Holy Innocents' Catholic Primary School
Admissions Policy & Procedures 2020 - 2021

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Holy Innocents Roman Catholic Primary School is a voluntary aided school in the Diocese of Southwark. It is the trusteeship of the Diocese. 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 school exists primarily to serve the Catholic community and Catholic children always have priority of admission. However, the Governing Body welcomes all applications, particularly from those of other denominations and faiths who support the religious ethos of the school.

Having consulted the Local Authority and other admission authorities, the Governors intend to admit into the Reception class, in September 2018, (via the London Borough of Bromley Co-ordinated Admissions) up to 30 pupils without reference to ability or aptitude.

Where the number of applications exceeds 30, the Governors will offer places using the following criteria in the order stated:-

1. Looked After Catholic Children or Looked After Children in the care of Catholic families.
   A looked after child is a child who is in care to a local authority or who is provided with accommodation by that authority and will still be looked after when at the time an application for their admission to a school is made, and who the local authority has confirmed will still be looked after at the time when the child is admitted to the school. Children placed by the Local Authority by a Kinship or residency order are NOT classed as Looked After Children.

2. Baptised Catholic children resident in the parishes of Holy Innocents, Orpington, St Michael and All Angels, Locksbottom and St. Theresa of the Infant Jesus, Biggin Hill

3. Other Baptised Catholic children. Evidence of Baptism will be required.

4. Children enrolled in the catechumenate. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required.

5. Other Looked After Children.

6. Children who are members of Eastern Orthodox Churches. Evidence of Baptism will be required.

7. Children of families who are committed members of other Christian denominations that are part of Churches Together in England. Evidence of Baptism (or dedication) provided by a priest or minister of a designated place of worship will be required.

8. Children of other faiths. Evidence of religious commitment provided by a priest, minister or religious leader of a designated place of worship will be required.

9. Any other children.

The following order of priorities will be applied when applications within any of the above categories exceed the places available and it is necessary to decide between applications.

1. For Category 2 above – The strength of evidence of commitment to the faith as demonstrated by the family's Mass attendance on Sundays. Commitment is defined using the frequency of Mass attendance asked for on the Supplementary Form. Applications will be ranked using the information provided on the Supplementary Form with those who attend Mass weekly being ranked highest, then those who attend Mass once or twice a month, etc. This evidence must be provided by the parents/carers and be endorsed by a priest at the church(es) where the family normally worship. *Catholics include members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome. Reference to other Christian denominations refers to denominations that are full members of Churches Together in England.*

2. Siblings - A brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner, attending the school at the beginning of their first term. In every case the child must be living in the same family unit at the same address Evidence of the relationship may be required.

3. Social and medical needs which make the school particularly suitable for the child in question. Strong and relevant evidence must be provided by an appropriate professional authority (e.g. qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker or priest).

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4. Distance from home to school –distance will be measured (in a straight line/by the shortest walking route) from the front door of the child's home address(including flats) to the main entrance of the school, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the highest priority. Where the last remaining place is to be allocated and two or more children are deemed to live at the same distance from the school the place will be decided by the drawing of lots. Evidence of residence may be required.

Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan.

The admission of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or with an EHC Plan is dealt with by an entirely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of statements and EHC plans by the pupil's home local authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the SEND code of practice. Pupils with a statement or EHC plan naming the school will be admitted without reference to the above criteria.

In Year (casual) admissions:

Applications for a place at the school in-year must be made using the common application form of the local authority (LA) where the child resides. This form must be returned to the LA. The school's supplementary form should also be completed to enable the Governors to rank the application in the event of there being more than one application for a place. The Governors will use the same criteria to rank the application as that listed above. The offer of a place at the school will be made by the LA on behalf of the governors. In the event of the governors deciding that a place cannot be offered parents will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on a waiting list. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents who are seeking a place for their child outside of their normal age group, eg, the child has experienced problems such as ill health or the parents of a summer born child preferring not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday, may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1.

Governors will make decisions on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group, and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. They will also consider the views of the school's head teacher. When informing a parent of the decision which year group the child should be admitted to, the governors will set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

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Where the governors agree to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school the local authority will process the application as part of the main admissions round, (unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible) and on the basis of the determined admission arrangements, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

Waiting List:

Parents of children who have not been offered a place at the school may ask for their child's name to be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list, which will be maintained until the end of the academic year in which the request is made, will be operated using the same admissions criteria listed above. Placing a child's name on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place. It is possible that when a child is directed under the local authority's fair access protocol they will take precedence over those children already on the list.

Fair Access Protocol

The school participates in the local authority's Fair Access Protocol to allocate places to vulnerable and other children in accordance with the School Admission Code 2014. Admitting pupils under the protocol may require the school to admit above the planned admission number for the relevant year group.

Appeals

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with section 85(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing and must set out the reasons on which the appeal is made. Appeals should be made to the Admissions Appeal Clerk at the school address. Parents/Carers have the right to make oral representations to the Appeal Panel.

Infant classes are restricted by the legislation to 30 children. Parents should be aware that an appeal against refusal of a place in an infant class may only succeed if it can be demonstrated that:-

a) the admission of additional children would not breach the infant class size limit; or

b) the admission arrangements did not comply with admissions law or had not been correctly and impartially applied and the child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had complied or had been correctly and impartially applied; or

c) the panel decides that the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

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February 2017