



# St. Mary's Catholic Primary School Admissions Policy 2026-27

## Admissions Policy and Oversubscription Criteria

**Indicated Admission number - 30 (Reception to Year 6)**

**Indicated Admission number - 40 (Nursery)**

**School Capacity Number 250**

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School is a voluntary aided Catholic School which operates in the Catholic Community of St. Mary's Parish, within the Archdiocese of Cardiff and Cardiff Council Local Authority.

We provide a Catholic education which permeates every aspect of school life at St. Mary's. All of our actions and decisions are made in line with our school Mission Statement:

*"In Jesus' footsteps we learn, love and grow together to be the best that we can be."*

It is essential that the Catholic nature of our school is fully supported by all families and it is expected that applicants desire a Catholic education for their child.

The Governing Body of St. Mary's Catholic Primary School will act in accordance with all relevant provisions of the statutory codes of practice (the Welsh Assembly Government School Admissions Code and the School Admissions Appeals Code of Practice 2013) as they apply at any given time to maintained schools and with the law on admissions as it applies to maintained schools.

### **Admissions to Nursery**

Application forms for Nursery are available from the school office or the school web site. Applications can only be made by the person(s) who have parental responsibility and only one application can be submitted for each child.

### **Admissions to Reception**

When applying to our Reception Class, parents should be aware that attending our Nursery Class does not guarantee a place in our Reception Class. A separate application is required and priority is not given to children who have attended our Nursery Class.

Parents applying for a place in Reception Year at the school **must express a preference for a place at the school on the Council's School Admissions Portal at [www.cardiff.gov.uk](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk). Evidence of a child's baptismal certificate must be sent to school.**

**Applicants will be notified of the result of their application via the Council Portal on the offer date in April 2026. You will then receive a welcome letter from the school.**

The minimum age of entry to the Reception Class is 4 years provided that the child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday falls between 1<sup>st</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> August of that academic year.

The indicated admission number for the school is 30. Where the number of applications is equal to or less than the number of places available, all applications will be successful. However, where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the Admissions Committee will apply the following over-subscription criteria and allocate places accordingly.

Where St. Mary's Catholic Primary School is named on a child's statement of educational need, the Admissions Committee has a duty to admit the child to the school before the over-subscription criteria is applied against applications received.

In each category below:

- Priority will next be given to the siblings of those pupils who will be registered at St Mary's Catholic Primary School at the time the child is to be admitted.

**The Oversubscription Criteria are as follows:**

1. Looked after Children (LAC - children in the public care) or previously Looked After Children who are baptised as Roman Catholics or have been formally accepted into the Roman Catholic Church.
2. Children who are baptised as Roman Catholics, or have been formally accepted into the Roman Catholic Church, who permanently reside in the catchment area\*.
3. Children who are baptised as Roman Catholics, or have been formally accepted into the Roman Catholic Church, who **do not** permanently reside in the catchment area\*.
4. Looked after children (LAC -children in the public care) or previously Looked After children who are not of the Roman Catholic Faith.
5. Children of other Christian denominations, whose parents have demonstrated a wish for Catholic education, who permanently reside in the catchment area\*.
6. Children of other Christian denominations, whose parents have demonstrated a wish for Catholic education, who **do not** permanently reside in the catchment area\*.
7. Children of other Faith traditions, whose parents have demonstrated a wish for Catholic education, who permanently reside in the catchment area\*.
8. Children of other Faith traditions, whose parents have demonstrated a wish for Catholic education, who **do not** permanently reside in the catchment area\*.
9. Other children, whose parents have demonstrated a wish for Catholic education, who permanently reside in the catchment area\*.
10. Other children, whose parents have demonstrated a wish for Catholic education, who **do not** permanently reside in the catchment area\*.

\* *Catchment area of St Mary's Catholic Primary School:*

- *Ely River, the eastern side of Western Avenue (A48) Ely Road and Cardiff Road.*
- *To roundabout (BBC) including Llandaff Village bounded by the River Taff to railway line parallel to Ninian Park Road.*
- *Both sides of Sloper Road to both sides of Bessemer Road and Hadfield Road to the River Ely.*

In the event that the Admissions Committee is unable to allocate places to all the children in one particular category whose parents are practising Catholics or practising Christians, priority will then be based on those residing closest to St Mary's Catholic Primary School. For further information on how distances are measured, please refer to the paragraph entitled 'Home to School Distances' within the 'Relevant Information' section.

## RELEVANT INFORMATION

### Additional Documentation and Proof of Residency

1. It is the expectation that children are taught in their chronological year group, unless exceptional circumstances apply. For this reason, applications must be supported by a *photocopy of your child's birth certificate*.
2. The Admissions Committee also requires proof of residency in support of all applications in order to verify their home address. The Council will check Council Tax addresses for this purpose. It is your responsibility to advise Cardiff Council of any change in your circumstances following submission of your application. Such changes may have an effect on the outcome of your application.
3. If you have indicated that your child is a baptised Roman Catholic or has been received into the Roman Catholic Church, evidence is required to be submitted with the application. Evidence must include a *photocopy of your child's Baptismal Certificate* or *completion of the Minister/Religious Leader's reference*. If your child is currently preparing for the sacrament this must be confirmed by the parish priest in writing and will be equated to 'baptism'. If this confirmation is not received then your application will be considered under 'other children' (Cat 9 and 10). ***The Admissions Authority will consider the age that your child was baptised as a Roman Catholic with the youngest given the highest priority.***

If you have indicated that your child is of another faith than Roman Catholic, evidence must be the *completion of the Minister/Religious Leader's reference*. If not, your application will be considered under 'other children' (Cat 9 and 10).

For Christian applicants a *photocopy of your child's Baptismal Certificate* should be provided unless the particular denomination favours adult baptism in which case *completion of the Minister/Religious Leader's reference* is required. If not, your application will be considered under 'other children' (Cat 9 and 10). ***This evidence must come directly to the school.***

***Allegations of fraudulent claims will be investigated and places may be withdrawn if parents have knowingly provided false information in order to obtain the advantage of a particular school to which they would not normally be entitled.***

Applicants should note that for the purpose of processing applications for school places the information you provide on your application form may be shared with other agencies that are directly involved in the education, health and welfare of school children, including other local admission authorities.

### Late Applications

Any applications received after the closing date, or applications that remain incomplete as at the closing date, will only be processed after places have been allocated for applications that were received by the closing date, and this may increase the possibility of not achieving a place at St Mary's Primary School. Any late applications will be batch filed and processed together at the end of the calendar month following receipt, once the offer date has passed. However, applications received after the published submission date will be considered with those received at the closing date only if supported by a letter giving exceptional reasons for its lateness and only if received before the offers of the places are made. Exceptional reasons may be defined as when circumstances include the serious illness of a single parent, having just moved into the area, or arriving from abroad has meant that it was not possible to submit the application by the closing date.

## **Allocating Places**

Parents/carers have the right to express a preference for their child to be admitted to any school maintained from public funds. Making an application and providing the relevant supporting evidence does not guarantee admission to the preferred school. Each request will be considered individually and complied with wherever possible. If the number of applications received is at or below the school's indication admission number, all applications will be admitted. However, if more applications are received than the admission number, the admission request may have to be refused. In these circumstances, admission is based on the relevant school's published over-subscription criteria. The Admissions Committee will consider all applications made in accordance with the over-subscription criteria, without reference to race, gender, disability, social background, ability or aptitude of the child.

Headteachers do not have the authority to give parents an indication of the outcome of their application, or tell them that their child has been given a place at the school, before an offer of a place has been made formally by the Governing Body.

## **Deferred Entry**

The law does not require a child to start school until the start of the term following the child's fifth birthday. In accordance with this, the Governing Body will allow parents the option of deferring their child's entry into Reception until later in the same school year. The effect is that the place is held for the child and is not available to be offered to another child. The parents would not, however, be able to defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the school year for which the application was made.

## **Terms Used**

- **Home to School Distances**

This distance is measured as the "shortest available walking route, accompanied as necessary" between the home and school. Cardiff Council uses a Geographical Information System (GIS) to calculate home to school distances in miles to the nearest 2 decimal point. The shortest walking route is calculated using Ordnance Survey (OS) customised route data from an applicant's home address to the nearest open school gate.

- **Children of UK Service Personnel and Crown Servants**

The address of UK service Personnel will be accepted if their application form is accompanied by an official Ministry of Defence (MoD) letter declaring a definite return date and confirmation of the new address.

- **Shared Parental Responsibility**

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with both parents for parts of the week the home address will be determined as the property where the child lives for the majority of the school week (i.e. 3 out of 5 days) as at the stipulated closing date for applications. Parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for admission purposes.

- **Siblings**

For admission purposes a sibling is a child who is the brother/ sister, half-brother/ sister (children who share one common parent), Step brother/ step sister (where two children are related by virtue of their parents being married or co-habiting). This also includes adopted or fosters children living at the same address. A school will only consider siblings attending Years 1-6 during the 2025-26 school year.

## **Multiple Births**

If, when applying the oversubscription criteria, the last child to be admitted is one of multiple birth, the Admissions Committee will admit the other sibling(s)

## Waiting lists

- ***Phase Transfer***

During a phase transfer process, should your child be refused a placement at your preferred school(s), your child's name will remain on a waiting list **until 30<sup>th</sup> September in the year in which the application is made**. If additional places become available, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list on the basis of the published oversubscription criteria. Waiting lists do **not** give priority to children based on the date the application was added to the list. Prior to 30<sup>th</sup> September, parents will be contacted and asked to confirm whether or not they wish to remain on the waiting list for the remainder of the academic year, after which time a new application may be made.

- ***In-Year Admission or Transfer***

Where an application made for an in-year transfer is refused, the child's name will remain on a waiting list **until the end of the academic year** at which time a new application may be made. If additional places become available, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list on the basis of the published oversubscription criteria. Waiting lists do **not** give priority to children based on the date the application was added to the list.

## Some reasons why we may refuse admission

Whilst parents have the right to express a preference for their child to be admitted to any school maintained from public funds, there are reasons why that preference may have to be refused, since when determining applications, the Admission Committee also has to have regard for:

- The infant class size initiative which is committed to ensuring that no child aged 5, 6 or 7 years will be in a class of more than 30 pupils for every one qualified teacher. The statutory infant class size limit of 30 pupils applies to Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes.
- The physical limitations of the school and the site buildings which may result in a class size of fewer than 30 pupils.
- Any other factors which may prejudice the provision of efficient education and / or the efficient use of resources.

## Class size exceptions

Welsh Government regulations require Governing Bodies to limit infant class sizes to no more than 30 pupils and also to ensure where possible that junior class sizes do not exceed 30 pupils. There are, however, exceptions to these regulations (called 'excepted pupils') which may allow the 30 pupils per class limit to be exceeded. These pupils are as specifically outlined in the statutory School Admissions Code.

Excepted pupils will remain so, once admitted, for the remainder of their time in an infant class or until class numbers fall back and they can be organised to comply with the infant class size limit. Classes must be organised so as to comply with the limit wherever possible.

## School Appeals

Parents have the statutory right of appeal against the refusal by a Governing Body to admit their child, and should put their reasons for appeal in writing in accordance with the procedures outlined in the decision letter. Appeals will be heard by an Independent Appeal Panel, in which the Governing Body and Headteacher play no role. The decision of the Appeal Panel is binding on all parties.