

St Teresa's Catholic Primary School



ADMISSIONS POLICY 2026-2027

ST TERESA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL Admissions Policy 2026-2027

St Teresa's Catholic Primary School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below. The school is conducted by its governing body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed articles of association, and seeks at all times to be a witness to Our Lord Jesus Christ.

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. We therefore hope that parents will give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school. This does not affect the right of an applicant who is not Catholic to apply for and be admitted to a place at the school in accordance with the admission arrangements.

The governing body is the admission authority and has responsibility for admissions to the school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admissions round for admissions to the school in Reception Class at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year or for other classes. The Governing Body has set its admission number at 30 pupils to the Reception year, in the school year which begins in September 2026.

The governing body will, where logistically possible, admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the last child ranked within the school's Published Admissions Number ("PAN").

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (see note 1)

The admission of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school must be admitted. Where this takes place before the allocation of places under these arrangements this will reduce the number of places available to other children.

Details of this separate procedure are set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. Please contact the school for further advice or the Parent Partnership Service. Information for parents about the Essex Parent Partnership Service can be found on the main Essex County Council website.

Oversubscription Criteria

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

1. Catholic looked after and previously looked after children. (see notes 2 & 3)
2. Catholic children with a **Certificate of Catholic Practice** who are resident in the parishes of St. Teresa's, Lexden and St. Mary Immaculate and the Holy Archangels, Kelvedon. (see notes 3, 4 & 10) and Catholic children of armed service personnel who are resident inside or outside the boundaries of the above mentioned parishes.
3. Other Baptised Catholic children with a **Certificate of Catholic Practice**. (see notes 3 & 4)
4. Other Catholic children who are resident in the parishes of St. Teresa's, Lexden and St. Mary Immaculate and the Holy Archangels, Kelvedon. (see notes 3 & 10)
5. Other Catholic children. (See note 3)
6. Other looked after and previously looked after children. (See note 2)
7. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (See notes 5 & 7)
8. Children of a Christian denomination whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion (see note 6).
9. Any other children.

Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.

- i. Children of permanent teaching staff who are employed at the school at the time of application for the school place or where the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made.
- ii. The attendance of a brother or sister at the school at the time of enrolment (up to and including Year 5 at the point of application) will increase the priority of an application within each category so that the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made after children in (i) above (see note 8).

Tie Break

Priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. Distances are calculated on the basis of a straight line measurement using the local authority's computerised measuring system.

In the event of distances being the same for two or more children where this would determine the last place to be allocated, random allocation will be carried out and supervised by a person independent of the school. All the names will be entered into a hat and the required number of names will be drawn out.

Application Procedures and Timetable

Essex County Council coordinates arrangements for Reception intake admissions to all primary schools within its jurisdiction. Applications for admission to the Reception class will be managed in accordance with the arrangements published by the Local Authority. The Governing Body of St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Colchester, is responsible for all admissions.

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round for a September Reception Class place, you must complete a Common Application Form available from the local authority in which you live.

You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form (available to download via the School Website). The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to the school by the Essex County Council published closing date.

If you do not provide the information required in the Supplementary Information Form and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child will not be placed in criteria 1-8 and this is likely to affect your child's chance of being offered a place.

All applications which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions.

Late Applications will be administered in accordance with Essex County Council's Primary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. You are encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.

Details of this separate procedure are set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. Please contact the school for further advice or the Parent Partnership Service. Information for parents about the Essex Parent Partnership Service can be found on the main Essex County Council website. Email: parentpartnership@essex.gov.uk Telephone: 01245 436036

Admission of children below compulsory school age and deferred entry.

A child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday. A child's parent may defer the date at which their child, below compulsory school age, is admitted to the school, until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age, or beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which an offer was made. A child may take up a part-time place until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age. Upon receipt of the offer of a place a parent should notify the school, as soon as possible, that they wish to defer their child's entry to the school or take up a part-time place.

Admission of children outside their normal age group.

A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1st April and 31st August, may request that the child be admitted out of their normal age group.

Any such request should be made in writing to the head teacher at the same time as the admission application is made. The governing body will make a decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the head teacher, including the head teacher's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the governing body will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

Continued Interest Lists

In addition to their right to appeal, unsuccessful applications will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a continued interest list. This list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out above and ***not in the order in which applications are received or added to the list***. The continued interest lists for admission will operate throughout the school year. Parents may be required to re-submit up to date documents.

In-Year Applications

An application can be made for a place for a child at any time outside the admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. Application should be made to the school by contacting Essex County Council.

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out above, will be applied.

If there are no places available, the child will be added to the continued interest list (see above).

Essex County Council will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing. You have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

Fair Access Protocol

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 admission round the governing body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The governing body has this power, even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number (subject to the infant class size exceptions).

The governing body reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place, or the place itself where the child is already attending the school, where it is satisfied that the offer or the place was obtained by deception.

Notes:

1. A Statement of Special Educational Needs is a statement made by the local authority under section 324 of the Education Act 1996, specifying the special educational provision for the child. An Education, Health Care Plan is a plan made by the local authority under section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014, specifying the special educational provision required for the child.
2. A 'looked after child' has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any child who is (a) in the care of a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents) at the time of making an application to the school.

A 'previously looked after child' is a child who was looked after, but ceased to be so because he or she was adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order. Included in this definition are those children who appear (to the governing body) to have been in state care outside of England and who ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted."

3. 'Catholic' means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes Eastern Catholic Churches. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of baptism in a Catholic Church or a certificate of reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy, it includes a looked after child who is part of a Catholic family where a letter from a priest demonstrates that the child would have been baptised or received if it were not for their status as a looked after child (e.g. a looked after child in the process of adoption by a Catholic family).
For a child to be treated as Catholic, evidence of Catholic baptism or reception into the Church will be required. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism should contact their Parish Priest who, after consulting with the Diocese, will decide how the question of baptism is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church.
4. '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 is impossible to do so) attended Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation for at least five years (or, in the case of a 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://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/education/school-admissions/>
5. 'Catechumen' means a member of the catechumenate of the Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens.
6. 'Children of other Christian denominations' means children who belong to other churches and ecclesial communities which, acknowledge 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 creedal 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 England and CYTŪ 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.
7. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.

8. 'brother or sister' includes:
 - i. all natural brothers and sisters, half brothers and sisters, adopted brothers and sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address, and
 - ii. the child of a parent's partner where that child lives for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same address as the applicant.
9. A 'parent' means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for a child and any person who has care of a child.
10. For the purposes of this policy, parish boundaries are those applied by the diocese. Clarification of parish boundaries should be sought from the relevant parish or the diocese.
11. A child's "home address" refers to the address where the child usually lives with a parent or carer, and will be the address provided in the Common Application Form ("CAF"). Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives for part of the week with each parent, the home address will be the address given in the CAF, provided that the child resides at that address for any part of the school week.