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Admission Policy September 2019

The Governing Body has responsibility for admissions to this school and intends to admit 26 pupils in morning Nursery, 26 pupils in afternoon Nursery, 30 pupils in Reception and 30 pupils in each subsequent year group.

Basic Information:

1. St. Mary's Catholic Primary School is promoted by the Diocese of Northampton and is maintained by Central Bedfordshire Local Authority (LA).
2. The Governing Body of the school is responsible for determining and administering the policy relating to the admission of pupils to the school. The Governing Body is guided in that responsibility by the requirements of the law, by the advice of the Diocesan Trustees and its duty to the school and the Catholic community.
3. In accordance with the provisions of Regulations 49 of the Education (School Government) Regulations 1999, the Governing Body has delegated responsibility for determining admissions to its Admissions Committee, with regard to the school.
4. The ethos of St. Mary's Catholic Primary School is based on Christian Gospel values and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. We ask parents applying for a place here to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community. This does not affect the rights of parents who are not of the Roman Catholic faith to apply for and be considered for a place here.
5. The school primarily serves the parish of St. Mary's Catholic Church Dunstable.
6. To fulfill the requirements of the law and having consulted with the LA and other local admission authorities, the Governing Body has set a planned admission number of 30 pupils.
7. Parents wishing to apply for a place in the school in Reception must complete the Central Bedfordshire application form and the supplementary form for Catholic Schools in Central Bedfordshire and return to the LA by no later than the date specified in the Starting School Information booklet. Both these forms are available from the School Office Manager. It must be carefully noted that all applications must be submitted on the LA form or made on-line and all applications will be considered at the same time. Allocation letters will be issued on the offer date set out in the co-ordinated admissions scheme. The co-ordinated admissions scheme will be published on the Council's website on the school admission pages, the scheme will be updated on an annual basis.
8. Children with a statement of Special Educational Needs or Educational Health and Care Plan naming the school will be admitted in accordance with the policy and regulations. The school

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also supports the In Year Fair Access Protocol. On occasion pupils will be admitted to the school using Central Bedfordshire's In-Year Fair Access Protocol for primary schools. Such placements override the normal admission arrangements; this includes admitting children above the published admission number.

9. The Admissions Committee of the Governing Body will consider all applications on equal preference (see additional information) according to the criteria set out below without reference to the ability or aptitude of any child.

Admission Criteria:

In the case of over subscription the Governors will give priority to children in the following order:

1. Looked after children or children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order¹. 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 (section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989)
2. Baptised Catholic children with siblings attending St. Mary's Catholic Primary at time of proposed admission. The original Baptismal Certificate must be provided.
3. Other baptised Catholic children. The original Baptismal Certificate must be provided.
4. Siblings other than Catholic of children attending the school at the time of admission.
5. Children from other Christian denominations whose parents wish them to receive a Christian education, and whose application is supported by their priest or minister of religion.
6. Children of staff currently at St. Mary's Catholic Primary School at the time of the proposed admission.
7. Children from other faith backgrounds whose application is supported by their minister of religion.
8. Other children.

¹ An adoption order is an order under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders). A 'child arrangements order' is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 as amended by s.14 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

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In any situation where the application of the above criteria results in a situation where there are more children with an equal right to admission to the school than the number of available places, the tie break will be distance from the main school gate, measured in a straight line, using a computerised mapping system, as approved by Central Bedfordshire (or relevant) Council. Those living closer to the school will be accorded the higher priority. The distance will be measured from a point at the home address identified in the Local Land and Property Gazetteer to the main entrance of the school site.

Where one twin/child of multiple birth qualifies for a place and the other sibling(s) do not qualify for a place, both twins/multiple birth children will be promoted to the sibling criterion. This approach will also apply to siblings in the same year group who live together at the same address.

In the event of (a) two or more children living at the same address point (e.g. children resident in a block of flats) or (b) two addresses measuring the same distance from the school, the ultimate tie-breaker will be random selection, witnessed by a Council officer, independent of the Admissions Team.

Additional Information:

The Governors operate an equal preference system which means all applications are considered against each of the above criteria, regardless of any indicated preference ranking.

1. All parents/carers whose application was successful or unsuccessful will be informed in writing of the outcome of their starting school (Year R) application on the offer date set out in the co-ordinated admission scheme. The co-ordinated admission scheme will be published on the Council's website on the school admissions pages, the scheme will be updated on an annual basis.
2. The decision of the Admissions Committee and its reasons for not offering a place (Year R) will be explained along with the parent/carer's right to lodge an appeal against the decision including detail of how and to whom such appeal should be lodged.
3. The Admissions Committee will keep a waiting list of those children who have not been offered a place. For the new Reception intake the names will be held on the waiting list until 31 July 2020, however, applications received in the summer term 2020 will remain on the waiting list until 31 July 2021. Parents will need to reapply for a place at their preferred school after this date if they wish their child's name to be carried forward on the waiting list.

For all other year groups, unsuccessful applications received from the start of the autumn term 2019 until the end of the spring term 2020 will be placed on a waiting list until 31 July 2020. Applications received from the start of the summer term 2020 to the end of the academic year will be placed on a waiting list until 31 July 2021.

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4. A Catholic child is a child baptised according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church and possesses an original Baptismal Certificate. A child enrolled in a catechumenate programme is also accepted as a Catholic if they are supported by a letter from their parish priest confirming their enrolment and attendance on the programme (for starting school admissions in 2019 this means a child needs to be enrolled and attending the catechumenate programme before the deadline for applications on 15 January 2019).
5. 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 (Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989)
6. A sibling is defined as brothers or sisters living in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, step brothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters. That sibling must be in school at the time of admission to fit into the Admissions Criteria.
7. Children of staff are defined as the children of those who are employed directly by the school in any capacity, on a permanent contract, whether full or part time. The member of staff must be working at the school at the time of application. Children are defined as those for whom the member of staff has legal responsibility whether they are biological children, step children, adopted or fostered.
8. A pupil's home address will be regarded as the address of the parent(s) or carer(s) with parental responsibility with whom the pupil usually lives. This will not usually include grandparents, aunts or uncles. Where a pupil spends time with parents at more than one address, the address used will be the one at which the pupil is ordinarily resident and where the pupil spends the majority of the school week (Monday to Friday) including nights. If there is any query on the home address this will be checked against official documentation.
9. If a pupil moves into the admissions area outside the normal admissions round (or after the allocation process has been completed) there can be no guarantee of a place at the school if this would mean exceeding the admissions number. All applicants in this category will be considered against the admissions criteria set out above. Parents can apply directly to the school.
10. Overriding priority will be given to pupils who have a statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health and Care plan which names the school.
11. A Christian is defined as 'a member of one of the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland at the time when admission decisions are made. Proof of church membership must be provided by the appropriate church leader.
12. An equal preference system means that all first, second and third preference applications are considered equally against the school's admissions criteria.

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Applications received after the closing date will not be considered in the initial allocation of places, except in very exceptional circumstances. Where parents have submitted an application form before the closing date, but then seek to change their preference after the closing date, this late expression of preference will be treated as a 'late' application and will not be considered in the initial allocation of places. Late applications and late changes of preference will be processed as soon as possible after the offer date. Late applications for a place at St. Mary's Catholic Primary School should be routed through Central Bedfordshire Council in accordance with coordinated admission arrangements.

13. Appeals:

Any pupil refused the offer of a place has the right of appeal to an independent appeals panel. Parents can lodge an appeal by writing to the Admissions Clerk. Appeals, in the normal admission round for Year R will be heard within 40 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals. For late applications or in-year admissions, appeals will be heard within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged. In respect of appeals for Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 the Independent Appeals Panel will decide on:

- Whether the school's admission arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code and Part 3 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.
- Whether the arrangements were correctly applied.
- Whether the admission of another student would prejudice the efficient education and use of resources within the school.

The panel exercises its discretion balancing the degree of prejudice to the school against the appellant's case for the child being admitted, before arriving at a decision.

In respect of appeals for Years R, 1 and 2 where infant class size limits have been reached an appeal panel can only offer a place to a child where it is satisfied that either:

- The child would have been offered a place if the admission arrangements had been properly implemented;
- The child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had not been contrary to mandatory provisions in the School Admissions Code and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998; and/or:
- The decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

15. School Transport:

Information on eligibility for assistance with transport can be found in the LA's documents in regards to school applications by Central Bedfordshire Council. Eligibility criteria are also set out in the Council's Home to School Transport Policy.

16. Deferred Entry

The School admits children into Reception classes in the September prior to the child's fifth birthday. Parents/carers can choose to defer their child's entry to school, or take up a part

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time place, until he or she is of compulsory school age, providing the full time place is taken up within the same academic year.

Therefore:

Children born between 1/9/14 – 31/12/14 can defer their place until January 2020.

Children born between 1/1/15-31/8/15 can defer their place until April 2020.

Parents/carers cannot defer their child's entry beyond the dates given above.

Parents/carers of children born between 1/4/15-31/8/15, who would like their child to start Year 1 in September 2020 would need to reapply for admission at a later date.

These applications would be treated as an 'in-year' admission request and a place would only be offered if there were vacancies in the year group.

Parents/carers wishing to defer their child's entry to school or take up a part time place must put their request in writing to the Headteacher, ideally within 21 days of being offered a place by the Council.

18. Admission of Children Outside of their Normal Age Group

Parents seeking a place for their child outside of the chronological age group should submit their written case to the Admissions Committee.

Parents should include information regarding the child's academic, social and emotional development and whether they have previously been educated outside of their normal age group. If the child has been born prematurely, parents should include these details in their application. Applications relating to the Starting School (Year R) admissions round will also be discussed with relevant local authority professionals. Decisions will be made based on the circumstances of each case and parents will be informed of the reasons for the decision in writing.

Our consultation runs from Wednesday 13 December 2017 to Wednesday 24 January 2018. During this period you are invited to respond to this proposal by contacting the Headteacher on 01582 602420, or email stmaryscadd@cbc.beds.sch.uk The closing date for comments is **Wednesday 24 January 2018**.