Local Authority. Details of this separate procedure is set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. If your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs you must contact your local authority SEN officer.

**Change of Details**
If any of the details on either of your forms changes between the date of application and the date of 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** (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

‘Looked after child’ has the same meaning as in section 22 of the Children Act 1989, and means any child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by them (e.g. children with foster parents).

‘Sibling’ is defined as brother or sister, half brother or sister, stepbrother or sister, or foster child living with the same parent/carer at the same postal address.

‘Parent’ means the adult or adults with legal responsibility for the child.

‘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.
‘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 laid down by the Diocese. ‘Family’ includes the Catholic or Catholics who have legal responsibility for the child.

‘Catechumen’ means a child who is 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 is normally evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism or Reception from the authorities of that Church.

‘Christian’ for the purposes of this policy, means a member of one of the Churches affiliated to ‘Churches Together in Britain and Ireland’.

‘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.

‘Distance from school’ means distance as measured by a straight line, from the front door of the child’s residential address (including flats) to a point at the school.

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

‘Distance from school’ means distance as measured by a straight line, from the front door of the child’s residential address (including flats) to a point at the school.