

ST. RAPHAEL'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

PRIMARY ADMISSIONS POLICY 2025-2026



St. Raphael's Catholic Primary School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. 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.

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.

St. Raphael's is a Catholic Voluntary Aided school, maintained by the London Borough of Ealing and in the trusteeship of the Diocese of Westminster.

Full responsibility for the admission of pupils rests with the governing body of the school.

The Published Admissions Number (PAN) for the reception class at St Raphael's is 60. The Governing Body has sole responsibility for admissions to this school and intends to admit 60 children in the school year which begins in September 2023. Applications are welcome from families whose child reaches his/her 4th birthday between 1st September 2024 and 31st August 2025.

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic applicants in accordance with 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 for places than number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority.

1. Catholic looked after children and Catholic children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order. Including Catholic children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
2. Baptised Catholic children resident in the parishes of St. Raphael's and St. Gabriel & St. Bernard's with a Certificate of Catholic Practice who have a sibling in Years 1 to 6 inclusive at the time of admission.

3. Baptised Catholic children resident in the parishes of St. Raphael's and St. Gabriel & St. Bernard's and whose practice is supported by a Certificate of Catholic Practice.
4. Other baptised Catholic children whose practice is supported by a Certificate of Catholic Practice.
5. Other baptised Catholics.
6. Looked after children and children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order. Including children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
7. Children of Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church.
8. Christians of other denominations whose application is supported either by a certificate of baptism or by a letter from their minister confirming membership of the faith community.
9. Children of other faiths whose application is supported by a letter from their faith leader confirming membership of the faith community.
10. Other applicants

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.

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.

Tie Break

Where the offer of places to all applicants in any of the sub-categories listed above would still lead to oversubscription, the places up to the admission number will be offered to those living nearest to the school, as measured from a point in the property of the child's home to the main entrance of the school in a straight line. If all is equal, the Local Authority's admissions system will operate a random allocation. The Local Authority is responsible for measuring the distances.

In-Year Admissions

In-Year Admissions are co-ordinated by the Local Authority, so please complete the in-year primary school application form online. In order for the Governing Body to rank your application against the admission criteria, you should complete and return to the school the school's Supplementary Information Form (SIF).

If you are of another faith, you should provide a letter from your religious leader confirming membership of the faith community. If you do not complete these forms, then your application will be ranked lower than those who do. When a vacancy arises, if there are more applications than places available then the Governing Body will rank all applicants against the oversubscription criteria and inform the LA of the child at the top of the waiting list; an offer letter on behalf of the Governing Body will be sent and your child admitted. When a vacancy arises and there is only one child on the waiting list the school will inform the LA and an offer letter on behalf of the Governing Body will be sent and your child admitted. When a place cannot be offered, usually because the year group is full, you will be placed on the waiting list. The waiting list is ranked as above and not in the order in which applications are received. The Local Authority will inform you of the reason for the refusal of a place and of your right of appeal. Names are removed from the waiting list at the end of July each year unless you advise the LA by email or letter in June or July that you wish to remain on the waiting list for the next academic year.

Fair Access Protocols

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 Diocese and the local authority 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 2025- 2026

Applicants must complete a Common Application Form (CAF) from the Local Authority they pay council tax to and return it to them according to their instructions, by the deadline. The application should be made online at www.eadmissions.org.uk. You should also complete the School's Supplementary Information Form (SIF). 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 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 **17th January 2025**, the Governing Body will be unable to consider your application fully and it is very unlikely that your child will be offered a place. Applications received after the closing date will be dealt with after the initial allocation process has been completed.

Parents of children attending the nursery must make a fresh application for reception. Attendance at the nursery does not guarantee a place in reception.

The local authority will write to you on behalf of the Governing Body with the outcome of your application on **18th April 2025**.

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. Appeals must be submitted by May 2025.

PUPILS WITH AN EDUCATION, HEALTH & CARE PLAN (EHC)

The admission of pupils with an EHC Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Details of this separate procedure are set out in EHC 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.

RECEPTION YEAR DEFERRED ENTRY

Applicants may defer entry to school up until statutory 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 statutory school age is reached. Entry may not be deferred beyond statutory school age or beyond the year of application, therefore applicants whose children have birthdays in the summer may only defer until April 2026.

Parents may request that their child be educated out of his/her chronological age group. Such requests must be made in writing to the Chair of Governors during the autumn term in the year of application. When the application is made, it will be ranked with all the other applicants and no further exceptions will be given. A statutory right of appeal will be given upon refusal if no place has been offered in any school year.

Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

'Looked after child'

Children who are looked after or were previously looked after - A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order immediately following having been looked after. Adopted children are those who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders). Child arrangements orders are defined in s.8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by s.12 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order. A special guardianship order is defined by s. 14A of the Children Act 1989 as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians). A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

"Adopted" An adopted child is any child who has been formally adopted and whose parent/guardian can give proof of adoption.

"Child arrangements Order" A child arrangement is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.8 which defines it as an order setting the arrangements to be made as to the person whom the child is to live.

"Special Guardianship Order" A special guardianship order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s. 14A which defines it as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s).

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

'Sibling' means brother or sister, this includes:

- (1) All natural brothers and sisters, half brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address and
- (2) 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 child who is the subject of the application.

'Catholic' means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the 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 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 laws of the Church.

'Certificate of Catholic Practice' means a certificate given by the family's parish priest (or the priest in charge of the church where the family practises) 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 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 <https://education.rcdow.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Priests-Certificate-of-Catholic-Practice-Guidance-Proposed-amendments-2017-2-CLEAN-COPY.pdf>

'Catechumen' means a child (or the parent/guardian if the child is under 7 years of age) who is a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a Certificate of Reception into the Order of Catechumens.

'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally 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, 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 CYTUN 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.

'Children of other faiths' means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of 'other Christian denominations' at 7 above and which falls within the definition of a religion for the purposes of charity law. The Charities Act 2011 defines religion to include:

- A religion which involves belief in more than one God, and
- A religion which does not involve belief in a God.

Case law has identified certain characteristics which describe the meaning of religion for the purposes of charity law, which are characterised by a belief in a supreme being and an expression of belief in that supreme being through worship.

'Resident' – 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 the child resides at that address for any part of the school week.

Parish Boundaries – for the purposes of this Policy, parish boundaries are shown on the enclosed map and list of street names.