



ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Greenway, Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 3LF

Reception Admissions Policy 2021 - 2022

St. Thomas More School is a Catholic Primary School founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for Catholic children. 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. All applicants are therefore expected to give their full support for the aims and the ethos of the school. Responsibility for the admission of pupils rests with the Board of Governors. 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.

Applications are invited for September 2021 from families whose child attains 5 years of age between 01/09/2021 and 31/08/2022.

For the past 5 years applicants have been admitted from a range of different criteria, up to and including number 9. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic applicants.

The governors intend to admit up to the school's Published Admission Number of 30 pupils into the Reception in each school year. The timetable for admissions, including late applications, is in line with the LA Admissions process and notification will be sent out by the LA on behalf of the governors on or about 16 April 2021. Where there are more applications for places than the total of 30 places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority:

Oversubscription Criteria

Should the school be oversubscribed, the following criteria will apply in order of priority:

1. Catholic 'looked after' children and Catholic children who have been adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders, immediately after having been looked after.
2. Baptised Catholic children, with a Certificate of Catholic Practice, who have a sibling at the school at the time of admission.
3. All other baptised children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice.
4. Baptised Catholic children.
5. Other 'looked after' children and children who have been adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders, immediately after having been looked after.
6. Other children with a sibling at St Thomas More School, where the sibling will still be in attendance at the time of admission.
7. Members of an Eastern Christian Church.
8. Children of another faith/tradition who provide evidence of membership of their faith.
9. Any 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.

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Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the Governing Body to admit a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that names the school. The admission of pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC) is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the Special Educational Needs 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 to the school.

Tie Break

In the event of oversubscription in category 3, the geographical proximity of the child's home to the school will be taken into account. A 'straight line' distance measurement is used in all home to school distance measurements for community and VC schools in Hertfordshire. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

In the event of oversubscription in any other category, the geographical proximity of the child's home address to school will be taken into account. Home address means that at which the child normally resides for 50% or more of the school week, not an accommodation address. Proof of residence will be required.

Where the final place is offered to a child who has a twin/triplets etc. applying for a place in the same school year, these siblings will also be admitted.

Reception Application Procedures and Timetable

Applicants must complete the online LA application form (Common Application Form, CAF) and the school's own Supplementary Information Form (SIF). In conjunction with the school SIF, those applicants applying under criteria 2 and 3 will need to complete a Certificate of Catholic Practice obtained from their parish priest (from the parish where the family worship) or from the diocesan website on:

<http://rcdow.org.uk/att/files/education/admissions/certificate%20of%20catholic%20practice%202015.pdf>

The school SIF will be available to download from the school website, or from the school office, when the relevant application process opens. Those applying under criterion 2 and 3 will be required to obtain a Certificate of Catholic Practice from their parish priest no less than two weeks before the application deadline. Please submit the school SIF, the Certificate of Catholic Practice and a copy of the child's baptism certificate to the school. If you do not complete the SIF and return it by the closing date, the governing body will apply their admission arrangements using the information submitted on the Online Application Form only, which may result in your application being given a lower priority and it is unlikely that your child will get a place at the school. Both forms must be submitted by the closing date as stated on the Herts county admissions website at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions. Parents will be advised of the outcome of their applications by the LA.

Reception Year Deferred Entry

Applicants may defer entry to school up until compulsory 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. Entry may not be deferred beyond compulsory school age or beyond the year for which the application has been made, therefore applicants whose children have birthdays in the summer term may only defer until the 1st April 2022.

Part-time attendance

Applicants may also choose for their child to attend part-time until compulsory school age is reached.

Summer Born Children

A parent may choose for his/her summer born child to start school in Reception in the September following his/her 5th birthday i.e. a child born between 1st April – 31st August being admitted to Reception at 5 years of

age. Applicants should make the school aware of their intention by writing a letter 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.

Children Out of Year Group (*Except summer born applications to Reception*).

Children are educated within their correct chronological year group, with the curriculum differentiated as necessary to meet the needs of individual children. If parents/carers believe their child(ren) should be educated in a different year group they must, at the time of application, submit supporting evidence from relevant professionals working with the child and family, stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age appropriate cohort. The governing body will decide whether the application will be accepted on the basis of the evidence submitted. There is no guarantee that an application will be accepted on this basis. If the application is not accepted this does not constitute a refusal of a place and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal.

There is no automatic right of admission to the Reception Class for children who have attended the Nursery Class. Nursery children need to apply for a place in the Reception Class.

In-Year Admissions

The above application procedures also apply to In-Year admissions. If a place is available and there is no waiting list then the governing body will inform the authority who will in turn notify the family that the child is to be admitted. If more applications are received than there are places available then applications will be ranked by the governing body in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. If a place cannot be offered at this time then you may ask us for the reasons and you will be informed of your right of appeal. You will be offered the opportunity of being placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained by the governing body in the order of the oversubscription criteria and not in the order in which the applications are received. Names are removed from the list at the end of each academic year. Proof of address will be required when a position becomes available. Successful applicants will receive a letter of offer from the LA, on behalf of the school governors.

Cross Border Coordination

Cross Border Coordination for primary applications was introduced in 2011. If the child is living outside Hertfordshire, at the time of application, parents must apply on their home Local Authority's application form.

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 governing body for the current school year. The governing body has this power even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number. Children offered places under the HCC Fair Access Protocol will be prioritised before children on a Continuing Interest List (Waiting List).

Appeals Procedure

Parents have the right to appeal against refusal of admission by the Governors. The appeal is organised and heard by an independent committee. Parents wishing to appeal who applied online should log on to their online application and click on the link "register an appeal". For those who did not apply online, please contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request an appeal pack.

Waiting Lists

Unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a Continuing Interest List (Waiting List). This list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out above and not in the order applications are received or added to the list. The list is held open for one year, after which you will need to reapply. Proof of address will be required when a position becomes available.

Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

“Adopted” –An adopted child is a child who is adopted under the terms of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 section 46 (adoption orders).

“Child Arrangements Order” – A Child Arrangements Order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.8 settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live. Children ‘looked after’ immediately before the order is made qualify in this category.

“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).

“Baptised Children” – Baptised children are required to provide a copy of a Baptismal Certificate.

“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. Further details of these circumstances can be found in the guidance issued to priests <http://rcdow.org.uk/education/governors/admissions/>

“Child looked after” has the same meaning as in section 22 of the Children Act 1989, and means any child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by them (e.g. children with foster parents).

“Catholic” means a member of the 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 priest’s letter 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).

“Eastern Christian Church” includes Orthodox churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.

“Family” includes the Catholic or Catholics who have a legal responsibility for the child.

“Sibling” refers to brothers and sisters, step brothers and sisters, half-brothers and half-sisters or adopted brothers and sisters, a child looked after or previously looked after and in every case living permanently in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of this application. A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.

“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 CYTŪN 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’ 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.



**Diocese of Westminster
Catholic Primary Schools
Reception Supplementary Information Form 2021 –2022**



School applying to: St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School Greenway, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire. HP4 3LF.

Child's Details

Child's surname:	
Child's Christian or other first name:	
Home Address:	Date of Birth:
	Postcode:

Parent/Carer Details

Parent/Carer's Name:	
Address: <i>(If different from above)</i>	
Telephone number:	
Email Address:	

Details of Religion

Religion of child: <i>(Please tick)</i>	Catholic	Other Christian <small>(name of denomination e.g. Methodist)</small>	Other faith
Catholic Parish you live in:			
Church where child was baptised and date of baptism: <i>(baptism certificate required)</i>			
Name and position of priest or religious leader supplying evidence of membership <i>(where appropriate)</i> :			

Names of brothers or sisters at this school:	Name Class or Year Group
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Is your child 'looked after' by the local authority, adopted having previously been 'looked after' or subject to child arrangement orders or special guardianship orders? <i>(Please circle your response)</i>	Yes No
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Does your child have exceptional medical, pastoral or social needs that can only be met by attendance at this school? Please circle. (Professional evidence will be required.)

YES	NO
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I confirm that I have read and understood the Admissions Criteria Policy and that the information I have provided is correct. I understand that I must notify the school immediately if there is any change to these details and that should any information I have given prove to be inaccurate that the governors may withdraw any offer of a place even if the child has already started school.

Signed..... Date.....

Name:

Please note:

- Applicants from other Christian denominations and other faiths may attach either a certificate of baptism or a letter from their minister or religious leader confirming membership of a faith community.
- You **must also** complete the Local Authority's online e-admissions form at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk. If you do not do this, you will not be offered a place.

Checklist:

Please ensure you have enclosed:

- Original/Certified Baptism certificate (where necessary)
- Evidence of membership of other faith community (where necessary)
- Original verification of proof of address (2 documents required)

Please ensure you either post or hand deliver the forms to the school office.
Please do not email. All originals will be returned to you.

Deadline is January 15th 2021

Have you completed your local authority's online e-admissions form?

The school is committed to protecting the information provided by parents/carers and using it only for the purpose for which it was obtained. For information on the school's Privacy Notice please look on the school website under Privacy Notice or contact the school for a hard copy.

ADMISSIONS PRIVACY NOTICE FOR - St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School is a data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018 and is committed to dealing with your information safely and securely. We need to collect and share information in order to fulfil our obligations as an admission authority. We take our responsibility to protect your data seriously and we will use it in accordance with the legal requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.

We will comply with the School Admissions Code, which has the force of law. In respect of in-year admissions, the Local Authority is the admissions authority for this school. The information you provide to us on your Supplementary Information Form (SIF), any supporting papers or appeal documentation you provide will be used to:

- Process your application
- Consider Admission Appeals

We may also use this data for the following purposes:

- Forward planning as part of school budget, forecasting and reorganisation proposals
- To assist in the development of policy proposals
- For the prevention and/or detection of crime or fraud
- For research and statistical purposes when we will ensure that statistics are developed in such a way that individual children cannot be identified

In order to administer admissions to this school the following information may be collected by us:

- Name and date of birth
- Address where the child ordinarily lives at the time of application, which will be used for distance calculation purposes
- Supplementary information i.e. information on religious affiliation and status
- Parent name and contact details
- Details of baptism and/or Catholic practice
- Information on parish of residence.

Agencies we will share the information with:

- The Department for Education, to comply with statutory data collections
- The LA, to verify the information provided so that the admission scheme/process can be accurately administered
- Admission Appeal panels
- The Schools Adjudicator, in response to any objections raised
- In Year Fair Access Panel, where applicable, to enable them to appropriately place complex admissions
- The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, when investigating maladministration of school admissions and admission appeals.

School Retention Policy:

The information listed above will be retained securely by the school for 1 year after admission date if successful, after which it will be destroyed. If your application is not successful and goes to appeal it will be kept for 1 year after the closure of appeal.

For further information please refer to the Privacy Policy on the School website or contact:

Mrs Michelle Anderton on admin@stmore.herts.sch.uk