St John Fisher RC Primary School

Admissions Policy 2026-27



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St John Fisher Mission Statement

The school, in partnership with parents and with the parish of St John Fisher, offers to each one of its children a Catholic education centred on Christ, which enables them to develop their talents in accordance with Christian values and principles and which throughout all aspects of school life presents Christ's ministry of love and reconciliation.

St. John Fisher RC Primary School

Admissions Policy and Procedures 2026-2027

St. John Fisher Catholic Primary School is a voluntary aided school in the Diocese of Southwark. It is in the trusteeship of the Diocese. 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. The school exists primarily to serve the Catholic community and Catholic children always have priority of admission. However, the Governing Body also welcomes applications from those of other denominations and faiths and from those who have no faith who support the religious ethos of the school.

Having consulted with the Local Authority, the Diocese and other admission authorities, the governors intend to admit into the reception class, in September 2026, up to 60 pupils, the published admission number (PAN), without reference to ability or aptitude.

Where the number of applications exceeds 60, the Governors will offer places using the following criteria in the order stated below: -

1. Looked after Catholic children and all previously looked after Catholic children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. Catholic children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.

2. Baptised Catholic children, in possession of a Certificate of Practice. Both a baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church and the Certificate of Practice must be provided.

3. Baptised Catholic children. A baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church must be provided.

4. Looked after children and all previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. Children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.

5. Children enrolled in the catechumenate. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required.

6. Children who are members of Eastern Orthodox Churches. Evidence of Baptism will be required.

7. Children who are members of other faiths, Churches and denominations. Evidence of Baptism/dedication or evidence of membership required.

8. Any other children.

Priorities applied in case of oversubscription within the above categories.

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

i. A brother or sister on the school roll at the time of admission. Evidence of the relationship may be required. The governors will, where logistically possible, admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the last child ranked within the school's published admissions number.

ii. Living in the parish of St. John Fisher*

iii. Social, pastoral and medical needs which make the school particularly suitable for the child in question. Strong and relevant evidence must be provided, at the time of application, by an appropriate professional authority (eg qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker or priest).

iv. Proximity to the school of the child's home address, the distance measured in a straight line from the school entrance by the local authority using a geographical computerised information system. Evidence of residence may be required. 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.

Notes:

a. Catholics include members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome**
b. A looked after child has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 that is child who is (a) in the care of a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents) at the time of making application. A previously looked after child is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order.
c. A looked after child has the same meaning as in section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989 that is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents) at the time of making an application. A previously looked after child is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order. This will include children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.
d. A certificate of practice: This is a standard form, completed by the pupil's parish priest or recognised Ethnic Minority Chaplain [please refer to the Archdiocese of Southwark Directory for a list of chaplains]. The purpose of the form is to certify that the child and his family are known to the priest and that to the best of the priest's knowledge and belief the child is a practicing Catholic.
e. A "brother or sister" means children who live as brother and sister including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers or sisters. It would not include other relatives (e.g. cousins).
f. Home refers to the permanent home address at which the child lives for the majority of his/her time and with the parent who is in receipt of child benefit.

Admissions procedure

The Common Application Form (CAF) required by the Local Authority and the Certificate of Practice should be completed and received at the school not later than the national closing date for primary schools. The Certificate of Practice is not mandatory and is only required for those applying under Criteria 2 of the model policy. You are advised to retain a copy of the certificate, offers of places will be sent to parents by their home Local Authority on the common offer date.

Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan

The admission of pupils with an EHC Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of 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 an EHC plan naming the school will be admitted without reference to the above criteria.

Appeals

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with section 94 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.

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, eg, 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 that is to reception rather than year 1.

Governors will make decisions on 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 will also take into account the views of the school's head teacher. When informing a parent of the decision which year group the child should be admitted to, the governors will set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

Where the governors agree to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school the local authority will process the application as part of the main admissions round, (unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible) and on the basis of the determined admission arrangements, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group.

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, which will be maintained until at least 31st December of each school year of admissions. The waiting list will be operated using the same admissions 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. It is possible that when a child is directed under the local authority's fair access protocol they will take precedence over those children already on the list.

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.

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), will also apply to succeeding years, and be subject to the availability of places.

Parish boundary map

https://www.st-johnfisher.merton.sch.uk/assets/Documents/Attachments/Parish-Boundary.pdf

*** Churches in union with Rome***

Personal Ordinariate: *Baptised children of parents who are members of the Ordinariate, established under The Apostolic Constitution Anglicanorum Coetibus of 4th November 2009, are to be given equal preference to that offered to children baptised in a Catholic church. It is important to note that these children may have been baptised in the Church of England.*

Eastern Catholic (or Oriental Rite) Churches in union with Rome: *The Holy See's Annuario Pontificio gives the following list of Eastern Catholic Churches.*

Alexandrian liturgical tradition:

1. Coptic Catholic Church (patriarchate):

2. Eritrean Catholic Church (metropolia):

3. Ethiopian Catholic Church (metropolia):

West Syrian, including Malankara, liturgical tradition (which is part of Antiochene Rite):

1. Maronite Church (patriarchate):

2. Syriac Catholic Church (patriarchate):

3. Syro-Malankara Catholic Church (major archepiscopate):

Armenian liturgical tradition:

1. Armenian Catholic Church (patriarchate):

Chaldean or East Syrian liturgical tradition:

1. Chaldean Catholic Church

2. Syro-Malabar Catholic Church (Major Archepiscopate):

Constantinopolitan (Byzantine) liturgical tradition:

1. Albanian Catholic Church (apostolic administration):

2. Belarusian Catholic Church (no established hierarchy at present):

3. Bulgarian Greek Catholic Church (apostolic exarchate):

4. Byzantine Church of Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro (an eparchy and an apostolic exarchate):

5. Greek Byzantine Catholic Church (two apostolic exarchates):

6. Hungarian Greek Catholic Church (an eparchy and an apostolic exarchate):

7. Italo-Albanian Catholic Church (two eparchies and a territorial abbacy):

8. Macedonian Catholic Church (an apostolic exarchate):

9. Melkite Greek Catholic Church (patriarchate):

10. Romanian Church United with Rome (major archiepiscopate):

11. Russian Catholic Church (two apostolic exarchates, at present with no published hierarchs):

12. Ruthenian Catholic Church (a sui juris metropolia, an eparchy & an apostolic exarchate):

13. Slovak Catholic Church (metropolia and an eparchy):

14. Ukrainian Catholic Church (major archiepiscopate):

There are an equivalent number of Eastern Orthodox Churches with similar names that are not in union with the See of Rome. The general rule is Eastern Rite Churches in union with the See of Rome will have the word Catholic in their titles. Churches with the word Orthodox in their titles are not in union with the See of Rome and children from these Churches should not be considered as Catholic children. Please refer any queries to the Commission.