



St Mary's Catholic Primary School
Live, Love, Believe



Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

COMMON ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR ISLE OF WIGHT CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS

ADMISSION POLICY 2026-27

The Isle of Wight Catholic primary schools were established principally to provide education for the children of Catholic families. Over the years our mission has developed such that we offer our Christian Catholic education in our local community, to families of all faiths and none. It is however the case that if there are more applications than places available, priority will be given in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out below. The schools are conducted by their governing bodies as part of the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth and seek at all times to be effective witnesses to the Good News of Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Church.

As Catholic schools, we provide a Catholic Christian education for all our pupils, so these values permeate every aspect of the school's activities. This does not affect the right of an applicant who is not a Catholic, or Christian, to apply for and be awarded a place in accordance with the admission arrangements, and we are open to all those who share our Gospel based values of a loving, secure and inclusive environment combined with the highest educational standards.

The governing bodies are the admissions authorities and have responsibility for admissions to their schools. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round¹. The governing bodies have set their admission number for the Reception year group in the school year which begins in September 2026.

- **Holy Cross Catholic Primary (Parishes: Cowes, East Cowes) 30**
- **St Mary's Catholic Primary (Parish: Ryde) 30**
- **St Saviour's Catholic Primary (Parish: Totland Bay) 20***
- **St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary (Parish: Newport) 30**

* The Governors of St Saviour's Catholic Primary School will adhere to infant class size regulations of not more than 30 children per class in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 Governors will admit up to 30 children in each class.

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 B below).

The admission of pupils with a Statement of 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 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.

¹ This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year

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 C and G below), (Complete the separate Supplementary Information Form).
2. Catholic children who are resident within the boundaries of the parishes, which the school services. A map can be found on the school website or is available, on request, from the school. (Complete the separate Supplementary Information Form).
3. Other Catholic children (see G below). (Complete the separate Supplementary Information Form)
4. Other looked after and previously looked after children who are not baptised Catholics (see C below).
5. A staff child who is a child living at the same address of a current staff member who has Parental Responsibility for the child at the time of application (see D below).
6. Un-baptised children of either; baptised Catholic parents, grandparents or guardians (see G below). (Complete the separate Supplementary Information Form).
7. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion (see H below). (Complete the separate Supplementary Information Form).
8. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader (see I below). (Complete the separate Supplementary Information Form).
9. Any other children (see E below).

Within each of the categories listed above, the following provision will be applied.

The attendance of a sibling (see A below) at the school at the time of enrolment 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.

Children living the shortest distance from the school (see E below) at the time of enrolment will be the next priority after sibling criteria within each category.

Definitions:

- A. **'Sibling'** refers to a brother or sister, a half brother or sister, an adopted brother or sister, a step-brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner, or a foster brother or sister and in every case the child must be living permanently in the same family unit at the same address. 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.
- B. **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 a child. An **Education, Health and 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 a child.

- C. **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 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.

- D. **For a staff child** to be eligible the member of staff has either (1) been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, or (2) have been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
- E. **'Children living the shortest distance from the school'** is measured in a straight line, from the child's home address to the main gate of the school, as determined by the Local Authority distance measuring system. The 'home address', used for the term 'living within' with regard to the area served by the school, means the address where the child usually lives. Where parents have shared residence of a child and the child lives for part of the week with each parent the Governing Body will take the home address to be the address at which:
- the child lives most of a school week or;
 - where the child lives at each address for equal parts of a school week, then the address nearest to the school as determined by the Local Authority distance 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.

- F. In the case of **UK service personnel and Crown servants**, an official MOD, FCO or GCHQ letter declaring a relocation date to the relevant parish of the school will establish the equivalent of residence or distance from the school.
- G. **'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 in the process of adoption and living within a family where at least one of the parents is Catholic.

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, can consult with the diocesan Catholic Academies and Schools Office if they need further guidance.

- H. **'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 credal 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 CYTÛN 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.

- I. **‘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 6 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.

Application Procedures and Timetable

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round, you must complete a Common Application Form available from the local authority in which you live. You are also strongly requested to complete the **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)** attached to this policy if you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria 1 to 3 or 6 to 8. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to the school by 4.30pm on 15th January 2026

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 16th April 2026 or the next working day, by the local authority on our behalf. If you are unsuccessful (unless your child gained a place at a school you ranked higher) you will be informed of the reasons, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

If you do not provide the information required in the SIF and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child will not be placed in criteria 1 to 3 or 6 to 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 which is 15th January 2026

[Late Applications will be administered in accordance with the Isle of Wight Council’s Primary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. You are encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.]

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 parents 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 either 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 of 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, to reception rather than year 1.

Any such request should be made in writing to the Headteacher at the same time as the admission application is made. The governing body will make its 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.

Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful children will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This waiting 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. Waiting lists for admission will operate throughout the school year. The waiting list will be held open until 31 July 2026 unless applicants request in writing to remain on the list.

Inclusion in the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

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. Parents **must** obtain a **Common Application Form** from the Local Authority Admissions Office, County Hall, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 1UD (Telephone (01983) 821000, e-mail school.admissions@iow.gov.uk). If you are applying for a place under categories 1 to 3 or 6 to 8 of the Oversubscription criteria you are also encouraged to complete a **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)**, which should be obtained from the school or downloaded from the school website. It should then be completed and returned to the school.

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 waiting list (see above).

You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing, within a maximum of 15 school days of receipt, and 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).

Nursery

For children attending the school's nursery (where applicable), application to the reception class of the school must be made in the normal way, to the home local authority. Attendance at the school's nursery does not automatically guarantee that a place will be offered at the school.

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

Websites where you can obtain further information:

- [Holy Cross](#)
- [St Mary's](#)
- [St Thomas of Canterbury](#)
- [St Saviour's](#)
- [Isle of Wight Council](#)