

St James the Great Catholic Primary School
Admissions Policy
For admission to the school in the academic year 2024-25



Mission Statement

St James the Great is a Catholic primary school. In partnership with the home and parish we aim to develop and strengthen the faith of each individual by living according to Christian values. We aim to educate our children to enable them to reach their full potential spiritually, academically and socially in order that their lives are brought to fulfilment in God.

1. St James the Great Catholic Primary School is situated in the Archdiocese of Southwark and is maintained by the Southwark Local Education Authority.
2. The Governing Body of the school is responsible for determining and administering the policy relating to the admission of pupils to the school. It is guided in that responsibility by the requirements of the law, by the advice of the Diocesan Trustees, and its duty to the school and the Catholic community.
3. The school serves the parish of St James the Great.
4. Having consulted the LA and others in accord with the requirements of the law, the Governing Body has set as its planned admissions number thirty pupils for the school year commencing September 2024.
5. Applications for these places must be made through a Common Application Form (CAF) obtained from the school or LA and returned to the LA by the published date. Applicants must also complete a supplementary form, which should be returned to the school by 14th January 2024.
6. Completion of an Application Form does not mean that a child is guaranteed a place at the school. Once the offer of a place has been made by the LA, the school will request two proofs of residential address and the child's original birth certificate.
7. Parents wishing to apply for a place in the school for their child in the school year 2024/25 must complete the enclosed Supplementary Application Form by no later than January 14th 2024. *Please Note: as of the 5th June 2022, Pentecost, the Bishops of England and Wales reinstated the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days. Parents applying for a place at St James the Great Catholic Primary School, under a faith- based criteria will need to complete a Supplementary Information Form. Evidence of practice will be measured by frequency of attendance at Mass as validated by either a priest or minister, as was the case prior to 18th March 2020. These arrangements apply to the admissions round for 2023 and subsequent rounds.*
8. It must be noted that all applications must be submitted on that form and all applications will be submitted at the same time. [In accordance with the provisions of Regulation 49 of the Education (School Government) Regulations 1999, the Governing Body has delegated responsibility for determining admissions to its Admissions Committee.]
9. Pupils who are admitted to the school will enter the reception class in September 2024, they are those whose birthday falls between 1st September 2019 and the 31st August 2020.

Places will be offered in accordance with the following order of priorities:

- 1) Looked after Catholic children or looked after children in the care of Catholic families and previously looked after Catholic children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order, including IAPLAC (internationally adopted previously looked after children).
- 2) Baptised children of committed Catholic parent/s who are resident in the parish of St James the Great, Peckham. Commitment to Catholicity must be verified on the form supplied by the parish priest of the parish where the family regularly worships. *Commitment to catholicity is defined by the regularity of weekly attendance at Mass.* This must be sent by the parish priest to the school. It indicates four levels of commitment listed below as a, b, c and d. Priority will be given to applicants in category a first, then b, then c. Applicants who fall into category d will be ranked below baptised children of committed Catholics resident in other parishes who fall into categories a, b or c.

- a) Regular attendance at mass
 - b) Occasional attendance at mass
 - c) Irregular attendance at mass
 - d) No previous knowledge of attendance at mass.
- 3) Baptised children of committed Catholic parent/s who are resident in other parishes. Commitment to Catholicity must be verified by the parish priest of the parish where the family regularly worships on the form supplied.
 - 4) Other looked after children and other previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.
 - 5) Children of parents who are adherents to the Christian Orthodox Church, not included in 1 – 3 above, who are baptised in the Orthodox Rites. Commitment to their faith must be verified by their priest.
 - 6) Baptised children of other Christian denominations as recognised by the British Council of Churches. Commitment to their faith must be verified by their priest or minister.
 - 7) Any other applicants

Oversubscription

The following order of priorities will be applied when applications within any of the above categories exceed places and it is necessary to decide between them.

- (a) The presence of a brother or sister in the school at the time of admission;
- (b) For categories 2, 3 and 4 above, the strength of evidence of commitment to the faith as demonstrated by the family's mass attendance will increase the priority of an applicant within each category. This evidence must be provided by the parents or guardians and endorsed by a priest or minister from the place where the family normally worships.
- (c) Medical or social grounds which make the school more suitable for the child than any other local school. Verification by an appropriate authority (e.g. medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker) would be required;
- (d) Distance from front door of home to main school gate on Peckham Rd., measured by the shortest walking distance using public highways. Where the last remaining place is to be allocated and two or more children are deemed to live at the same distance from the school the place will be decided by the drawing of lots.

Additional information

The Governing Body is under a duty to admit children with Education Health Care Plans that name the school.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) who are not offered a place for their child have the right to appeal to an independent appeal committee under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) wishing to appeal should obtain an appeal form from the school. The form should be sent to the Clerk to the Appeal Committee, care of the school, within 14 days from the notification of the decision.

Notes:

'looked after child' has the same meaning as in Section 22 of the Children's 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).

'Catholic' means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of Baptism in a Catholic church or a certificate of reception into 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 priest's reference 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).

Reference to other Christian denominations refers to other denominations that are full members of Churches Together in England.

'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. By 'regular practising Catholic family', we mean at least one parent/carer and the children attend mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation as a central part of their lives. Missing mass more than once a month would not be deemed as regular practice.

A sibling is defined as a full brother or sister or step, half brother or sister living at the same address, a child who is living as part of the family unit by reason of a Court Order or a child who has been placed with foster carers as a result of being 'looked after' by the authority.

To demonstrate an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the governing body will normally require written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.

Admissions procedure

In addition to the Common Application Form supplied by the LA, which must be returned to Southwark Council School Admissions, the Supplementary Information and Priest's Declaration Form, available from the school, must be completed and returned to the school not later than the closing date published by the LA 14th January 2024. The Supplementary Information and Priest's Declaration Form MUST be completed if you wish your son/daughter to be considered for a place. You are advised to make two copies of the forms. You should retain one copy and pass the second copy to your LA, school or priest, as indicated.

Offers of places will be sent to parents on the common offer date as notified by the LA. The parents of those children whom the Admissions Committee have agreed to admit as pupils at the school will be informed by the Local Authority and will be expected to confirm their acceptance within 3 weeks of notification. If acceptance is not confirmed at the end of this time, the offer will be withdrawn and the place offered to the next ranked applicant.

Appeals

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with section 85(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing and must set out the reasons on which the appeal is made. Appeals should be made to the Admissions Appeal Clerk at the school address. Parents/Carers have the right to make oral representations to the Appeal Panel.

Infant classes are restricted by the legislation to 30 children. Parents should be aware that an appeal against refusal of a place in an infant class may only succeed if it can be demonstrated that:-

- a) the admission of additional children would not breach the infant class size limit; or
- b) the admission arrangements did not comply with admissions law or had not been correctly and impartially applied and the child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had complied or had been correctly and impartially applied; or
- c) the panel decides that the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

Waiting Lists

Parents of children who have not been offered a place at the school may ask for their child's name to be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list will be operated using the criteria listed above. Placing a child's name on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available, This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place. A waiting list will be maintained by the LA until 31st August and subsequently by the school until 31st January 2025.

Late Applications

Any late applications will be considered by the Governors' Admissions Committee, in the event of there being any available places using the above criteria. If all places have been filled, parents will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on the waiting list. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

Admission of children below compulsory school age

The governors will provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year; parents may also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents who are seeking a place for their child outside of their normal age group, e.g., the child has experienced problems such as ill health or the parents of a summer born child preferring not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday, may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1. This application must be received in the correct year in the relevant admissions round.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

In Line with the School Admissions Code, parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group. We are aware that some parents of summer-born children may not want to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1. St. James the Great will manage such request via the following process:

- Parents applying for an out-of-year group place in St. James the Great Catholic Primary must submit supporting professional documentation
- The Governors will use advice given by external agencies and professionals from the fields of health, social care and education for guidance on these applications. The Governors will then decide whether such an out-of-year group place will be offered at St. James the Great. This will allow the school to comply with section 2.17 of the Code, where it states that *“Admission authorities must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent’s views; information about the child’s academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. They must also take into account the views of the head teacher of the school concerned.”*
- This application must be received in the correct year in the relevant admissions round.
- If the request is granted, then the child will be offered a place in the year group agreed by the Governors.
- If the place is NOT offered and no offer is made for the child to attend the school in any other year group, then the family will be given the right of appeal. However, if another year group has been offered in the school then the right of appeal will not be offered.

Fair Access Protocol

The school participates in the local authority’s Fair Access Protocol to allocate places to vulnerable and other children in accordance with the School Admission Code 2012. Admitting pupils under the protocol may require the school to admit above the planned admission number for the relevant year group.

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

The admissions of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or with an EHC Plan are dealt with by a completely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of statements and EHC plans by the pupil’s home local authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the SEND code of practice. Pupils with a statement or EHC plan naming the school will be admitted without reference to the above criteria.

This admissions procedure, although primarily relevant to children for whom a place is sought at the normal age of entry to primary education (Year R), applies also to succeeding years and the nursery subject to availability of places.

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body

_____ (signature) _____ (position)

St James the Great Catholic Primary School
Peckham Road
London SE15 5LP



Supplementary Information Form for 2024/25

This form should be completed when applying for a place at St James the Great Catholic Primary School. Please complete and sign the form below and, if you are Catholic, hand it to your parish priest or the parish priest at the church at which you normally worship. He will complete Part 2 and forward the form to the school. If you are not a Catholic, please hand the form to your minister (or equivalent) who will complete Part 3.

Note: You must also complete and return a Common Application Form (available from the school and/or Local Authority)

PART 1 (To be completed by all parents or carers)

School to which you are applying: _____

Address of school: _____

Surname of child: _____ Date of birth: _____

Christian/forename(s) of child: _____

Religion/Denomination: (eg Roman Catholic) _____ Boy Girl

Date and place of Baptism (if applicable): _____

Parent's or carer's name: _____

Parent's or carer's religion/denomination: _____

Home address: _____

_____ Postcode _____

Contact telephone numbers: _____ (Mother/Father/Carer)

If **Catholic**, indicate which Mass you normally attend Saturday at _____ (time)
or Sunday at _____ (time)

Parish in which you live (eg St James the Great Parish, Peckham):

Usual place of worship (if different): _____

How long have you worshipped there? _____ years. If you have recently moved to the parish, please give details of your previous parish

How often do you attend Mass? weekly once or twice a month less often

Please add here any other information you may feel is relevant to this application in relation to the school's admissions policy in respect of exceptional medical, social or pastoral needs of your child that make only this school suitable for them. Strong and relevant evidence must be provided by an appropriate professional authority (eg qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker or priest). (Continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

I confirm that the information we have given on this form is accurate and truthful:

Signed: _____ Parent/carer Date: _____

PART 2 (To be completed by Catholic priests only)

I am satisfied that the child is a baptised Roman Catholic or a baptised member of a Church that is in full communion with Rome. Yes No

If no, are the parents/child enrolled in a RCIA/RCIC programme? Yes No

PARENT/CARER	
Is/Are the parent/carer known to you?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
1.Regular attendance at Mass (i.e. weekly)	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.Occasional attendance at Mass (i.e. once or twice a month)	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.Irregular attendance at Mass (i.e. less than once a month)	<input type="checkbox"/>
How long have the parent(s) attended your church?	_____

Priest's name: _____ Parish (or ethnic chaplaincy): _____

Address: _____ Tel.: _____

Parish stamp or seal

Priest's signature: _____

Date: _____

PART 3 (To be completed only by ministers of other denominations or faiths)

Non-Catholic parent(s)/carer(s) from other denominations or faiths should hand this form to their minister or equivalent asking them to complete the section below and return it as soon as possible to the school indicated over.

I confirm that this family are members of our faith community The family is not known to me

Name of minister: _____ Denomination/faith: _____

Parish or faith community: _____

Address: _____ Tel.: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Instructions to the priest, minister or other faith leader:

Please complete and return this form by hand or by post to the Office/Clerk to the Governors at the Catholic school indicated overleaf no later than 14th January 2024.

Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR: The information provided on this form will be used for admission purposes only. The information may also be shared with the Local Authority to verify the information given and for the prevention and detection of fraud in relating to admission applications. For further information about how we process this data, please find our privacy notice on our school website: <https://stjamesthegreat.southwark.sch.uk/gdpr-documentation/>