

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

2025

Admissions Policy



“Doing our best for God”

Introduction

St Bernadette's is a Catholic School provided by the Diocese of Lancaster and maintained by Blackpool Council as a voluntary aided primary school.

The Governing Body is the admissions authority and is responsible for taking decisions on applicants for admission.

The Governors welcome applications from Catholic and non-Catholic parents who wish to have their children educated within the aims and ethos of St Bernadette's Catholic School.

St Bernadette's is a Catholic Primary School in which the Catholic faith and the teachings of the Catholic Church are important aspects of school life and influence the school curriculum.

We ask all parents applying for a place here to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community. This does not affect the right of parents who are not of the faith of this school to apply for and be considered for a place here.

The Governing Body is responsible for admissions within the requirements of the law. In doing so, the Governing Body has regard for:

- I. The advice of the Diocesan Trustees on the nature and purpose of Catholic schools;**
- II. The Governing Body's responsibility towards the school and the Catholic community it serves;**
- III. The Catholic character of the school and its Mission Statement.**

It is the duty of the Governing Body to comply with class size limits at Key Stage One. This means that the school cannot operate classes in Key Stage One of more than 30 children. No more than 30 children will be admitted to any one reception or infant class.

The information for pupils starting school in 2025 will be available from the school in May 2025.

As required by law, all children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs naming the school will be admitted before the application of the oversubscription criteria.

The Governing Body has set the planned admissions number for September 2025 at 30. The Local Authority and other parties required by law have been consulted on this.

1. Applications for a place at the school should be made on the Local Authority common application form or online and returned **to the Local Authority no later than 15th January 2026**

2. Parents must complete the common application form available from the Local Authority. Parents who wish their application to this Catholic school to be considered against the priority faith criteria should also complete **St Bernadette's School's Supplementary Information Form**. If the school is oversubscribed, failure to complete the supplementary form may result in your application for a place in this school being considered against lower priority criteria, as the Governing Body will have no information upon which to assess the application on the basis of the applicant's baptism.
3. ***The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to the school by 15th January 2026***
4. Each Catholic applicant will be required to produce a baptismal certificate or other evidence of baptism.
5. The admissions committee of the Governing Body will consider all applications at the same time after the given closing date.
6. Parents or guardians will be informed of the outcome of their application in writing by the School and Local Authority **by April 2026**
7. As required by law, all children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs naming the school will be admitted before the application of the over- subscription criteria.

ADMISSIONS (OVER-SUBSCRIPTION) CRITERIA

The Governors will admit up to 30 children in September 2024. If the number of applications for admission exceeds the places available, children will be admitted in the order of priority A - J

- A. **Looked after and previously looked after Baptised Catholic children.**
- B. **Baptised* Catholic children worshipping at St Bernadette's Church and with a sibling in the school at the time of expected admission.**
- C. **Other baptised Catholic children worshipping at St Bernadette's Church.**
- D. **Other baptised Catholic children living in St Bernadette's Parish and with a sibling in school at the time of expected admission.**
- E. **Other baptised Catholic children living in St Bernadette's Parish.**
- F. **Other baptised Catholic children with a sibling in school at the time of expected admission.**

- G. Other baptised Catholic children.**
- H. Other looked after and previously looked after children.**
- I. Other children whose parents wish them to be educated within the aims and values of a catholic school who have a sibling at St Bernadette's.**
- J. Other children whose parents wish them to be educated within the aims and values of a Catholic school.**

In the event of over-subscription in any of the above criteria, places will be allocated according to the following tie-breaker criterion:

Applicants living nearest to the school (The distance between an applicant's home and school is measured as a straight line from the Ordnance Survey address point of the home address the school. The Ordnance Survey address point is a point within the boundary of the property and is usually located at its centre. Distances are measured using the Councils' Geographic Information System.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

(These notes are part of the policy)

Looked After Children

A 'Looked After Child' or 'previously looked after child' is a child who is in or has been in the care of the Local Authority or provided with accommodation by that Authority (as defined in Section 22 of the Children Act 1989) at the time of application and allocation. This includes any "looked after child" and any child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order.

Siblings

Sibling refers to full brothers or sisters, half brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, or the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom the place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling. Stepchildren or foster children who live at the same address are also classed as siblings

Address of Pupil

The address used on the school's admission form must be the current one at the time of application. If the address changes subsequently, the parents should notify the school. In some cases, for example, where shared parental living arrangements are in place, a child's address may be difficult to determine. In these circumstances, the address used for child benefit purposes, ie, the address of the parent claiming the child benefit, will be used.

If you are moving house and applying for the school and it is not oversubscribed, using your new address may not be a problem. In the event of oversubscription, it may be possible to consider your application on the basis of an address you are intending to move to. You must be resident at a specific address and not just a stated intention to move to an area. You must provide evidence that you have exchanged contracts on a house or have an offer of a tenancy on a property in which you intend to live and which will be in place when your child would start at the school. This evidence must be submitted as soon as possible and no later than the deadline of **15th January 2026**. Further evidence, e.g. utility bills, will also need to be submitted by this date.

Multiple Births

Where there are twins or multiple birth children wanting admission and there is only one single place left within the admission number, then the Governing Body will exercise as much flexibility as possible within the requirements of infant class sizes.

In exceptional circumstances we are now able to offer places for both twins and all triplets even when this means breaching infant class size limits. This may also apply to children who are siblings within the same year group.

Late Applications

Applications received after the closing date of **15th January 2026** will be treated as late applications. Only in exceptional circumstances, and where appropriate evidence is provided, will applications received after the closing date (but before offers of places have been made) be considered alongside those received on time.

Waiting List

A waiting list for children who have not been offered a place will be kept and will be ranked according to the admissions criteria. Parents/guardians are invited to contact the school if they wish to be informed of their child's position on the waiting list. The waiting list will be closed at the end of the Autumn term.

Fraudulent Applications

Where the Governing Body discovers that a child has been awarded a place as a result of an intentionally misleading application from a parent, e.g. where a false address has been provided, then the Governing Body is required to withdraw the offer of a place. The application will then be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.

Appeal Arrangements

If the Governing Body has turned down an application for admission, parents can appeal to an independent appeals panel. This appeal should be sent in writing to the clerk to the governors at the school within 14 days of notification of refusal. The date of notification will be considered to be 2 working days after posting by first class post of the refusal to offer a place. The parents must give their reasons for appealing in writing. The decision of the appeal panel is binding on the parents and on the Governing Body.

Non-routine admissions

It sometimes happens that a child needs to change school other than at the "normal" time; such admissions are known as non-routine admissions. Parents wishing their child to attend this school should arrange to visit the school. They will be required to complete a school application form in addition to the common application form, provided by the Local Authority, allowing them to express up to three preferences. The admission of all students to Blackpool schools will be co-ordinated by the Schools Admissions Team. If there is no place, then the School Admissions Team will provide information about how to appeal against the decision. Appeals for children moving into the area will not be considered until there is evidence of a permanent address, e.g. exchange of contracts or tenancy agreement with rent book.

Please note that you cannot re-appeal for a place at a school within the same school year unless there has been relevant, significant and material change in the family circumstances.

To be reviewed September 2026

Louise Woolfall
Head Teacher