ST. VINCENT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS POLICY 2026 - 2027

St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. 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. We therefore hope that all 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 this school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round (This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year). The admission authority has set its admission number at 60 pupils to Reception in the school year which begins in September 2026.

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.

Applications are welcome from families whose child reaches his/her 4th birthday between 1st September 2025 and 31st August 2026 *(i.e. children born between 1st September 2021 and 31st August 2022).*

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic applicants in accordance with the Trust Deed of the Diocese of Westminster, and seeks at all times to be a witness to Our Lord Jesus Christ. Applications will be ranked using the oversubscription criteria listed below.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (see note 1)

Please note that the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with 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.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

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

1. Catholic 'looked after' children and previously 'looked after' children (see notes 2 and 3).

2. Baptised Catholic children, with a Certificate of Catholic Practice who will have a sibling in the school on 1st September 2026 (see notes 3, 4 and 9).

3. Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice who are the child of a member of staff permanently employed by the school for two years prior to application (application being the deadline for submission of applications) (see notes 3, 4 and 9).

4. Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice who are resident in the Parish of Our Lady of Lourdes in Acton and St Aidan's in East Acton (please see parish boundary maps and notes 3, 4 and 10):

    (a) 62% of these places to those who live in the Parish of Our Lady of Lourdes.
    (b) 38% of these places to those who live in the Parish of St Aidan's.

5. Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice who are resident outside the Parish of Our Lady of Lourdes in Acton and St Aidan's in East Acton (see notes 3, 4 and 10).

6. Other baptised Catholic children who will have a sibling in the school on 1st September 2026 (see note 3 and 9).

7. Other baptised Catholic children who are the child of a member of staff permanently employed by the school for two years prior to application (application being the deadline for submission of applications) (see notes 3 and 9).

8. Other baptised Catholics (see notes 3 and 10):
    a. Other Baptised Catholic resident in the parishes of Our Lady of Lourdes & St Aidan's
    b. Other Baptised Catholic resident outside of the parishes of Our Lady of Lourdes & St Aidan's

9. Other 'looked after' children and previously 'looked after' children (see note 2).

10. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church (see notes 5 and 6).

11. Christians of other denominations whose application is supported either by a certificate of baptism or by a letter from their Minister of Religion (see note 7).

12. Children of other faiths whose application is supported by a letter from their religious leader (see note 8).

13. Any other children.

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

(i) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made. (see note 11)

(ii) The attendance of a brother or sister at the school at the time of enrolment will increase the priority of an application 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 9)

(iii) Any other children with priority given to the child of a member of staff permanently employed by the school for two years prior to application (application being the deadline for submission of applications).

TIE BREAK

Where the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the sub-categories listed above would still lead to oversubscription, priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. Distances are calculated 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, independent authority such as the local authority (not the school) will operate a random allocation through the admissions system.

MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS

The admission authority 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").

CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE

Applicants applying under criteria 2, 3, 4 and 5 should submit a Certificate of Catholic Practice (CCP) by the closing date. This certificate is available from the priest at the parish where the family normally worships or from the diocesan website. It is the parent's duty to ensure that the CCP is submitted to the school in good time.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE for 2026 – 2027

In order to make an application, you **must** complete a Common Application Form (CAF) available from the local authority in which you live.

You **should** also complete the **School's Supplementary Information Form (SIF).** This should be completed online via https://www.st-vincents.ealing.sch.uk/reception-admissions/
(Should you have difficulties submitting the online form, please contact the school).

Whilst this is not compulsory, the information on the SIF enables the admission authority to assess your application fully against the School's criteria in the event of oversubscription**. It is unlikely that your child will be offered a place if a SIF is not submitted.** Please complete the online SIF, together with all other relevant documentation required for your application. If you do not submit both of the forms described above and all supporting documentation by 15th January 2026, your child may not be placed in criteria 1-8 and 10-12 and this may 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.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 16th April 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.

LATE APPLICATIONS

Applications received after the closing date will be dealt with after the initial allocation process has been completed. If the school is oversubscribed it is very unlikely that late applicants will obtain a place.

RIGHT OF APPEAL

Should you wish to appeal, please contact the school as soon as possible for an appeal form on which you must list your reasons for making an appeal. Appeals must be submitted to the school in writing by Monday 18th May 2026.

WAITING LIST

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful applicants will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out in the policy 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. Names will be removed from the list on 31st August 2027, 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.

RECEPTION YEAR DEFERRED ENTRY

A child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday. 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 term may only defer until 1st April 2027. 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.

SUMMER BORN CHILDREN

If a parent wishes his/her summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1st April – 31st August 2022 to be admitted to Reception at 5 years of age, they should make the school aware of this by writing to the Chair of Governors at the time of application. Parents must then submit an application in the normal way. This application will be treated in the same way as all other applications and there is no guarantee that an offer will be made.

DELAYED ADMISSION, i.e. Children educated outside their chronological age (except summer born applications for Reception)

Parents may apply for their child to be educated outside his/her chronological age group, i.e. a year behind or a year ahead. Application should be made to the Chair of Governors at the time of application and any supporting evidence should be submitted at the same time.

The admission authority 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 admission authority will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

If the parents' case for delayed admission into Reception is agreed, the application for a place in the next cohort would have to be made in the following September and would be considered along with all the other applicants for admission in that year. ***There would be no guarantee that a place would be offered in the preferred school year***. If the parents request for delayed admission into Reception is refused, the parents could still apply by the closing date of 15 January 2026 for admission to Reception to the child's normal age group. After the offer of a place had been made, the parent could then inform the Admissions Panel and the Local Authority that they want to delay entry as outlined above.

NURSERY

For children attending the school's nursery, 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.

IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS

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**.** In-year applications are made directly to the school by filling out the In-Year application form (this is available on our school website and from the school office).

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out above, will be applied. When a place becomes available the admission authority will decide, in accordance with these Arrangements, to whom the place should be awarded.

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

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 admission authority reserves the right to withdraw the place, even if the child has already started at the School.**

NOTES (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

1. 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.

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 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 admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and who ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

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.

3. '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 living with 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, 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 was impossible to do so) attended Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation for at least five years (or, in the case of the 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.

5. 'Catechumen' means a child who is a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This will be evidenced by a Certificate of reception into the Order of Catechumens.

6. '**Eastern Christian Church**' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.

7. 'Children of other Christian denominations' means children who belong to other churches and ecclesial communities which, acknowledging 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 of 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.

8. 'Children of other faiths' means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of 'other Christian denominations' 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.

9. '**Sibling'** - 'brother or sister' includes:
(i) all natural brothers or 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 (a sibling relationship does not apply when the older child(ren) will leave before the younger one starts); and

(ii) the child of a parent's partner where that child for whom the school place is sought lives for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same **home address** as the child who is the subject of the application.

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.

'Resident/Home address' – 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.

10. 'Parish Boundaries' – for the purposes of this Policy, parish boundaries are as shown on the attached map and will be applied to the admission arrangements for **2026-2027**

11. To demonstrate an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the admission authority will require compelling written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.