



ADMISSIONS POLICY 2025-2026

PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOLS BUCKS AREA

APPROVED BY: LOCAL ACADEMY COMMITTEE

LAST CONSULTED ON: November 2022

DATE: November 2023

NEXT CONSULTATION DATE (unless required earlier): OCT 2029

This policy is going through a consultation period in respect of an amendment to the oversubscription criteria for St Joseph's Catholic Primary School – see page 6 of the policy for the amendment (highlighted).

The consultation will open on 29 November 2023 and close on 10 January 2024. Any comments should be sent to consultation@stcat.co.uk.

St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. This Admission Policy applies to the following schools:

- Our Lady's Catholic Primary School
- St Edward's Catholic Junior School
- St Joseph's Catholic Infant School
- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
- St Louis Catholic Primary School and Nursery
- St Peter's Catholic Primary School

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will 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 Catholic schools, 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 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 admissions authority for the school is the Board of Directors of the St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust who has responsibility for admissions to this school. The Board of Directors has delegated responsibility for the administration of the admissions process to the Local Academy Committee of the relevant school.

The admissions process for the above listed schools is part of the Local Authority co-ordinated admissions scheme. To apply for a place at any of the above listed schools in the normal admissions round, an application must be made using the school admission application process of the local authority in which you live naming the school on the application form. Applications need to be made by 15 January 2025. A Supplementary Admission Form must also be completed and returned directly to the school by the same date.

The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round¹. The relevant Local Academy Committees have set admission numbers for pupils to be admitted to the reception year and nursery in the school and at Year 3 for St Edward's Catholic Junior School, year beginning September 2025 as follows:

| School | Admission Numbers |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Our Lady's Catholic Primary School | 30 |
| St Edward's Catholic Junior School | 64 |
| St Joseph's Catholic Infant School | 60 |
| St Joseph's Catholic Primary School | 60 |
| St Louis Catholic Primary School | 60 |
| St Peter's Catholic Primary School | 15 |

The relevant Local Academy Committee 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 ("PAN").

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (see note 1)

The admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school must be admitted. Where this takes place before the allocation of places under these arrangements this will reduce the number of places available to other children.

¹ This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year

Oversubscription Criteria: Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority. Where reference is made to "relevant parish(es)", this is the parish that the school resides in.

1. Looked after and previously looked after children, including those who have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see note 2).
2. Baptised Catholic children of teachers² 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. (see note 3)
3. Baptised Catholic children of practising Catholic families with priestly support for Catholic Practice. (see note 3)
4. Baptised Catholic children but without priestly support for Catholic Practice. (see note 3)
5. Siblings of other children on the school roll at expected time of admission. (see note 4)
6. Children of teachers² 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.
7. Children of other Christian denominations.
8. Any other children.

Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.

- (i) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social or, medical need of the child which can most appropriately be met at this school. (see note 6).
- (ii) Siblings of children who will be on the school roll at the expected date of admission in order of nearest residence³ (see note 4).
- (iii) Other pupils within the category who do not fit into provision (i) and (ii) outlined above.

² Teachers' are full or part time individuals employed as teachers holding Qualified Teacher Status.

³ Nearest residence means the closest by distance from home to school. Distance from home to school is the distance from a child's home to school as measured by the Local Authority.

Oversubscription Criteria: St Edward's Catholic Junior School

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority. Where reference is made to "relevant parish(es)", this is the parish that the school resides in.

1. Looked after and previously looked after children, including those who have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see note 2).
2. Baptised Catholic children (or children who are actively participating in a Parish Baptismal Programme) who live and practice in the relevant parish(es) or who for family/liturgical reasons, attend another Catholic church. (see notes 3 and 7)
3. Other baptised Catholic children (see note 3).
4. Children who attend St Joseph's Catholic Infant School.
5. Children who have a sibling attending St Edward's (or St Joseph's Infant, Aylesbury) in Reception to Year 5 at the time the allocations are made. For in-year admissions after the point of entry this will apply to siblings of children who are in Reception to Year 6 at the time of admission. (see note 4).
6. Children of staff employed by St Edward's or St Joseph's Infant for two or more years.
7. Baptised or dedicated children of other Christian denomination whose parents wish them to have a Catholic education and whose application is supported by a Minister.
8. Unbaptised children from a Catholic or other Christian family, whose parents wish them to receive a Catholic education and can provide a completed supplementary form by their parish priest or Church minister (see note 3).
9. Children from other faiths or traditions whose parents wish them to have a Catholic education and whose application is supported by a religious leader
10. Any other children.

Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.

- (i) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social or, medical need of the child which can most appropriately be met at this school, the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made (see note 6).
- (ii) Catholic children who attend St Joseph's Catholic Infant School (Aylesbury).
- (iii) Catholic children who have a sibling attending St Edward's (or St Joseph's in Aylesbury) in Reception to Year 5 at the time the allocations are made. For in-year admissions after the point of entry this will apply to siblings of children who are in Reception to Year 6 at the time of admission. (see note 4).
- (iv) Other pupils within the category who do not fit into provision (i) and (iii) outlined above

Oversubscription Criteria: St Joseph's Catholic Infant School

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority. Where reference is made to "relevant parish(es)", this is the parish that the school resides in.

1. Looked after and previously looked after children, including those who have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see note 2).
2. Baptised Catholic children with siblings who attend St Joseph's Catholic Infant School or St Edward's Catholic Junior School at the time of admission (or those currently attending a baptismal programme). (See note 3 and 7).
3. Baptised Catholic children (or those currently attending a baptismal programme). (see note 3 and 7)
4. Siblings of other children who attend St Joseph's Catholic Infant School or St Edward's Catholic Junior School at the time of admission. (see note 4)
5. Children of staff⁴.
6. Children from other Christian denominations who submit a baptismal certificate or written support statement from their Minister.
7. Any other faiths with the written support of their minister of religion provided their parents are in sympathy with the Catholic ethos of the school.
8. Any other children.

Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.

- (i) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social or, medical need of the child which can most appropriately be met at this school. (see note 6).
- (ii) Children who attend St Joseph's pre-school at the time of application.
- (iii) Other pupils within the category who do not fit into provision (i) and (ii) outlined above.

⁴ All staff, on a permanent contract, either full time or part time.

Oversubscription Criteria: St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

1. Looked after and previously looked after children, including those who have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see note 2).
2. Baptised Catholic children who are resident in the relevant parish(es) for whom the school is the nearest Catholic school (see notes 3 & 7) and who have a sibling (see note 4) attending the school at the time of admission.
3. Other Catholic children (see note 3).
4. Siblings of other children of the school roll at expected time of admission. (see note 4)
5. Children of teachers⁵ at St Joseph's Catholic Primary 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.
6. Children of other Christian denominations supported by a priest or minister of religion.
7. Children of other Christian denominations without support from a priest or minister of religion.
8. Children of other faiths.
9. Any other children.

Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.

- (i) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social or, medical need of the child which can most appropriately be met at this school. (see note 6).
- (ii) Siblings of children who will be on the school roll at the expected date of admission.
- (iii) Children who have attended St Joseph's pre-school.
- (iv) Proximity of the child's permanent address to school (as the crow flies).

⁵ Teachers' are full or part time individuals employed as teachers holding Qualified Teacher Status.

Oversubscription Criteria: St Louis Catholic Primary School

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority. Where reference is made to “relevant parish(es)”, this is the parish that the school resides in.

1. Looked after and previously looked after children, including those who have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see note 2).
2. Baptised Catholic children who are resident in the relevant parish(es) for whom the school is the nearest Catholic school (see notes 3 & 7).
3. Baptised Catholic children who are resident in other parish(es) (see notes 3 & 7).
4. Other Baptised Catholic children (see note 3).
5. Children of teaching staff⁶
6. Baptised or dedicated children of other Christian denominations (including Orthodox) whose parents wish them to have a Catholic education and whose application is supported by a Minister.
7. Baptised or dedicated children of other Christian denomination (including Orthodox) whose parents wish them to have a Catholic education and that are in sympathy with the ethos of the school.
8. Unbaptised children from a Catholic family whose parents specifically wish them to receive a Catholic education, that are in sympathy with the ethos of the school and can provide supporting evidence of their faith commitment.
9. Children from other faith backgrounds who have supporting evidence from their Minister or Faith Leaders and whose parents are in sympathy with the ethos of the school.
10. Children from other faith backgrounds whose parents can provide evidence other than a Faith Leader’s signature and specifically wish them to receive a Catholic education and are in sympathy with the ethos of the school.
11. Any other children.

Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.

- (i) Children of teaching staff
- (ii) Siblings and are attending St Louis’ Nursery
- (iii) Siblings.
- (iv) Children who are attending or have attended St Louis’ Nursery
- (v) Other pupils within the category who do not fit into provision (i) and (iv) outlined above.

⁶ Teachers employed at St Louis’ on a permanent contract either part time or full time.

Oversubscription Criteria: St Peter's Catholic Primary School

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. Where reference is made to "relevant parish(es)", this is the parish that the school resides in.

1. Looked after and previously looked after children, including those who have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see note 2).
2. Baptised Catholic children who are resident in the relevant parish(es) for whom the school is the nearest Catholic school (see notes 3 & 7) and who have a sibling (see note 4) attending the school at the time of admission.
3. Baptised Catholic children who are resident in another parish and who have a sibling (see note 4) attending the school at the time of admission.
4. Baptised Catholic children who are resident in the relevant parish(es) for whom the school is the nearest Catholic school (see notes 3 & 7).
5. Other Catholic children (see note 3).
6. Children who have a sibling at the school and whose parents support the Catholic ethos of the school.
7. Children whose parents support the Catholic ethos of the school.
8. Any other children.

Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.

- (i) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social or, medical need of the child which can most appropriately be met at this school, the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made (see note 6).
- (ii) Final distance. Distances are calculated on the basis of a straight-line measurement between the front door of the child's home address (including the community entrance to flats) and the main entrance of the school using the local authority's computerised measuring system. 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.



Tie Break

Priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. Distances are calculated on the basis of a straight-line measurement between the front door of the child's home address (including the community entrance to flats) and the main entrance of the school using the local authority's computerised measuring system. 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 Procedures and Timetable

To apply for a place at one of our schools in the normal admission round⁷, you must complete a Common Application Form available from the local authority in which you live. You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Admission Form attached to this policy if you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria 1 and 3 to 10. The Supplementary Admission Form should be returned to the relevant school by 15 January 2025.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 16th April or the next working day, by the local authority on our behalf. If you are unsuccessful (unless your child gained a place at a school you ranked higher) you will be informed of the reasons, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel. Parents can lodge an appeal by writing to the Clerk to the Governors of the school to which you are applying.

If you do not provide the information required in the Supplementary Admission Form and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child will not be placed in criteria 1 and 3 to 5, and this is likely to affect your child's chance of being offered a place.

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 2025.

Late Applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with your home Local Authority Primary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. You are encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.

Admission of Children Below Compulsory School Age and Deferred Entry

A child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday. A child's parents may defer the date at which their child, below compulsory school age, is admitted to the school, until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age, or beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which an offer was made. A child may take up a part-time place until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age. Upon receipt of the offer of a place a parent should notify the school, as soon as possible, that they wish to either defer their child's entry to the school or take up a part-time place.

Admission of Children outside their Normal Age Group

A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1 April and 31 August, may request that the child be admitted out of their normal age group, to reception rather than Year 1.

Any such request should be made in writing to the Chair of the Local Academy Committee of the relevant school at the same time as the admission application is made. The Local Academy Committee will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the head teacher, including the head teacher's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the Local Academy

⁷ This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

Committee will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful children will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out above and **not** in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Waiting lists for admission will operate throughout the school year.

Reception: The waiting list will be held open until July 2026. Parents will need to reapply for a place at their preferred school after this date if they wish their child's name to be carried forward on the waiting list.

Year 1 to 6: Unsuccessful applications received from the start of the autumn term 2025 until the end of the spring term 2026 will be placed on a waiting list until 31 July 2025. Applications received from the start of the summer term 2026 to the end of the academic year will be placed on a waiting list until 31 July 2027.

Inclusion in the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

In-Year Applications

An application can be made for a place for a child at any time outside the admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. Application should be made directly to the school.

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out above, will be applied.

If there are no places available, the child will be added to the waiting list (see above).

You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing within 10 school days, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

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 admission round the Local Academy Committee is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The Local Academy Committee has this power, even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number (subject to the infant class size exceptions).

Nursery

Nursery places are allocated by the school and applications for admissions should be made directly to the school.

Attendance at the school's nursery does not automatically guarantee that a place will be offered at the school and an application form must be submitted for transfer from nursery to primary school.

The Local Academy Committee reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place or, where a child is already attending the school, the place itself, where it is satisfied that the offer or place was obtained by deception.

Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

1. An Education, Health and Care Plan is a plan made by the local authority under section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014, specifying the special educational provision required for a child.
2. A 'looked after child' has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 and means any 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 to the school.

A 'previously looked after child' is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because he or she was adopted or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order.

Both categories include those children who have been in state care outside of England.

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 the full communion of the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy, it 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 into the 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. 'brother or sister' and 'sibling' includes:
 - (i) All natural brothers or sisters, half brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or 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.
5. A 'parent' means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for a child, and any person who has care of a child.
6. To demonstrate an exceptional social or medical need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the governing body will require a letter from a Doctor (medical need) or Director of Children Services (social need) in the relevant Local Authority, specifying why the school is the only reasonable alternative for the child and the reasons why other schools in the catchment area for the child are not appropriate.
7. For the purposes of this policy, the relevant parishes are:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Our Lady's Catholic Primary School | Our Lady's, Chesham Bois; St Columba's, Chesham; St Aidan's, Little Chalfont; and Immaculate Heart of Mary, Great Missenden |
| St Edward's Catholic Junior School | St Joseph's and St Clare's; Guardian Angels; Our Lady of Lourdes (Aylesbury); or St Anne's (Wendover) |
| St Joseph's Catholic Infant School | St Joseph's and St Clare's; Guardian Angels; Our Lady of Lourdes (Aylesbury); or St Anne's (Wendover) |
| St Joseph's Catholic Primary School | St Joseph's, Chalfont St Peter (which includes The Most Holy Name Church, Denham and Bridgettine Convent, Iver) and St Teresa's, Beaconsfield |
| St Louis Catholic Primary School | St Joseph's and St Clare's, Our Lady of Lourdes and Guardian Angels, Aylesbury |
| St Peter's Catholic Primary School | St Peter's, Marlow |

8. 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.
9. In the case of UK service personnel and crown servants returning to England, a place can be allocated in advance of the family arriving in the area provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declare a relocation date. The address at which the child will live will be applied as long as the parents provide evidence of their intended address. This address will also be used in the case of applying the over-subscription criteria and tie break. Further, a parent may request a Unit or quartering address is used as the child's home address when considering the application against the oversubscription criteria.

