



St Matthias School

Admissions Policy 2021-22 – Main School

Our admissions policy reflects the 2014 School Admissions Code and the governors' intent in creating a school with a distinctive Christian ethos. As followers of Jesus, we believe our school should:

- serve the community in which it is based,
- strengthen the faith of the Christian children in school through prayer and worship
- welcome children and their families regardless of any disability or special educational need they may have
- provide an education that enables all children to achieve the highest possible standards.

In order to achieve this, our admissions policy includes Foundation Places for those who regularly attend a Christian church, Other Faith Places for those who are regular worshippers of other faiths and Open Places for anyone who wishes to come to this school because of its Christian ethos. In order to provide an education that lets children achieve the highest possible standards we have a standard class size of 30. This is because we strongly believe that to go above this number would be to compromise the efficiency of the education we would be able to offer to all of the pupils in the class. It is also the limit imposed upon us by law for infant classes.

When there are more applications than places, Governors will allocate places according to the following priorities:

- First, looked-after children and children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because, immediately after being looked after, they became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order. (See Note 1)
- Second, children for whom it is deemed there is strong medical, mobility or social reason to attend the school applied to. (See Note 2)
- Third, children of staff employed at St Matthias School, subject to the conditions detailed in Note 3.

Children with a Statement of Special Educational Need or with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan naming St Matthias School will always be offered places. If there is then greater demand for admission than there are places available, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out below:

The remaining places will be allocated on the basis of 53% (maximum of 16) Foundation Places, 27% (maximum 8) Other Faith Places and 20% (maximum 6) Open Places.

A. Foundation Places as follows:

Foundation Places for children whose parent(s)/carer(s) regularly attend a Christian church (See Notes 4 & 5):

1. Children who have siblings in the school at the time of attendance (See Note 6).
2. Children who live within the catchment area of the school (See note 7).
3. Children living outside of the catchment area of the school applied to (See note 8).

B. Other Faith Places as follows:

Other Faith Places for children whose parent(s)/carer(s) regularly attend another world faith place of worship (See Note 3):

1. Children who have siblings in the school at the time of attendance (See Note 6).
2. Children who live within the catchment area of the school (See note 7).
3. Children living outside of the catchment area of the school applied to (See note 8).

C. Open Places as follows:

1. Children who have siblings in the school at the time of attendance (See Note 6).
2. Children who live within the catchment area of the school (See note 7).
3. Children living outside of the catchment area of the school applied to (See note 8).

Please note that where a place has been offered:

- it is for a full-time place from the September following the child's fourth birthday;
- parents of a child whose fifth birthday falls between 1 September 2020 and 31 March 2021 may request that their child is not admitted until later in the school year 2020/21 (no later than the term [using three term year] after the child's fifth birthday, when s/he reaches compulsory school age). For children born between 1 April and 31 August, this is not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made. The school will hold any deferred place for the child.
- where parents wish a child may attend part time until they reach compulsory school age.

Admissions out of the Normal Age Range

For children whose fifth birthday falls between 1 April 2021 and 31 August 2021, parents who do not wish them to start school in school year 2020-21, but to be admitted in September 2021 for school year 2021-22, should discuss this with the school at an early stage.

Decisions will be made by the Governing Body on the circumstances of each case and the best interests of the child. Parental views, academic achievement, social and emotional development and where relevant medical views will be taken into consideration. The views of the school's head will also be taken into account. The reasons for the decision will be clearly set out in writing.

Parents may decide not to apply for a Reception place in the school but to apply in the second half of the summer term 2021 for a Year 1 place in September 2021. Parents should be aware that the Year 1 group may have no vacancies as it could be full with children transferring from the 2020-21 Reception Year group. Alternatively, they may decide to apply in the normal round (no later than 15 January 2021) for a Reception Year place in September 2021, but would need to provide strong supporting reasons for seeking a place outside the normal year group via the protocol outlined above.

Notes:

Note 1: by a "looked-after child" we mean one in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services function. An adoption order is one made under the Adoption Act 1976 (Section 12) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Section 46). A 'child arrangements order' is one settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live (Children Act 1989, Section 8, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014, Section 14). A 'special guardianship order' is one appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian/s (Children Act 1989, Section 14A). Applications under this criterion must be accompanied by evidence to show that the child is looked after or was previously looked after (e.g. a copy of the adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order).

Note 2: this can include the parents', carers' or other family members' medical conditions and the family's social needs. Parents must complete the relevant section on the application form and attach medical and/or social reports from a suitable professional (e.g. a doctor or social worker) to support the application.

Note 3: there are two possible conditions. First, the member of staff must have been employed on a continuous basis at the school for two or more years. For normal round admissions the date that will be used to assess the length of time that a member of staff has been employed will be the closing date for applications. Second, a member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which, in the opinion of the governing body, there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

Note 4: by 'regular' we mean once a month for the year preceding the date of application. Certification of attendance in writing from an official of the worship centre attended is required.

Note 5: by 'Christian church' we mean, in order of priority, a) an Anglican church in the Tower Hamlets deanery and b) any other church that is a member of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland or those affiliated to the Evangelical Alliance within the geographical area of St Matthews parish. A map of the parish is available to see in the school office.

Note 6: 'Sibling' refers to 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, and in every case the child should be living in the same family unit at the same address.

Note 7: In the event of oversubscription within this category, priority will be given, to children for whom St Matthias is their nearest school within the catchment area; and then to children who live nearest to the main entrance of the school on Bacon Street measured by a straight line.

Note 8: within this category, priority will be given to children who live nearest to the main entrance of the school on Bacon Street measured by a straight line.

Where there is oversubscription in any category priority will be given to children who live nearest to the main entrance of the school on Bacon Street measured by a straight line. Where more than one child has the same distance, allocation will be made using random allocation.

Proof of address may be required.

In the event of a twin being the 30th child in a year, the other twin will also be admitted.

In the event of over subscription, a waiting list will be maintained from which places will be allocated at the time of a vacancy in accordance with the above criteria. Names will be kept on the waiting list for 1 year from the date for which entry was requested.

Applications for in-year admissions will, in the event of oversubscription, be treated in the same way as those made during the normal admissions round including addition to the waiting list, the names being removed at the end of the academic year during which entry was requested.