



## ADMISSIONS POLICY and PROCEDURES For September 2024 entry

### MISSION STATEMENT

**“Jesus took a little child and set him by his side and then said to them, ‘Anyone who welcomes this little child in my name, welcomes me; and anyone who welcomes me, welcomes the one who sent me.’ ”**

**Margaret Roper 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.

Catholic teachings and practice permeate every aspect of our school life. The governors ask everyone who applies for a place at Margaret Roper School to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community.

Having consulted with the Local Authority, the Diocese and other admission authorities, the Governors intend to admit into the reception class, in September 2024, up to **30** children without reference to ability or aptitude.

### OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

Where the number of applications exceeds 30 the Governors will offer places using the following criteria in the order stated below: -

1. Looked after Catholic children and looked after Catholic children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a child arrangements or guardianship order and 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. (See Notes a, e)
2. Catholic children with a sibling on roll at Margaret Roper School in September 2024. A baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church must accompany the Supplementary Information Form. (see Note a,c)

3. Other Catholic children. A baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church must accompany the Supplementary Information Form. (*see Note a*)
4. Looked after children, looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a child arrangements or guardianship order and 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. (See Note a)
5. Children not meeting criteria 1-4 who have a sibling on roll at Margaret Roper School in September 2024. (*see Note c*)
6. Children enrolled in the catechumenate. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required.
7. Children who are members of Eastern Orthodox Churches. Evidence of baptism will be required.
8. Children of families who are members of other Christian denominations that are part of Churches Together in England. Evidence of baptism (or dedication) provided by a priest or minister of a designated place of worship will be required.
9. Children who are members of other faiths. Evidence of membership of the faith provided by a priest, minister or religious leader of a designated place of worship will be required.
10. Any other children.

## **TIE BREAKS**

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. For Category 2 above - Evidence of the relationship may be required. (*See note c*). 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. For Category 3 above -The strength of evidence of commitment to the faith as demonstrated by the level of the family's Mass attendance at Sunday Mass (or Saturday evening vigil Mass). This evidence must be provided by the parents/carers and be endorsed by a priest at the church(es) where the family normally worship. Applications will be ranked in the order shown on the Supplementary Information Form; firstly, those who attend Mass weekly, then less than weekly etc. (*see also Note f*)
- 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). This information must accompany the SIF/

- 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 must accompany the SIF. (see Note d). 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.
- v. In the event of two or more children being ranked equally once all the criteria and the first tie break have been applied, random allocation which is independently verified will be used.

**Notes:**

- a. **Catholics** include members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome. Reference to other Christian denominations refers to denominations that are full members of Churches Together in England.
- b. The expression "parent" refers to the parent/s or guardian/s of the child.
- c. **A sibling** 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 (eg cousins).
- d. **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. The governors will take place of residence as that evidenced at the closing date for application. Any change of address must be notified to the school immediately.
- e. **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 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.
- f. The suspension of the obligation to attend Sunday Mass was announced on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020 by Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. If a parent/carer attended Mass at a particular parish (or parishes) prior to 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020 then they will be considered to have attended Mass in that parish (or parishes) at the same frequency since that time. This will remain the case until the Sunday obligation is reintroduced by the Bishops
- e. The school will ask to see a copy of the short form version of the candidate's birth certificate, after a place has been offered.

**Admissions procedure**

Open days, for those applying to join the reception class, are organised in the autumn term. This will be an opportunity to see the school and to ask questions.

To apply, parents should complete **BOTH** the Common Application Form (CAF), available from their own local authority **AND** the School's Supplementary Information Form. Parents may obtain a

Supplementary Information Form (SIF) from the school or their own Local Authority. Parents should note that completion of a SIF is not mandatory. However, any applications without a SIF may, in the absence of any other evidence, ranked by governors under Criterion 10, Any other children

### **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)**

Parents/Carers should complete **PART 1** and attach

- a copy of the baptismal certificate, or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church (if applicable)
- evidence of residence in the form of an original utility bill

Then:

**Catholic applicants:** ask your Parish Priest / the Priest at the Church where you normally attend Mass to complete **PART 2**. *Note:*

- If you have been resident in your parish for less than a year, please also obtain a reference from your previous Parish Priest.
- If you regularly attend Mass at more than one parish, please obtain a reference from *both* parishes.

**Applicants of other denominations or faiths:** ask your minister or faith leader to complete **PART 3**.

For Reception children, a SIF should be fully completed and returned to the school no later than **15<sup>th</sup> January in the year of admission**.

Offers of places will be sent to parents by their home local authority on **the common offer date 16th April 2024**.

Late applications will be considered after the initial on-time offer round, if places are still available.

### **Pupils with an Educational Health 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.

The timetable for appeals in the current admissions round is published on the school website on or before the 28<sup>th</sup> February in that admissions year.

### **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 LIST**

Governors operate a waiting list for unsuccessful applicants. In the event of a place becoming available and there being more than one applicant on the waiting list for the place, the oversubscription criteria will be applied.

A class is regarded as being "full" if: in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 there are 30 children. The class size of 30 can be exceeded in certain exceptional circumstances. For further information see the DFE school admissions code, para.2.15. The Published Admission Number (PAN) for junior classes is 34

Applications will be held on the waiting list for a period of 12 months from the date of written request. If after a period of 12 months parents have not received an offer of a place at Margaret Roper School, this means their application has been unsuccessful and their name will be removed from the waiting list unless they contact the school in writing to renew their interest. If a name is on the waiting list, parents must inform the school of any change in circumstances relevant to the application.

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 applications for places in other year groups, and be subject to the availability of places.

### **IN YEAR ADMISSIONS**

Applications for a place at the school in a class other than Reception or during the academic year must be made using the Common Application Form (CAF) of the Local Authority (LA) where the child resides. This form must be returned to the LA. The school's Supplementary Information Form (SIF) should also be completed to enable the governors to rank the application in the event of there being more than one application for a place. The governors will use the same over-subscription criteria to rank the application as those listed above. In the event of the governors deciding that a place cannot be offered, 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.

### **FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOL**

Margaret Roper School participates in the local authority's Fair Access Protocol to allocate places to vulnerable and other children in accordance with the School Admission Code 2021. Admitting pupils under the protocol may require the school to admit above the planned admission number for the relevant year group.