ST. JOHN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS POLICY 2026 - 2027

St. John's Catholic Primary School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below. The school is conducted by its governing body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and articles of association and seeks at all times to be a witness to Our Lord Jesus Christ.

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. We therefore hope that all parents (see note 7) will give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school. This does not affect the right of an applicant who is not Catholic to apply for and be admitted to a place at the school in accordance with the admission arrangements.

The governing body is the admissions authority and has responsibility for admissions to the school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round. The governing body has set its Published Admissions Number (PAN) at 30 pupils to be admitted to the reception class for the school year which begins in September 2026.
Applications are welcome from any family whose child reaches 5 years of age between 1st September 2026 and 31st August 2027.

The governing body will, where logistically possible, admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the last ranked within the school's Published Admissions Number (PAN).

Pupils with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHC) – (see note 1)

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. The admission of children with an EHC Plan will reduce the number of places available to other children (see note 1).

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 children looked after and Catholic children who were previously looked after, including those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England, and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order (see note 2)

2. Catholic children who will have a brother or sister at the school at the expected date of admission (see Rule 6).

3. Catholic children, who are resident in the Parishes of St John the Evangelist, Mill End; Our Lady Help of Christians, Rickmansworth; St Bede's, Croxley Green and St John Fisher, Chorleywood. (The number of places allocated to families resident in each of the four parishes will be shared in a ratio of 2:2:1:1 (St John the Evangelist: Our Lady Help of Christians: St John Fisher: St Bede's). If there are fewer applications than there are places available for residents of a parish, those places will be allocated to the remaining parishes. (see note 3).
4. Other Catholic children (see note 3).
5. Other looked after children and previously looked after children (see notes 2).
6. Other children who will have a brother or sister at the school at the expected date of admission (see note 6).
7. Children of catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church (see notes 4 & 5).
8. Any other children.

Social, Pastoral or Medical Needs

The Governors will give top priority within each criteria above to a child who has a particular social, pastoral or medical need which can only be met at St John's Catholic Primary School. The Governing Body will require compelling professional written evidence from the local church or health authorities and this evidence must be provided by the closing date for applications

Tie break

Where the offer of places to the applicants in any of the categories listed above would exceed the number of places available, the places up to the admission number will be offered to those living closest to the school. The measurement will be conducted by the Local Authority (LA) and is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of the child's home address (see note 8) to the address point of the school. This computerised mapping system is accurate to two decimal places and is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences. This is an objective method of measuring home to school distances consistently when applying admission rules. It does not take into account the actual or expected route a child will travel to school. If two or more applications are received from the same block of flats, the applicant with the lower door number will be classed as nearest and offered a place because they are likely to be closer to the ground floor and, therefore, the school. In the event of distances being the same for two or more children where this would determine the last place to be allocated, random allocation will be carried out and supervised by a person independent of the school. All the names will be entered into a hat and the required number of names will be drawn out.

Application Procedure and Timetable

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round, you **must** complete a Common Application form available from the local authority in which you live (paper forms are also available on request). This form must be returned to the Local Authority by the 15 January 2027.

If you are applying under oversubscription criteria 1, 2, 3, 4, or 7 you should also complete the **School's Supplementary Information Form (SIF).** Whilst this is not compulsory, the information on

the SIF enables the governing body to assess your application fully against the School's oversubscription criteria in the event of receiving more applications than the places available. Please return the SIF (in person, via email or by post) to the school office with all supporting documentation. If you do not complete the SIF and return it to the school by **Monday 15 January 2027**, your child will not be placed in criteria 1 to 4 or criteria 7 and this is likely to affect your child's chance of being offered a place.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application, on Tuesday 16 April 2027 or the next working day, by the local authority on our behalf. If you are unsuccessful (unless your child was offered a place at a school you ranked higher) you will be informed of the reasons, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above and you will have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

All applications which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is 15 January 2027.

Late Applications

Applications received by your local authority after 15 January 2027 will be dealt with in accordance with your home Local Authority Primary Coordinated Admissions Scheme. If the school is oversubscribed it is very unlikely that late applicants will obtain a place.

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 deferral until January or April 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 1st April 2027. Upon receipt of the offer of a place a parent should notify the school as soon as possible if they wish to defer until the spring or summer term.

Admission of Summer Born Children to Reception

Parents may request that their summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1st April – 31st August, be admitted to Reception in the September following their 5th birthday. Parents should inform the Chair of Governors of this at the time of making an application, which should be submitted in the usual way, during the 2026-2027 academic year instead, for a September 2028 place. This application will be treated in the same way as all other applications and ranked according to the oversubscription criteria. There is no guarantee that an offer will be made.

Admission of Children Outside Their Chronological Age Group

Parents may request that their child be educated out of their chronological age group. Such requests must be made in writing to the Chair of Governors during the autumn term in the year of application. Governors will consider each request on its own merits and permission will only be given in exceptional circumstances. When the application is made, it will be ranked with all the other applications and no further exceptions will be given. A statutory right of appeal will be given upon refusal if no place has been offered in any school year.

Continuing Interest (Waiting List)

After places have been offered, Hertfordshire County Council will maintain a continuing interest (waiting) list. 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.

In-Year Applications

An application for admission can be made for any child at any time outside the normal admissions round. Parents should make an online in year application via the Hertfordshire County Council website www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions or contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 for a paper application form. Parents should return the application form direct to the County Council. Parents should also complete the School's In Year Application form, available on the school website, providing evidence of Catholic baptism and return it to the school. This will enable the school governors to rank in-year applications on the continuing interest list against the oversubscription criteria.

In-Year Appeals

The county council will write to you with the outcome of your In Year application and, if you have been unsuccessful, will include registration details to enable you to login and appeal online at www.hertfordshire.gov/schoolappeals

Appeals

Parents who are unsuccessful in securing a place for their child in the Reception class, have the right of appeal. Parents wishing to appeal and who applied online should log into their online application and click on the link 'register an appeal'. For those who did not apply online, please contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request an appeal pack.

Fair Access Protocol

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 local authority 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 (subject to the infant class size exceptions) and also before any children on a waiting list.

NOTES (these explanatory notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

1. **An Education, Health and Care Plan** is a plan made by the local authority under S.37 of the Children and Families Act 2014, specifying the special educational provision required for a child.

2. Children in public care (children looked after)

Places are allocated to children in public care according to Chapter 7, Section 2 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

These children will be prioritised under rule 1.

Highest priority will also be given to children who were previously looked after, including those looked after outside England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangement order or a special guardianship order.

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 (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.

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.

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. Applications made for these children, with suitable supporting professional evidence, can be considered under rule 2.

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.

Children previously looked after abroad and subsequently adopted will be prioritised under Rule 1 if the child's previously looked after 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.

3. **'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 full communion of the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy this includes a looked after child living with a family where at least one of the parents is Catholic. For a child to be treated as Catholic, evidence of Catholic baptism or reception in the Catholic 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 law of the Church.

4. **'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 for a child aged 7 or over. For a child under 7 years of age it will be the certificate of the parent.

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

6. '**Brother or Sister'** includes:

    i. All natural brothers and sisters, half-brother and sisters, adopted brothers and sisters, stepbrothers and sisters, foster brothers and 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.
    iii. Foster siblings and other children living permanently at the address.

7. **A 'Parent'** means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for the child or any adult with legal responsibility for the child**.**

8. **'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.