

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School



"A place of learning – A community of Christ"

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INTRODUCTION

Our Lady's is a Roman Catholic Primary School providing co-educational day schooling. This document describes the Admissions Policy for our School so that all prospective parents are clear on the admission procedure and criteria, whether applying for a school place for the first time or transferring in-year.

The ethos of our school is Catholic and our School motto is '*A Place of Learning – A Community of Christ*'. We ask all parents applying to Our Lady's Catholic Primary School to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community. This does not affect the right of parents who are not of the Catholic faith to apply and be considered for a place.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School is promoted by the Diocese of Northampton and is a member of the St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust which was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families.

The admissions authority for the school is the Board of Directors of the St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust who has responsibility for admissions to the school. The Board of Directors has delegated responsibility for the administration of the admissions process to the Local Academy Committee of the school. It is guided in that responsibility by the requirements of:

- The National Education Acts and the School Admissions Code 2021
- The Northampton Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees (NORES)
- The advice and guidance of Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC)
- Its duty to the school and the local Catholic communities
- The Fair Access protocol

The school serves the Catholic Parishes of Our Lady's Chesham Bois, St. Columba's Chesham, St. Aidan's Little Chalfont and Immaculate Heart of Mary Great Missenden.

ADMISSION NUMBER

Each year group has 1 class.

The Admission Number of the school for Key Stage 1 is 30. This means a maximum class size of 30 children for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

The Admission Number of the school for Key Stage 2 is 2. This means a maximum class size of 32 children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6.¹

At the start of Key Stage 2 (Year 3) there is a formal point of admission. The Admissions Procedure and criteria below will also apply for the allocation of the additional places available in Key Stage 2.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

The admissions procedure is as defined by The Co-ordinated Scheme for Primary Admissions in the area of Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) Local Authority (LA).

- The Admissions page of our school website provides all information for admission to our school. This should be consulted along with the BCC Primary Guide for Parents, which details the admissions timetable and application procedure. Both are available from our School Office or visit the BCC website on:
<http://www.bucksc.gov.uk/education/schools/admissions-and-moving-school>
- Parents wishing to apply for a place for their child must complete the co-ordinated admission form and submit it to the Local Authority, by their published deadline for admissions.
- In addition, in order to qualify for admissions criteria 1,2,3,4 and 8, the supplementary information form **MUST** be completed and submitted with supporting evidence such as certified copies of Baptismal certificates, letters from Priests, Religious Leaders, and evidence of Faith, to the school by the Local Authority published deadline for admissions. All evidence should be original copies and not photocopies.
- The Governing Body will consider all applications according to the criteria set out in this policy without reference to the ability or aptitude of the child.
- Children with a statement of Special Educational Needs naming the school will be admitted in accordance with the LA's policy and regulations.
- Places are offered for all Reception admissions to start in September. Parents can choose to delay that admission and/or take up the offer on a full or part time basis in the first instance. All children have to be attending full time from the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday.

¹ Typically, the 32-pupil capacity in Key Stage 2 (Year 3 onwards) will be filled from internal pupils moving up from Key Stage 1 (leaving Year 2) and external applicants will then be admitted up the relevant capacity figure.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

Ideally, the Governing Body would like to offer a place to every Catholic child who seeks admission, but because of the limitation on the number of children who can be accommodated within the school it is necessary to apply criteria to determine who will be offered the available places.

The Admissions Committee will give priority to children in the following order:

- 1st Baptised Catholic “looked after” and previously “looked after” children.
- 2nd Baptised Catholic children of Teachers* (see note) at Our Lady’s School who have been employed at the school as a Teacher for more than two years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made.
- 3rd Baptised Catholic children of practising Catholic families with priestly support for Catholic Practice.
- 4th Baptised Catholic but without priestly support for Catholic Practice.
- 5th “Looked after” and previously “looked after” children other than those of the Catholic faith.
- 6th Children of Teachers* (see note) at Our Lady’s School who have been employed at the school as a Teacher for more than two years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made
- 7th Siblings of other children on the school roll at expected time of admission.
- 8th Children of other Christian Denominations
- 9th Any other children

* Teachers’ are full or part time individuals employed as teachers holding Qualified Teacher Status

Within criteria **1 to 4** above, children are ordered as follows:

- a. Children deemed a ‘special case’ in the original application by Parish Priest/ Diocesan Agency/ Social Services/ Health Authority because of specific pastoral or medical need in order of ‘Nearest Resident’
- b. Siblings of children who will be on the school roll at the expected date of admission in order of ‘Nearest Resident’
- c. Children with no siblings who will be on the school roll at the expected date of admission in order of ‘Nearest Resident’

‘*Nearest resident*’ means the closest by ‘Distance from Home to School’, taking one child from each ‘parish’ in turn in the order below. Once no children remain from the four named parishes, children who are not resident in any of the four named parishes will then be selected and ordered by nearest ‘Distance from Home to School’:

1. Nearest in Our Lady’s Parish
2. Nearest in St. Columba’s Parish
3. Nearest in St. Aidan’s Parish
4. Nearest in Immaculate Heart of Mary/ St. Anne’s Parish.

The parish boundaries applicable are available on the school website Admissions page or from the school office.

Within criteria **5 to 9** above, children are ordered as follows:

- a. Children deemed a 'special case' in the original application by Parish Priest/ Diocesan Agency/ Social Services/ Health Authority because of specific pastoral or medical need ordered by nearest 'Distance from Home to School'
- b. Siblings of children who will be on the school roll at the expected date of admission in ordered by nearest 'Distance from Home to School'
- c. Children with no siblings who will be on the school roll at the expected date of ordered by nearest 'Distance from Home to School'

LATE APPLICATIONS

Late applications will be dealt with in accordance with the BCC Primary Guide for Parents.

APPEALS

All parents have the right to appeal against any unsuccessful application firstly to the Governing Body and secondly to an independent panel. The decision of the panel is binding on the school and the parents. Details of how to do this will be sent out with the decision letter.

In the event of an unsuccessful appeal, the school will not consider any further application in the same school year (1st September to 31st August); unless there has been a material change in circumstances, for example, a change of address.

WAITING LISTS

The school maintains waiting lists for those children who are not offered a place, and the parents ask for the child's name to be added to the waiting list. The order of priority on the waiting list is the same as the admissions criteria, and does not depend on the date on which an application is received. No account is taken of length of time on a waiting list. Parents will need to ensure their child remains on the waiting list by contacting OLS in May of each year to re-confirm the need for a place.

IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS

In-year admissions apply to children seeking a school place during the school year. In-year admissions are managed directly by the school which maintains the waiting lists. In-year admissions are managed according to the same admissions criteria listed above.

To make an in-year application please complete the supplementary information form available on the school website or from the school office.

ADMISSION OF CHILDREN OUTSIDE THEIR NORMAL AGE GROUP

The school will follow the LA's policy and regulations.

The details supplied for the requested admission of a child must satisfy the School Admissions Policy and will be subject to any existing waiting lists.

HELP AND ADVICE

The Head Teacher will be pleased to meet and help with further advice. Please make contact via the School Office:

Our Lady's Catholic School, Amersham Road, Chesham Bois, Amersham, Bucks, HP6 5PL

Tel: 01494 726390

Email: office@olschesham.co.uk

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. BAPTISED CATHOLIC means baptised according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church, or enrolled in a Catholic Baptismal programme.
2. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN are those children in care of the Local Authority or who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became the subject of an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. This also includes children who have been in similar Looked After situations Internationally. A full definition can be found in the Government School Admissions Code 2021 under Internationally Previously Looked After children (IAPLAC).
3. NORMAL HOME ADDRESS is where the child spends the majority of the school week (Monday to Friday, including nights). We may ask to see official documentation, such as a child benefit book or medical card.
4. OTHER CHRISTIAN denominations are member churches of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, as detailed on their website www.ctbi.org.uk when the school admissions criteria are applied, namely Spring term each year.
5. PARENT includes the natural parent or in their absence a person who is the legal guardian.
6. PRIESTLY SUPPORT means your priest will confirm one or more parent(s) are practising Catholics. This is confirmed by means of a Certificate of Catholic Practice which can be found of the Admissions page of the school website and is also available from the school office.
7. DISTANCE FROM HOME TO SCHOOL is the distance from a child's home to school as measured by the Local Authority.
8. SIBLING refers to brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister, step-brother and step-sister including adopted children. The children must be permanently resident at the same household and fully supported by the parents. When two or more children are applying to the school at the same time in different year groups, then they will be deemed to be siblings and will all fall into the SIBLING category within the admissions criteria for their respective year group.
9. PARISH: means Parish of residence and not where Mass is attended.