

The Oratory RC Primary School

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ADMISSIONS POLICY 2023-2024

The Oratory Roman Catholic Primary School was founded by the Fathers of the London Oratory in Brompton Road to provide education for children of Roman Catholic families. It is a Voluntary-Aided one-form entry school in the trusteeship of the Fathers of the London Oratory of St. Philip Neri. 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 Governing Body has sole responsibility for admissions to this school and intends to admit 30 pupils (The Published Admissions Number/PAN) to the reception class in the school year which begins in September 2023. Applications are welcome from families whose child reaches his/her 4th birthday between 1st September 2022 and 31st August 2023. As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. As 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. All applicants are therefore expected to give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Baptised Catholic applicants in accordance with the criteria listed below.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered in the following order of priority (in the past 5 years, no applicant has been admitted beyond criterion 3D on National Offer Day. The school is always oversubscribed by Catholic candidates):

1. Catholic 'looked after'¹ children and previously 'looked after' Catholic children who have been adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders, and Catholic internationally adopted previously looked after children.

2. Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice of Catholic members of staff of the Oratory RC Primary School where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two years or more at the time of application.

3. Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice from Catholic families

The child and at least one parent² should be Baptised and Catholic. 'Families' comprises of the Catholic or Catholics who have legal responsibility for the child in the following order of priority within this section:

- A who at the time of enrolment will have a Baptised Catholic sibling at the Oratory Primary School.
- B Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice from Catholic families who are resident within the Oratory Parish.³
- C Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice from Catholic families who are resident within the Holy Redeemer Parish.⁴
- D Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice from Catholic families who are resident within another Catholic Parish.⁵

4. Other baptised Catholic children.

5. Other 'looked after' children and previously 'looked after' children who have been adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders, and internationally adopted previously looked after children.

6. Children of members of staff at the Oratory RC Primary School where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two years or more at the time of application.

7. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church⁶.

8. Christians of other Christian denominations. Please provide a letter from your minister confirming membership of the faith community.

9. Children of other faiths. Please provide a letter from your faith leader confirming membership of the faith community.

10. Any other children.

The Governing Body will give top priority to an application within a category where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, pastoral or other need of the child which can most appropriately be met by this school. The evidence should state why the Oratory Catholic Primary School is the ONLY school that can meet the need and the argument must be compelling.

Tie Break and Distance from School

Where the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the sub-categories listed above would still lead to over subscription, the places up to the admission number will be offered to those living nearest to the school. Nearness to school will be calculated using a straight line (as the crow flies) measurement from the child's home 'address point' determined by Ordnance Survey Data to the centre of the school grounds as determined by the Royal Borough using its computerised measuring system. 'Home address' is defined as where the child lives for 50% or more of the school week. The child living closest to the school will receive the highest priority. Accessibility by car or public transport will be disregarded. If applicants share the same address point (for example, those who live in the same block of flats or shared house) priority will be given to those who live closest to the ground floor and then by ascending flat number order. Please provide the school with a copy of your Council Tax demand so that your address can be verified. Where the final place is offered to a child who has a twin/triplet, etc, applying for a place in the same school year, these siblings will also be admitted.

PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE

An eAdmissions Form entitled 'Application Form for Admission to Primary School'

A form called 'An Application for Admission to Primary School' or eAdmissions Form must be completed for the application to be valid and this must be obtained from the Home LA (borough of residence). Proof of address will be checked and validated by the Home LA for all applications for a place in the Reception Class **and** for all casual admissions. Residents of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea will be able to obtain the form from the school and the Town Hall. Applications can also be submitted online from 1 September 2022 at: www.rbkc.gov.uk

SIF, Certificate of Catholic Practice and Baptismal Certificate

If applying under criterion 2 or 3, a copy of the child's baptismal certificate and a Certificate of Catholic Practice should be submitted to support the school's Supplementary Information Form (SIF). Those applying under criterion 4 should provide a Certificate of Catholic Baptism. The SIF supplies the governors with your personal and religious details and will be considered in conjunction with your Certificate of Catholic Practice and/or certificate of baptism (if applicable).

The Supplementary Information Form (SIF) is obtainable from the school website, the LA offices and the LA website. You can collect the forms from the school or contact the school and ask for them to be sent to you. Where applicable, parents can also obtain a Certificate of Catholic Practice from the priest at the parish where they normally worship.

All Supplementary Information Forms for reception class must be received by the closing date 15 January 2023.

The Governors' admission panel meet several times following the closing date and all applicants are notified with the outcome from the submitted application to the school by the home LA. Applicants are invited to attend open days, dates of which can be found in the application pack and on the school's website. The Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher will meet with parents at this time and speak about the school and answer any questions parents may have. Older children from the school will then escort parents on a tour of the school. Attendance on a tour of the school is not obligatory and does not form part of the application process, but is highly recommended.

Reception Year Deferred Entry

Applicants may defer entry to school up until statutory, compulsory school age i.e. the first day of term following the child's fifth birthday. Application is made in the usual way and then deferral is requested. The place will then be held until the first day of the spring or summer term as applicable. Applicants may also request that their child attend part-time until statutory, compulsory school age is reached. Entry may not be deferred beyond compulsory, statutory school age or beyond the year for which the application has been made. Parents wishing to defer entry for summer born children should note that entry can only be deferred up until 1st April 2024.

Summer born children

If a parent wishes his/her summer born child to begin school in the September following his/her 5th birthday i.e a child born between 1st April - 31st August 2018 being admitted to reception at 5 years of age, they should make the school aware of this by writing a letter to the Chair of Governors at the time of application. Parents must then submit an application in the normal way. This application will be treated in the same way as all other applications and there is no guarantee that an offer will be made.

Children educated outside their chronological age group

Requests for admission outside of the child's chronological year of entry will be considered in accordance with para. 2.17 (Admissions Code). The School, as the admission authority, must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case, informing parents of their statutory right to appeal. This right does not apply if the child is offered a place in another year group at the school. Each case will need to be supported by a professional (e.g. GP, social worker) that provides the reason for admission outside of the chronological year group. 'Parents may request that their child be educated out of his/her chronological age group. Such requests must be made in writing to the Chair of Governors. Governors will consider each request on its own merits and permission will only be given in exceptional circumstances. When the application is made, it will be ranked with all the other applications and no further exceptions will be given. A statutory right of appeal will be given upon refusal if no place has been offered in any school year.'

Application Procedures and Timetable 2023-2024

The eAdmissions Form **MUST** be completed and returned, either online or on paper, to your Home LA by its closing date (**15 January 2023**) if applying for a place in Reception class. Supplementary Information Forms (SIF) should also be submitted by **15 January 2023**, to the school's address located on the SIF attached to this policy. Whilst this is not compulsory, the information on the SIF enables the Governing Body to assess your application fully against the School's criteria in the event of oversubscription. Please return the SIF by post to the school, together with all other relevant paperwork required for your application. If you do not complete both of the forms described above and return them by 15th January 2023, the Governing Body will be unable to consider your application against the oversubscription criteria and your child will be ranked under the lowest criterion. It is very unlikely that your child will be offered a place if a SIF is not supplied.

Parents will be advised of the outcome of their applications by the Home LA, on behalf of the Governors, on 16th April 2023 (Primary National Offer Day) and will have until 2nd May 2023 to accept the place. Parents/carers should accept or decline the place as soon as possible. To clarify: The final closing date for applications is January 15th 2023. Notification letters will be sent by the LA on behalf of the Governors on April 16th 2023.

Right of Appeal

Unsuccessful applicants will be given reasons related to the oversubscription criteria listed above and advised of their right of appeal to an independent appeal panel. They will also be offered the opportunity of being added to the waiting list. Should you wish to appeal, please contact the school as soon as possible for an appeal form on which you must list your reasons for making an appeal. The deadline for submission of an appeal must be a maximum of 20 school days from receipt of the letter of refusal.

Waiting List

If the school is full in the requested year group, in addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity of being placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained by the Governing Body in the order of the oversubscription criteria set out in the policy, as modified above, and not in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. When a place becomes available the Governing Body will decide who is at the top of the list so that an offer can be made. Children are only removed from the waiting list if the parents request this in writing.

Paperwork

Please provide:

A SIF for Criteria 2,3,4,6,7,8 &9

A Baptism Certificate for Criteria 1 to 4 and

A Certificate of Catholic Practice for Criteria 2 and 3

A copy of your Council Tax demand to validate your address

The Supplementary Information Form (SIF) is obtainable from the school website and the LA website.

The Certificate of Catholic Practice may be obtained from the priest in the parish where the family normally worships.

Late Applications

Applications received after the closing date will be dealt with after the initial allocation process has been completed. If the school is oversubscribed, it is very unlikely that late applicants will obtain a place

In Year Admissions

Applications outside of the normal point of entry (Reception) must be made directly to the school and include the school's Supplementary Information Form and any supporting documentation such as a Baptismal Certificate and a Certificate of Catholic Practice. If a place is available and there is no waiting list, the child will be admitted. If there is a waiting list, then applications will be ranked by the Governing Body in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. If a place cannot be offered at this time then you may ask for the reasons and you will be informed of your right of appeal. You will be offered the opportunity of being placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained by the Governing Body in accordance with the oversubscription criteria and not in the order in which the applications are received. When a place becomes available, the Governing Body will re-rank the list and make an offer to the child at the top of the list. The Local Authority will be informed of the offer as soon as it has been accepted.

Offers are made in accordance with the admission policy in effect at the time and not that which applied when the application was made.

Information relevant to both Reception and In Year Admissions**Fair Access Protocols**

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 admissions round the Governing Body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol that has been agreed by both the Local Authority and the Governing Body for the current school year. The Governing Body has this power even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan)

The admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. (This used to be called a Statement of Special Educational Needs). This procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of statements by the pupil's home Local Education Authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the Education, Health and Care Plan Code of Practice. If your child has an EHC Plan you must contact your local authority EHC Officer. Children with this school named in their EHC plan will be admitted.

Exceptional Need

The Governing Body will give top priority, after the appropriate category of looked-after children, to an application within a category where compelling evidence is provided at the time of application, from an appropriate professional such as a doctor, priest or social worker, of an exceptional social, medical, pastoral or other need of the child which can only be met by this school.

Multiple Applications

Where the final place is offered to a child who has other siblings applying for a place in the same school year, these siblings will also be admitted.

Certificate of Catholic Practice

Applicants applying under criteria [2 and 3] must submit a Certificate of Catholic Practice (CCP) by the closing date. This form is available from the priest in the parish where the family normally worships. The priest will only sign this form if he knows you. The CCP may either be returned with the SIF and Baptism Certificate or under separate cover directly by your Priest.

Responsibility for ensuring that the Certificate of Catholic Practice arrives safely and on time rests with the applicant.

Posting your Application

Please ensure sufficient postage is on the envelope to take account of the weight of an item AND its size. It is therefore advisable that you check this with the Post Office. Failure to do so will mean that the Post Office may withhold your application and that it is received after the closing date. The school will *not* be responsible for retrieving your application in such circumstances.

Change of Details

The Governors and the Local Authority should be informed in writing immediately if any of the information provided with your application changes. All correspondence relating to the SIF should be addressed to the Admissions Committee c/o The Oratory Primary School. Failure to do so may prejudice the application. The Governing Body reserves the right to make inquiries regarding an applicant's religious practice and commitment to their Parish and to the Church, and to seek verification of any information given by an applicant on the Supplementary Information Form or on any form, letter or document associated with the application. False information, or the omission of material information, may result in disqualification, or the loss of a place after it has been offered, accepted or taken up, even if the child has already started at the school.

NOTES & DEFINITIONS (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

'Catholic' means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. This will 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 this includes a looked-after child who is part of a Catholic family where a priest's reference demonstrates that the child would have been baptised or received if it were not for their status as a looked-after child (e.g. a looked-after child in the process of adoption by a Catholic family).

"Children of other Christian denominations" means: children who belong to other churches and ecclesial communities which, acknowledging God's revelation in Christ, confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures, and, in obedience to God's will and in the power of the Holy Spirit commit themselves: to seek a deepening of their communion with Christ and with one another in the Church, which is his body; and to fulfil their mission to proclaim the Gospel by common witness and service in the world to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. An ecclesial community which on principle has no credal statements in its tradition, is included if it manifests faith in Christ as witnessed to in the Scriptures and is committed to working in the spirit of the above.

All members of Churches Together in England and of CYTŪN are deemed to be included in the above definition, as are all other churches and ecclesial communities that are in membership of any local Churches Together Group (by whatever title) on the above basis.

"Children of other faiths" means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of 'other Christian denominations' and which falls within the definition of a religion for the purposes of charity law. The Charities Act 2011 defines religion to include:

- A religion which involves belief in more than one God, and
- A religion which does not involve belief in a God.

Case law has identified certain characteristics which describe the meaning of religion for the purposes of charity law, which are characterised by a belief in a Supreme Being and an expression of belief in that Supreme Being through worship.

1¹ 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 an 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 arrangements order, or special guardianship order, immediately following having been looked after. Included in this definition are those children who appear (to the Governing Body) to have been in state care outside of England and who ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

'Internationally adopted previously looked after children' are children who appear to the School to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

'Adopted' An adopted child is any child who has been formally adopted, having previously been in care and whose parent/guardian can give proof of this status.

A 'Child Arrangements Order' is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.8 settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live. Children 'looked after' immediately before the order is made, qualify in this category.

A 'Special Guardianship Order' is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.14A which defines it as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s). A child 'looked after' immediately before the order is made qualifies in this category.

² **'Parent'** means the adult or adults with legal responsibility for the child.

'Family' includes the Catholic or Catholics who have legal responsibility for the child.

'Sibling' means brother or sister, including adopted brothers and sisters, half, step or foster brothers and sisters. A sibling relationship does not apply when the older child will leave the school before the younger one starts.

'Resident'- A child is deemed to be resident at a particular address when he/she resides there for more than 50% of the school week.

^{3,4,5} **'Certificate of Catholic Practice'** means a certificate issued by the family's parish priest (or the priest in charge of the church where the family attends Mass) in the form laid down by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. It will be issued if the priest is satisfied that at least one Catholic parent or carer (along with the child, if he or she is over seven years old) have (except when it was impossible to do so) attended Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation for at least five years (or, in the case of the child, since the age of seven, if shorter). It will also be issued when the practice has been continuous since being received into the Church if that occurred less than five years ago. It is expected that most Certificates will be issued on the basis of attendance. A Certificate may also be issued by the priest when attendance is interrupted by exceptional circumstances which excuse from the obligation to attend on that occasion or occasions. Further details of these circumstances can be found in the guidance issued to priests <http://rcdow.org.uk/education/governors/admissions/>

If you practise at the Oratory Church your attendance should be registered at Oratory House as the Oratory Fathers will be using this information when they provide Certificates of Catholic Practice.

⁶ **'Eastern Christian Church'** includes Orthodox Churches, and is evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism or Reception from the authorities of that Church.

'Catechumen' means a child who is a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This will be evidenced by a Certificate of Reception into the Order of Catechumens for a child aged 7 or over. For a child under 7 years of age it will be the certificate of the parent.

'Christian' for the purposes of this policy, means a member of one of the Churches affiliated to 'Churches Together in Britain and Ireland'.