

Our Lady of Victories Catholic Primary School

Admission Policy for Academic Year 2024-2025



As a Catholic Voluntary Aided school, Our Lady of Victories Primary School aims to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. At a Catholic school, Catholic doctrine and practice permeate every aspect of school life. It is essential that the Catholic character of the school's education be fully supported by all families in the school. It is expected that all applicants desire a Catholic education for their child and will therefore give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school.

The Published Admissions Number (PAN) for the Reception class intake is 30. The Governing Board has sole responsibility for admissions to this school and intends to admit 30 pupils to the Reception class in the school year commencing September 2023. Families are invited to apply for a place for September 2023 for a child who reaches his/her 4th birthday between 1st September 2022 and 31st August 2023.

You should read the definitions contained in this policy to see which category your application is likely to fall into.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

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. Applications will be ranked using the criteria listed below.

- A1. Catholic 'looked after' children and previously 'looked after' children, who have been adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders within the UK or internationally.
- A2. Baptised Catholic children of qualified teachers who have been employed by the school for a minimum of two years at the time of admission as described in our definitions with a Certificate of Catholic Practice.
- A3. Baptised Catholic children resident within the boundaries of the parishes at the time of application with a Certificate of Catholic Practice.
- A4. Baptised Catholic children resident outside the boundaries of the parishes at the time of application with a Certificate of Catholic Practice.
- A5. Baptised Catholic children resident within the boundaries of the parishes at the time of application.
- A6. Baptised Catholic children resident outside the boundaries of the parishes at the time of application.
- A7. Other 'looked after' children and previously 'looked after' children who have been adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders within the UK or internationally.
- A8. Children of Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church.
- A9. Children from other Christian denominations whose application is supported either by a certificate of baptism or by a letter from their Minister of Religion confirming membership of the faith community.
- A10. Children of other faiths whose application is supported by a letter from their Minister of Religion confirming membership of the faith community.
- A11. Any other children.

Where the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the categories listed above would lead to oversubscription, the following will be applied in numerical order within each category:

1. **Exceptional Social, Medical, Pastoral Need**

Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child, which can only be met at this school. To demonstrate the need the Governing Board will require compelling written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a priest, social worker or doctor to be provided at the time of application.

2. **Sibling Policy**

Applicants who have a sibling who will be a pupil at Our Lady of Victories when the applicant starts school.

3. **Tie-Break**

Where there are more applicants in a criterion than there are places available, the balance of the places will be allocated by the use of an electronic random allocation system which will be independently operated.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. Apply to your home local authority (borough of residence) via the e-admissions system by completing the **Common Application Form (CAF)**. Residents of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea can either submit the form online from 1st September 2022 at www.rbkc.gov.uk or obtain the paper application form from the local authority. Proof of address will be checked and validated by the home local authority for all applications.
2. Complete the school's **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)** and submit it with the requested accompanying documents by **15th January 2023**. This can be downloaded from the school's website or from the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea's website www.rbkc.gov.uk
3. Complete a **Certificate of Catholic Practice (CCP) if you are applying under criteria A2, A3 or A4**. The CCP form can be obtained from the priest at the parish where the family normally worships or from the Diocese of Westminster website at www.rcdow.org.uk/education.

Parents/Carers should complete the top part of the CCP form and take the form to their parish priest (or the priest at the parish where they normally worship) for signature. It is the parent's duty to ensure that the CCP is submitted to the school with the application. The priest will only sign this form if he knows you and agrees that you are a practising Catholic family. If you have been a resident in this country for over 6 months, the CCP should be signed by a priest in your UK parish.

4. For all other denominations the application must be supported by a baptism certificate or a letter from the Minister of Religion confirming membership of the faith community.
5. Notification letters will be sent out by your local authority on behalf of the Governing Board on or about 16th April 2023 (Primary National Offer Day). Parents/Carers should accept or decline the place as soon as possible.
6. Unsuccessful applicants will be given reasons related to the oversubscription criteria listed above and advised of their right to appeal to an independent appeal panel.

Right of Appeal

If you are unsuccessful you may ask the Governing Board for the reasons for the refusal of a place. Parents/Carers wishing to exercise their right to appeal should contact the school for an appeal form. The deadline for the submission of an appeal is 15th May 2023.

Change of Details

If after submitting an application any of the information given on any of the forms or documentation associated with the application changes, the Head teacher and local authority must be informed immediately. Failure to do so may prejudice the application. Misleading information or the omission of material information may result in disqualification or the loss of a place after it has been offered, accepted or taken up.

Tie-Break

In the event of oversubscription, it may be necessary, as set out in the Oversubscription Criteria, to use a random allocation system to decide which child/children should be offered the available place(s). The use of random allocation will be operated independently of the school.

Multiple Births Reception Class only

In the case of multiple birth children, each multiple birth candidate shall be entered separately into the random allocation process. In the event that the random allocation process allocates a place to a multiple birth candidate, a place shall be offered for each child.

Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a zero numbered 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. Independent random allocation will be applied each time a place needs to be offered within the relevant category. Names are removed from the list after one year of no contact from the proposed date of admission. If an applicant wishes to remain on the waiting list after this period they must reapply through their local authority on an In-Year Application Form and also complete an updated School Supplementary Information Form.

In-Year Admissions

Applications outside of the normal point of entry (Reception) must be made through the Local Authority Admissions Team on the In-Year Application Form. The school's Supplementary Information Form (SIF) and accompanying documents must also be returned to the school. If more applications are received than there are places available, then applications will be categorised by the Governing Board in accordance with the admissions oversubscription criteria and the use of random allocation will be operated independently of the school. 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 Board is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol that has been agreed by the Local Authority and the Governing Board for the current school year. The Governing Board has this power even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number (PAN).

Reception Year Deferred Entry

Applicants may defer entry to the school up until statutory 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 deferral is requested. The place will then be held until the first day of the spring or summer term as applicable. Applicants may also request that their child attend part-time until statutory school age is reached. Entry may not be deferred beyond statutory school age or beyond the year of application, therefore applicants whose children have birthdays in the summer term may only defer until 1st April 2024.

Summer Born Children

If a Parent/Carer wishes his/her summer born child to start school in Reception in the September following his/her 5th birthday i.e. a child born between 1st April - 31st 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 Admissions 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.

Late Applications

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 unlikely that late applicants will obtain a place.

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. 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.

DEFINITIONS

In this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

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 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. 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.

Certificate of Catholic Practice: means a certificate given by the family's parish priest (or the priest in charge of the church where the family practises) in the form laid down by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. It will be issued if the priest is satisfied that at least one Catholic parent or carer (along with the child, if he or she is over seven years old) have (except when it was impossible to do so) attended Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation for at least five years (or, in the case of a child since the age of seven, if shorter). It will also be issued when the practice has been continuous since being received into the Church if that occurred less than five years ago. It is expected that most Certificates will be issued on the basis of attendance. A Certificate may also be issued by the priest when attendance is interrupted by exceptional circumstances which excuse from the obligation to attend on that occasion or occasions. Further details of these circumstances can be found in the guidance issued to priests www.rcdow.org.uk/education/governors/admissions

Looked After Children: has the same meaning as in S.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 at the time of making an application to the school).

Adopted: An adopted child is any child who has been formally adopted, having previously been in care and whose parent/ guardian can give proof of this.

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.

Special Guardianship Order: is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.14A appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian(s). A child ‘looked after’ immediately before the order is made qualifies in this category.

Qualified Teacher: is defined as a member of staff, who is a qualified full time or part-time teacher, and has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time of application and/or is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

Parent: is defined as the adult or adults who have legal responsibility for the child.

Sibling: is defined as the brother, sister, half or step-brother or sister, or adopted brother or sister resident in the same household who will be in attendance at the school in September of the year of admission.

Catechumen: means a child or parent who is a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This will be evidenced by a Certificate of Reception into the Order of Catechumens for a child aged 7 or over. For a child under 7 years of age it will be the certificate of the parent.

Eastern Christian Church: includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that 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 creedal 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: Churches Together in Wales 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.

Children of other faith: means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of ‘other Christian denominations’ as 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 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.

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.

Boundaries of the parishes: the parish boundaries are the catchment area for Our Lady of Victories and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and St. Simon Stock. A copy of the map is published on our school website. Even if you already have another child attending the school, you must be resident within the boundaries of the parishes at the time of the application to qualify within category A3.