



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Admissions Policy 2026/2027

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Our Governing body applies the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend this school. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 introduced a new framework for school admissions as of September 2000 further explained in the current statutory School Admissions Code and School Admission Appeals Code.

2 Aims

- 2.1 We seek to be an inclusive school, welcoming children from all backgrounds and abilities.
- 2.2 All applications will be treated on merit, and in a sensitive manner.
- 2.3 The only restriction we place on entry is that of number. If the number of children applying for entry exceeds the places available, we adopt the procedure set out below to determine whether a child is to be accepted or not. It is our wish for parents to find a place for their child at the school of their choice. However, this is not always possible, due to excess demand on the places available.
- 2.4 A child's level of ability is irrelevant to this school's admissions policy; as are any special needs the child may have.

3 How parents can apply for their child to be admitted to our school

- 3.1 Our school is a Voluntary Aided school, and it determines the admission arrangements in agreement with the LA and the Diocese. The Admissions Authority for our school is therefore the Governing body of the school. Parents can receive a copy of these regulations directly from the LA.
- 3.2 The LA's annual admissions prospectus informs parents how to apply for a place at the school of their choice. Parents have a right to express their preference, but this does not, in itself, guarantee a place at that particular school. Information regarding school admissions can be found on the Cumbria County Council website – <https://www.cumberland.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-admissions> . The application form is a SA1 and the closing date for returning the form will be 15 January 2026. The form can be obtained from the local authority who will notify parents of the decision as soon as all the applications have been considered.
- 3.3 In this area, children enter school at the start of the academic year in which they become five. There is one admission date per year, early in September (i.e. when the autumn term begins). Therefore, parents who would like their child to be admitted to this school during the year their child is five should ensure that they return the necessary application form by the date indicated on the form.

Governors' Admissions

Admission Number

The Governing Body of St Mary's will admit up to **30 children in September 2026**.

Arrangements are made for admission to St Mary's, in accordance with parental choice and the following procedures:

If the number of applications for admission exceeds the places available, children will be admitted in the order of priority set out below.

1. Catholic looked after children and previously looked after Catholic children who have been baptised, (evidence of Baptism for all categories will be: baptismal certificate or letter from a Catholic Priest confirming their knowledge of the child's baptism). This extends to children who have been adopted or have become subject to a residence or special guardianship order.
2. Other looked after children and previously looked after children. This extends to children who have been adopted or have become subject to a residence or special guardianship order.
3. Baptised Catholic children resident in the parish of 'Christ the Good Shepherd', who will have brothers and sisters or foster siblings in the school at the time of admission.
4. Baptised Catholic children, who live within the boundaries of the parish of 'Christ the Good Shepherd'.
5. Baptised Catholic children from other parishes, who will have brothers and sisters in the school at the time of admission. (For all categories siblings will be defined as a full, adopted, half or step brother or sister or foster siblings).
6. Baptised Catholic children from other parishes.
7. Children from St Mary's Nursery.
8. Non-Catholic children, whose parents wish them to be educated at St Mary's Catholic School and who have a brother or sister in the school at the time of admission.
9. Non-Catholic children, whose parents wish them to be educated at St Mary's Catholic School.
10. Any child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs will be admitted before the application of the oversubscribed criteria.
11. A waiting list for children who have not been offered a place will be kept and will be ranked according to the admissions/oversubscription criteria. Parents/guardians are invited to contact the school if they wish to be informed of their child's position on the waiting list. The waiting list will be closed at the end of the autumn term.
12. Where there are twins/triplets wanting admission and there is only a single place left within the admission number, the Governing Body will exercise as much flexibility as possible within the requirements of the infant class sizes. If places for both twins or all triplets, etc cannot be offered, the family will be advised accordingly. This may also apply to siblings who are in the same year group. If only a single place can be offered then it will be up to the parents to decide whether they wish to accept the place offered.

NOTES –

Looked After Children & Previously Looked After Children, - defined as those, who are in the care of the local authority or provided with accommodation by them, which extends to children who have been adopted or have become subject to a residence or special guardianship order.

Tie breaker

In the event of a tie in any of the above categories above, priority will be given to children living nearest the pupils' school gate, measured in a single straight line on the map. The home address will be determined as the place where the pupil permanently resides or in the case of a foster pupil where they temporarily reside.

5 Admission Appeals

- 5.1 If we do not offer a child a place at this school, this will be because to do so would prejudice the education of other children by allowing the number of children in the school to increase too much.
- 5.2 If parents wish to appeal against a decision to refuse entry they can refer to the school admissions appeals code that came into force on 01/02/2012.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code>

These regulations provide that an appeal panel established by the governing body of a foundation or voluntary aided school must consist of three or five members appointed by the governing body.

- 5.2 This independent panel will consider all such appeals, and its decision is binding for all parties concerned.
- 5.3 If the appeals panel decides that we should admit a child to whom we had refused a place, then we will accept this decision and continue to do all we can to provide the best education for all the children at our school.

6 The Standard Number

The 'standard number' is the number of children the LEA considers the school can accommodate. The standard number for our school is 210. We keep this number under review, and the governors will apply to change the number if circumstances change.

7 Sizes of Classes for Nursery:

We teach Nursery children (aged two to four) with a maximum number of 28 children per session – with two sessions per day.

Sizes of Classes for EYFS and KS1:

We teach Foundation Stage children (aged four to five) in classes that have a maximum number of 30 children.

Sizes of Classes for KS2:

We teach Junior children (aged seven to eleven in classes that have a maximum number of 30 children.)

8 Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored by the governors annually.

9. Deferred Entry

Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to school is deferred until later in the academic year or until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age. Parents can also request that their child takes up the place part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

The governors recommend that in your child's interests' full-time education is deferred no later than the start of the spring term.

10. Information and arrangements for disabled children

In St Mary's, we have a commitment to equal opportunities for all members of the school community and our Accessibility Plan outlines our intention to remove barriers for disabled pupils and to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the different areas of the national curriculum, increase access to extra-curricular activities and the wider school curriculum, improve the physical environment of school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided and improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

To achieve this, we will improve access to the curriculum by INSET training for all staff, all out-of-school and extra-curricular activities are planned to ensure the participation of all pupils and a review of Teaching Assistant deployment.

To improve access to the physical environment we have installed a ramp to enter the Reception Office and moved light switches and power outlets to wheelchair height. We have fire and emergency evacuation procedures to be in place for those with additional needs. To improve acoustics for hearing impaired pupils we have carpets fitted in classrooms.

11. Admissions Appeals Timetable

Written appeals to unsuccessful applications for admission into St Mary's for September 2026 must be lodged by May 13th 2026.

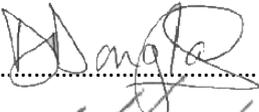
After this date, the Governors will allow a further 10 school days to ensure:

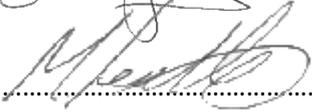
- those making an appeal have time to submit additional evidence
- admission authorities have time to submit their evidence
- the school admin office has time to send appeal papers to the panel and parties

After this date, we will ensure that those parents/carers who are making an appeal will receive notice of their appeal hearing by June 17th 2026.

The final decision letters which follow the above hearing will be sent by July 9th 2026.

Signed:

Headteacher:  Mrs D Douglas, Acting Headteacher

Governor:  Mr M Featherstone, Chair of Governors

Date: September 2024

Review Date: September 2025

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