

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 2016/17 academic year, the Governing Body's Planned Admission Number for St Joseph's is **30**.

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 **30th** 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 2016**.

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 2016**.

Waiting Lists

St Joseph's Governing Body maintains a waiting list until the end of the **Autumn Term 2016**.

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.

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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 Council as a Voluntary Aided School.

As a Catholic School, St Joseph's aims to provide a Catholic education for all its pupils, and so Catholic doctrine and practice permeate every aspect of the school's activities and ethos.

It is essential, therefore, that the Catholic character and ethos of the school is fully supported by all families with children in the school. All applicants for places are therefore expected to give their full and positive support to the aims and Catholic ethos of the school.

2. Nursery places

All three- and four-year-old children are entitled to a free part-time nursery education place. Currently, that entitlement is for 15 hours a week from the start of the term after the child's third birthday.

St Joseph's Governing Body is the sole Admissions Authority for the school and so is the body responsible for determining all applications for admission to the school and its Nursery. Although nursery education is non-statutory, the Governing Body places the same importance on nursery admission arrangements as for places in the main school.

Parents are reminded that a place in the Nursery does not mean the child will be guaranteed a place in the Reception Class. Admission to the Reception Class will be in accordance with strict criteria published in the school's main Admissions Policy.

The Nursery places will all be part-time places for morning sessions only - i.e. from 8.55 to 11.55 am.

3. Nursery Admissions Procedure

Prospective parents should contact the school as soon as possible to be included on the school's Interest List. An Application Form will be sent in due course to all parents on this list; copies of the form will also be available at the school.

Parents must complete the Application Form in full and return it to the school no later than 20 February 2016.

Parents of all Roman Catholic applicants will be required to produce, ON OR BEFORE 20 February 2016, a valid Baptism Certificate as evidence that their child has been baptised a Roman Catholic.

Parents' or other family members' baptismal or denominational affiliation to Roman Catholicism has no status in this respect, nor has a family history of attending St Joseph's.

Parents applying for a place on the grounds of specific medical or social reasons must provide written evidence from a doctor or other agency stating that the child has exceptional needs which mean that admission to St Joseph's School is essential. Reference may be made to the Community Health Physician, Social Services or the Educational Psychologist as appropriate.

Admission to St Joseph's Nursery will be made by the Governing Body in accordance with the criteria published in the Section below, following a strict order of priority.

Parents who have applied for a place will be notified of the Governing Body's decision at or around the time on which Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council notifies parents about Reception Class admissions. Parents must then accept or decline the allocated place using the form sent with the allocation letter.

This form must be returned to the school within three weeks from the date of the offer letter or it will be assumed that the offer has been declined.

If the place offered is declined, the place will be offered to the next applicant on the waiting list. Given the pressure for nursery places, parents are requested to advise the school as soon

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as possible and at any stage in the process if an application is to be withdrawn or a place is not to be accepted for any reason.

Parents do not have the right of appeal against the decision of the Governing Body to refuse admission to the Nursery. However, children who are not offered a place may ask to be entered on the Waiting List.

As part of St Joseph's Induction procedures, children whose application has been successful will be invited to visit the Nursery, with their parents, during the term prior to admission.

4. Nursery Admission Criteria

Admission to the Nursery will be given in strict accordance with the following criteria:-

1. Baptised Roman Catholic looked-after and previously looked-after children.
2. Baptised Roman Catholic children with exceptional social and medical needs.
3. Baptised Roman Catholic children born between 1 September 2012 and 31 August 2013 who will have a brother or sister attending the school on 1 September 2015, and are resident in the Catholic Parish of Joseph's, Mossley
4. Baptised Roman Catholic children born between 1 September 2012 and 31 August 2013 who are resident in the Catholic Parish of Joseph's, Mossley
5. Baptised Roman Catholic children born between 1 September 2012 and 31 August 2013 who will have a brother or sister attending Joseph's, Mossley on 1 September 2015, and are resident in another parish.
6. Other baptised Roman Catholic children born between 1 September 2012 and 31 August 2013.
7. Other looked after children and previously looked after children.
8. Other children with certified exceptional social and medical needs.
9. Other children with siblings in school.
10. Other children.

Within each criterion, children are further sub-grouped in an age order, as follows:-

- A. Children born between 1 September 2012 and 31 December 2012
- B. Children born between 1 January 2013 and 31 March 2013
- C. Children born between 1 April 2013 and 31 August 2013
- D. Children born between 1 September 2013 and 31 December 2013

5. 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.
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Practice) will be allocated places before the school's oversubscription criteria are applied.

6. Waiting List

Once the school has allocated all of its Nursery places, it will open a Waiting List.

If a place subsequently becomes available, it will be allocated to a child at the highest position on the Waiting List, according to the above criteria.

Parents will be contacted on a regular basis to see if they wish to remain on the Waiting List.

Please note that new arrivals who apply may have a higher priority under the above nursery admission criteria, so they will be ranked higher than those who have been on the list for some time.

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Please note that an offer of a place in Joseph's Nursery **DOES NOT** guarantee a place for siblings in future years.