

## **1. Introduction**

St Joseph's, Mossley is a Roman Catholic Primary School founded and provided by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salford; it is now maintained by Tameside Metropolitan Borough as a Voluntary Aided School.

The ethos of St Joseph's is Roman Catholic. The school was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for the children of Catholic families. The school is governed 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's Governors therefore ask all parents applying for a place at St Joseph's to understand, respect and support this Catholic ethos and its importance to the school community. This does not, however, affect the right of parents who are not of the Catholic faith to apply for, and be considered for, a place at the school.

The school's Governing Body is its admissions authority and has sole legal authority for taking decisions on applications for admission.

For the 2015/16 academic year, the Governing Body's Planned Admission Number for St Joseph's is **25**.

Admission to the school will be made by the Governing Body strictly in accordance with the criteria set out below. These criteria will be used to form a priority order if there are more applications for admission than the school has places available. These criteria need to be read in conjunction with the additional notes that follow them.

## **2. Admission Criteria**

1. Baptised Roman Catholic looked-after children and previously looked-after children.
2. Baptised Roman Catholic children with exceptional social and medical needs.
3. Baptised Roman Catholic children who will have a brother or sister attending the school at the time of admission and are resident in the Catholic Parish of St Joseph's, Mossley.
4. Baptised Roman Catholic children who are resident in the Catholic Parish of St Joseph's, Mossley.
5. Baptised Roman Catholic children who will have a brother or sister attending St Joseph's, Mossley at the time of admission, and are resident in another Catholic parish.
6. Other baptised Roman Catholic children.
7. Other looked-after children and previously looked-after children.
8. Other children with certified exceptional social and medical needs.
9. Other children with a sibling in the school.
10. Other children

For categories 1 to 6, a valid Certificate of Roman Catholic Baptism is required to establish the faith of a child. This proof of Baptism **MUST** be supplied to the school **BEFORE** the Governing Body's Admission Committee meets to allocate places.

Priority cannot be given to Roman Catholic applicants without this evidence.

### **3. Oversubscription and Tie-Breakers**

- A. In the event of the need for a tie-breaker, then geographical distance will be considered. Preference will be given to children living nearest to the school.
- The distance will be measured as a straight line from the child's home address to the school, using the address point assigned by the National Land and Property Gazetteer, to the main gate of the school property.
  - Measurements will be made using Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council's school admissions data mapping software, which uses a Geographical Information System based on the Ordnance Survey.
- B. In the event of geographical distances being the same for two or more applications where this distance would be the last place(s) to be allocated, the place will be allocated to the child that's home is nearer, using walking distance as again measured using the Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council's school admissions data mapping software.
- Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs where St Joseph's School is specifically named in a Statement (in accordance with the provisions of the SEN Code of Practice) will be allocated places before the school's oversubscription criteria are applied.

### **4. Additional Notes**

A. The school's Governing Body, not Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, is the admissions authority for St Joseph's. The school's Admissions Committee is comprised of the school's Headteacher and four other Governors, including (where possible) the Parish Priest at St Joseph's R.C. Church.

B. Each autumn term, all parents who have expressed an interest in a place at St Joseph's will be sent a letter advising them where to access an electronic copy of Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council's 'Primary Admissions Booklet', which is downloadable from the internet. This booklet gives details of Tameside Council's co-ordinated admissions arrangements and includes an online Application Form.

This booklet is also available from Tameside Council's offices and public libraries.

C. Parents must complete the Common Application Form and express **SIX** preferences for primary school admission. The closing date for all applicants is set by Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council. All applications that are received by the closing date will be considered by the school's Governors at the same time and in a fair way according to the school's published criteria.

Applications received after the closing date will be deemed "late" and will only be considered after all applications received on time have been processed.

D. Parents will be informed of the decision of the Governing Body by Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council on the offer date in the term before admission.

Parents should note that an offer of a place DOES NOT guarantee a place for brothers and sisters in subsequent years.

E. Parents should check carefully whether they are resident within the parish boundary of the Catholic Parish of St. Joseph's, Mossley. The parish boundary is the same as the Mossley boundary.

- F. Children are eligible for a Reception place from the beginning of the school year in which they become five years old. However they do not become of compulsory school age until the start of the term after their fifth birthday.
- G. Parents may therefore request that their child's school place be deferred until later in the school year. However they cannot defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the school year for which the original application was accepted. Parents can also request that their child attends on a part-time basis until the child reaches compulsory school age.
- H. If an application for admission has been turned down by the Governing Body, parents can appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel.
- I. This appeal, giving reasons for appealing, must be sent in writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body at the school within **20** days of receipt of the letter refusing to offer a place.
- J. To be successful, parents will have to show that the decision was one which, in the circumstances, no reasonable Governing Body would have made, or that the child would have been offered a place if the Governing Body's admissions arrangements had been properly implemented. The Appeals Panel decision is binding on the Governing Body.
- K. Where the Governing Body discovers that a child has been awarded a place as the result of an intentionally misleading application from a parent (for example, incorrect details of a place of residence in the catchment area) which effectively denies a place to a child with a stronger claim, then the governing body is **REQUIRED** to withdraw the offer of the place. The application will be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.

## 5. Definitions

### Home Address

A child's home address from which distance to the school will be measured will be the permanent residential address, at the time of application, of the parent with whom the child is normally resident.

Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week, the home address is the address from which the child travels to school for the majority of school days per week. If the number of days is exactly equal the home address will be that of the parent who receives the Child Benefit.

### Parent

Throughout this policy the term 'parent' includes:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for the child;
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child.

### Siblings: Sisters and Brothers

For the purposes of this policy, the words "brother" and "sister" refer throughout to natural sister or natural brother, half-sister or half-brother, adopted sister or adopted brother, step-sister or step-brother, foster sister or foster brother, or the child of the parent/carer's partner.

The child for whom the school place is sought must be living in the same family unit and at the same permanent address as the brother or sister. This allows for the priority admittance of children whose brothers and/or sisters will still be attending the school at the time of admission.

### Twins and other multiple births

In cases where places for twins, triplets, other multiple birth siblings, or other siblings whose date of birth falls within the same academic year, are split between different schools when allocations take place, parents will be offered a choice of

- Breaking the sibling link and being offered places at two or more schools, or,
- All siblings being offered a place at the same school which may not be a preference school named on the common application form.

The Governing Body may exceed Key Stage 1 and Reception Class Regulations for twins and multiple births where one of the children is the **25th** child admitted and the other(s) are beyond that limit.

### Proof of Address

The application form asks parents to provide TWO proofs of address, issued within the last 12 months, from the following list:

- Mortgage statement
- Tenancy agreement or letter from landlord
- Council Tax statement
- Council Tax benefit statement
- TV licence
- Home contents insurance certificate
- Buildings insurance certificate
- Recent utility bill (gas, electricity, water, land-line phone bill but not a mobile phone bill)\*
- Letter from a solicitor confirming exchange of contracts on a house\*

\* issued within the last 3 months

### Late Applications

The closing date for applications in the normal admissions round is **15 January 2015**.

Applications received after this date will only be considered after all applications received on time have been processed.

### Change of Preference

Changes to preferences, ranking order or pupil details, will not be allowed after the closing date, except in exceptional circumstances. For example, if the family has moved address. Evidence must be provided to support the request. An intention to change address cannot be considered until the move has actually taken place and proof is available, or parents may provide a solicitor's letter confirming an exchange of contracts on a property, or a tenancy agreement.

No changes can be considered even where there are exceptional circumstances once information has been passed from Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council to the school Governors, because the allocations process has then commenced. In the case of primary schools this date is **15 February 2015**.

### Waiting Lists

St Joseph's Governing Body maintains a waiting list until the end of the **Autumn Term 2015**.

Parents who have expressed the school as a preference and have not been offered a place at the school, or at a higher preference school, will automatically be placed on the waiting list. Other parents who have submitted an appeal or who have opted to go on the list will also be placed on the list.

All children on the waiting list will be ranked according to the school's oversubscription criteria. Places will be offered, should any become available, to the highest ranked application received by the date the place becomes available.

It should be noted that if new or late applications have a higher priority under the oversubscription criteria, they will be ranked higher than those who have been on the list for some time.

A significant change of circumstances, such as a change of address, will be taken into account: evidence must be provided to support this.

Children who have been formally referred under the Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council's Fair Access Protocol or who are the subject of a formal direction by the Tameside Council's to admit must be given precedence over any other children on the waiting list.

### Children with Exceptional Medical Needs or Home Circumstances and/or Special Educational Needs

Written evidence must be provided from a doctor or other agency that a child has exceptional needs which means that admission to St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School is essential - not just desirable.

A panel of Governors will make a decision as to whether to admit a child under this criterion using the evidence provided. All information provided will be in the strictest confidence.

### Looked-after Children and Previously Looked-after Children

A looked-after child is a child who is

(a) In the care of a Local Authority, or,

(b) Being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their Social Services functions (under Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

A previously looked-after child is one who immediately moved on from that status after becoming subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order.

Infant Class Sizes

Infant (Key Stage 1) classes (i.e. those where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6 or 7 during the school year) must not contain more than **30** pupils where there is a single school teacher.

Additional children may be admitted under very limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an 'excepted pupil' for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit.

Excepted children are as defined in the government's Admissions Code 2011 (Section 2.15)

Nursery Admissions

Admission arrangements to the St Joseph's Nursery are separate to these for the Reception Class.

Parents should note that attendance at the Nursery **does not** give priority to or guarantee a child admission to the main school.