



## **ADMISSIONS POLICY 2021-2022**

St. Vincent de Paul is a Catholic school founded by the Church to provide education for Catholic children. As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. At 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.

The Published Admission Number (PAN) for the reception class at St Vincent de Paul Catholic School is 30. The Governing Body has sole responsibility for admissions to this school and intends to admit 30 children in the school year that begins in September 2021. Applications are welcome from families whose child reaches his/her 4<sup>th</sup> birthday between 1 September 2020 and 31 August 2021.

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic applicants in accordance with the Trust Deed of the Diocese of Westminster. Applications will be ranked using the criteria listed below.

In this policy *applicant* refers to the person making an application on behalf of a child; *candidate* refers to the child on whose behalf the application is being made.

### **OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA**

Where there are more applications than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority

1. Catholic 'Looked After' Children and previously 'Looked After' Catholic children who have been adopted or made subject to child arrangement orders or special guardianship orders.
2. Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic practice with a brother or sister at the school at the time of enrolment (or step sibling or half sibling resident at the same address).

*'Love one another as I have loved you'*

3. Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice whose parent is a permanent member of staff and who has been employed at the school for at least two years at the time of application.
4. Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice attending St Vincent de Paul Catholic School Nursery.
5. Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice.
6. Other Baptised Catholic children with a brother or sister at the school at the time of enrolment (or step sibling or half sibling resident at the same address).
7. Other Baptised Catholic children.
8. Other 'Looked After' children and previously 'Looked After' children who have been adopted or made subject to child arrangement orders or special guardianship orders.
9. Other Christian applicants.
10. All other applicants.

**See below for definitions of these priorities:**

#### **EXCEPTIONAL NEED**

The Governing Body will give top priority, after the appropriate category of looked after children, to an application 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 at 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.

#### **APPLICATIONS IN PREVIOUS YEARS**

For the past five years the governing body has been unable to offer places to any applicants beyond oversubscription criterion 5. Whilst the school welcomes applications from all categories, it is usually oversubscribed by Catholic candidates.

#### **TIE BREAK**

Where the offer of places to all applicants in the categories listed above would lead to oversubscription, places up to the Published Admissions Number of 30 will be offered to those living nearest the school. Distances are measured by a straight line (as the crow flies). Distances will be calculated from the home address point, as determined by Ordnance Survey Data, to the school entrance using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system. *Where distance is used as a tie breaker, and where it is necessary to differentiate between applicants living in the same block of flats and eligible for the remaining place/s, priority will be given to applicants by ascending flat numerical order. Where it is necessary to further differentiate between applicants living the same distance from the school if distances are identical, the Governing Body will draw lots in the presence of an independent witness.*

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## **FAIR ACCESS**

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.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURE for 2021 – 2022**

In order to make an application, you **must** complete a **Common Application Form (CAF)** from your local authority either online or on paper and return it to them. You **should** also complete the **School's Supplementary Information Form (SIF)**. 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 (in person or 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 15 January 2021, 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.

## **CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE**

Applicants applying under criteria 2, 3, 4, and 5 should submit a Certificate of Catholic Practice (CCP) by the closing date. This form is available from the priest at the parish where the family normally worships or from the diocesan website. It is the parent's duty to ensure that the CCP is submitted to the school in good time.

The Local Authority will contact you on behalf of the Governing Body with the outcome of your application on or about 16<sup>th</sup> April 2021. This information will also be available on line. Parents/carers should accept or decline the place as soon as possible.

## **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.

## **NURSERY CHILDREN**

Attendance at the nursery **DOES NOT** guarantee a place in Reception.

Parents of children attending St Vincent de Paul Catholic School Nursery **must** make a fresh application for Reception.

### **RIGHT OF APPEAL**

If you are unsuccessful you may ask us for the reasons for the refusal of a place. These reasons will be related to the oversubscription criteria listed in the policy and you will have the right of appeal to an independent panel. 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. Appeals should be submitted to the school in writing by Friday 21 May 2021.

### **WAITING LIST**

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out in the policy and not in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Names will be removed from the list on 31 August 2021, unless applicants request in writing to remain on the list.

### **PUPILS WITH AN EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLAN (EHC)**

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

### **CHANGE OF DETAILS**

If any of the details on either of your forms changes between the date of application and the receipt of the letter of offer or refusal, you **must** inform the School and the Local Authority immediately. If misleading information is given or allowed to remain on either of your forms, the Governing Body reserves the right to withdraw the place, even if the child has already started at the School.

### **IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS**

Applications for In-Year admissions are made directly to the school. 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 us 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 the order of the oversubscription criteria and not in the order in which the applications are received. Names are removed from the list at the end of each academic year. When a place becomes available the Governing Body will re-rank the list and make an offer to the person at the top of the list. The local authority will be informed of the offer as soon as it has been accepted.

### **RECEPTION YEAR DEFERRED ENTRY**

Applicants may defer entry to school up until 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 the 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 compulsory school age is reached. Entry may not be deferred beyond compulsory school age or beyond the year of application, therefore applicants whose children have birthdays in the summer term may only defer until the 1 April 2021.

### **ADMISSION OF CHILDREN OUTSIDE THEIR NORMAL AGE GROUP**

If a parent wishes his/her child to be educated outside his/her normal age group, i.e. a child born between 1 April – 31 August 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.

### **NOTES (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)**

**'Looked after child'** has the same meaning as in S.22 of the Children Act 1989, and means any child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by them (e.g. children with foster parents at the time of making an application to the school).

**'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.

**'Child Arrangements Order'**. 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.

**'Special Guardianship Order'**. A special guardianship order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.14A 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.

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

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

**'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 with the Catholic Church.

**'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/>

**'Catechumen'** means a child or parent 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.

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

**"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 Britain and Ireland 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.

**'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.

**'Distance from school'** means distance as measured by a straight line (as the crow flies). Distances will be calculated from the home address point, as determined by Ordnance Survey Data, to the school entrance using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system. *Where distance is used as a tie breaker, and where it is necessary to differentiate between applicants living in the same block of flats and eligible for the remaining place/s, priority will be given to applicants by ascending flat numerical order. Where it is necessary to further differentiate between applicants living the same distance from the school, if distances are identical, the Governing Body will draw lots in the presence of an independent witness.*