

St John Fisher Catholic Primary School

Admission Policy 2013/2014

St John Fisher Catholic Primary School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. 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 over subscription criteria listed below. In this policy, 'applicant' refers to you, the parent applying for a place and 'candidate' refers to the child for whom an application is made.

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide 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.

The Governing Body has sole responsibility for admissions to this school and intends to admit 30 children to the Reception Class (Foundation Stage) in the school year commencing September 2012. Thirty is the Published Admission Number (PAN) for the school. Applications are welcome from families whose child reaches his/her 4th birthday between 1st September 2012 and 31st August 2013.

Over subscription criteria

Where there are more applications for places than the total of 30 available, applicants will be considered subject to the following order of priority:

- 1 Catholic "Children looked after 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 living in the parish of St Alban and St Stephen who have a brother or sister in the school at the time of admission.(see note below)
- 3 Baptised Catholic children living in the parish of St Alban and St Stephen.
- 4 Baptised Catholic children living outside the parish of St Alban and St Stephen who have a brother or sister in the school at the time of admission
- 5 Other baptised Catholic children living outside the parish of St Alban and St Stephen
- 6 Other "looked after children and children who have been adopted (or made subject to residence orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after"
- 7 Non-Catholic children who have a brother or sister in the school at the time of admission.
- 8 Christian children whose application can be supported by their minister
- 9 Any other applicants

The Governing Body is committed to taking its fair share of vulnerable children who are hard to place, in accordance with locally agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal round of admissions, the governing body are empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol, which carries the agreement of both the governing body and the diocese for the current admission year. The Governing Body has this power even when admitting such a child would exceed the normal admission number.

The Governing Body will give top priority to an application within a category where evidence is provided at the time of application by a professional, such as a doctor, social worker or priest, of a social, pastoral, medical or other need of the child, which can be met most appropriately at this school.

Tie Break

Where the offer of places to all applicants in any of the categories listed above would lead to over subscription, **the places up to the Published Admission Number will be offered to those living nearest the school as determined by the straight line distance measurement provided by Hertfordshire County Council's GIS system as outlined in the Moving On/Under 11s publications, after taking into account the above criteria. Where there is a need for a tiebreaker where two different addresses measure the same distance from the school the following will apply: in the case of a block of flats the lower door number will be deemed nearest as logically this will be on the ground floor and therefore closer; in all other cases the tie break will be random.**

Application, Procedures and Timetable

In order to make a full application for a place at St John Fisher you should complete and return two separate forms by **the closing date for applications as given by Herts County Council**. You are requested to complete the schools Supplementary Information Form (SIF) and return it to the head teacher at the school. Catholic applicants will need to attach a completed Diocesan priest's reference form to the SIF whilst those of other faiths should attach a letter or reference from their Minister. You must also complete the Herts County Council application form (also known as the Common Application Form or CAF) from the Local Authority and return it to **Herts County Council**. If a SIF is not completed the Governing Body will apply the school's admission arrangements using only the information supplied on the Herts County Council form, which may result in the application being given a lower priority. The SIF is obtainable from the school and the Local Authority offices. You can also download the SIF from the school website and the Local Authority website www.hertsdirect.org/admissions. You can collect the form from the school or contact the school and ask for it to be sent to you.

You will be advised of the outcome by the local authority on **the date specified by Herts County Council**. If your application for a place is unsuccessful you may ask us for the reasons related to the over subscription criteria listed above and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel. **An appeal should be addressed in the first instance to the Chair of Governors.**

Waiting List

In addition to the 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 over subscription 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 at the end of each academic year.

Children with statements of special educational needs

The admission of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs is dealt with by an entirely different procedure. Details of this procedure are set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. It states that all governing bodies are required by section 324 of the Education Act 1996 to admit to the school a child with a statement of special educational needs that names the school.

Notes: (these notes form part of the over subscription criteria)

Parish of St Alban and St Stephen: The parish boundaries are indicated on a map, which is available for inspection in the school or can be sent on request.

Catholic

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 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).

Children Looked After

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

Sibling,

Sibling means brother or sister to include step brothers and sisters, half brothers and sisters or adopted brothers and sisters.

Twins or Multiple Births

As far as possible, siblings (including twins, triplets or children from other multiple births) will be admitted to the school as long as this will comply with the infant class size regulations. Twins/multiple births will be given priority within each category. If this results in only one place being available for more than one child within the same family the offer of a place will be decided by lottery which will be carried out by the governors in the presence of an independent witness.

Evidence of a social, pastoral, medical or other need

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 require written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.

In-Year Admissions

Applications for In-Year admissions 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. If a place cannot be offered at this time then you may ask us 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. When a place becomes available the governing body will decide who is at the top of the list **and offer the place.**

Home Address

For the purposes of this policy '**home address**' should be defined as, '**the place where the child lives for more than 50% of the school week**'.

Deferred Entry

Applicants may defer entry to school up until statutory school age ie the first day of term following the child's fifth birthday. Application is made in the usual way and then the deferment is requested. The place will then be held until the first day of the spring or summer term. Entry may not be deferred beyond statutory school age or beyond the year of application. Parents of children with birthdays in the summer term should be aware that, if they wish to defer, they will need to apply for a Year 1 place for the following September

and that if the school is oversubscribed they are very unlikely to obtain a place. Parents can request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Cross Border Coordination

Cross border coordination for primary applications will be introduced in 2011. All applicants must apply for primary places on their own home Local Authority's application form.

This policy is reviewed annually.

Last reviewed **December 2011**