

The Admissions Policy

St Teresa's Catholic Independent School

Mission Statement

Inspiring and achieving together, using our unique gifts given to us by God.

Reviewed: June 2019

Next Review no later than: June 2020

Introduction

St Teresa's School is primarily intended for the education of Catholic children. However, children of all, or no religion are welcomed to the School, on condition that the parent/guardian agrees to their child/children following the Religious Education Program set by the Diocese of Northampton, together with the liturgy celebrations arranged by the School. All parents/guardians are informed of this condition on their initial visit to the School.

St Teresa's School welcomes boys and girls. Children are accepted from the age of 'rising three' until eleven, when they transfer to secondary schools.

St Teresa's School is non-selective and does not test or formally assess pupils to determine entry. However, children are required to sit assessment tests as part of their Pupil Visit. This is not to determine entry, but whether they may be deserving of, or in need of, extra assistance outside of the usual curriculum. If it is felt that St Teresa's would not be able to benefit a prospective pupil, or that a child's enrolment may be to the detriment of other pupils in a class, the Head Teacher will discuss the options available with the parents/guardians and may decide not to enrol the pupil based on the above two criteria. It must be stressed, however, that if at all possible, St Teresa's will aim to educate any pupil who makes an application to the School, unless the class is fully subscribed.

Aim of the Policy

- To ensure compliance with the School's charitable purpose as a Catholic School.
- To set selection criteria and procedures that is consistent with the charitable purpose of the School and fair to prospective pupils
- To identify prospective pupils whose needs can be met by the School and who would benefit from the ethos and standards set by the School community
- To set out the 'Oversubscription' criteria for entry to the School

Equal Opportunities

St Teresa's School welcomes children from many different ethnic and racial groups, backgrounds and creeds. Human rights and freedoms are respected but must be balanced with the lawful needs and rules of the School community and the rights and freedoms of others. The School is committed to being an Equal Opportunities Education Provider and is committed to equality of opportunity for all members of the School community. The School recognises and accepts its responsibilities under the law.

All candidates for admission will be treated equally, irrespective of their, or their parents'/guardians age, gender, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and

maternity, race or ethnicity, language, religion or belief, national or social origin, sexual orientation, property, birth or other status. The School welcomes all those involved with the child's learning, development and well-being into the School community, including childminders and other carers.

All children and/or parents/guardians with disabilities are actively encouraged to participate in life at St Teresa's School and the Equal Opportunities Policy is made widely available.

Organisation

The number of children per academic year should not normally exceed 22 (17 in Reception). If a place is required in the Main School, the availability should be confirmed before the child is accepted into the Pre-school (see also Early Years Admissions and Fees Policy & Procedure). In extenuating circumstances Governors will consider allowing the number in a class to exceed 22. However, the impact on the teaching and learning of the cohort of pupils and the ability of the School to allocate the appropriate resources to support the cohort will be considered before a decision is made.

Admissions Process

Step 1: Prospective parents/guardians contact the School expressing an interest in a place for their child. If requested a prospectus is sent or offered and parents/guardians are invited to make an appointment to view the school.

Step 2: An appointment is offered for the parents/guardians to meet with the Head Teacher and to tour the school.

Step 3: Following the tour parents/guardians are given a Prospectus and a Registration Form. The School may ask for further details about the family if required.

Step 4: If parents wish to apply for a place for their child, the Registration Form needs to be completed and returned with a non-refundable Registration Fee of £50 per application (£50 for subsequent siblings not included on initial registration). The child/children will be placed on the Registration List. However, this does not guarantee a place for the child/children. Children who currently attend our Pre-school Class must also follow the same procedure from Step 4.

Step 5: If a child is registered to start at the beginning of an academic year, parent/guardians will be contacted at the end of the Advent Term* to invite the child to visit the school for a Pupil Visit at the beginning of the Lent Term*. Places will be offered in writing before the end of the Lent Term*.

Where a child is registered to start mid academic year a Pupil Visit is still required, but the time scale for an offer of a place may differ.

Step 6: Following the Pupil Visit a letter offering a place to the child/children may be sent to the parents/guardians requesting a deposit of £300 and the completion of the Enrolment Form.

Should a child not be offered a place, the parents/guardians will be informed by the Head Teacher as soon as possible after the Pupil Visit.

Step 7: Receipt of the deposit and Enrolment Form secures the child's enrolment at St Teresa's. Following which, should the child not start at St Teresa's, the deposit will be retained by the

School. The deposit will be refunded less any amounts owing when the child leaves the School assuming appropriate notice has been received by the school.

*Advent Term – September to December, Lent Term – January to April, Trinity Term – April to July

Waiting List and the Over Subscription Criteria

If a place is not available due to the over-subscription of that particular year group, the child/children will be placed on the Waiting List. Children on the Waiting List will be allocated a place in accordance with the following Oversubscription Criteria and may be required to fill in a Supplementary Information Form and provide a Baptismal Certificate:

1. Roman Catholic* children from St Teresa of the Child Jesus, Princes Risborough Parish, who have the signed support of the Parish Priest and a Baptismal Certificate.
2. Roman Catholic* children from other parishes who have the signed support of their Parish Priest and a Baptismal Certificate.
3. Unbaptised children from families where one or both parents are baptised Roman Catholics* who have the signed support of their Parish Priest and a Baptismal Certificate.
4. Siblings* of pupils who currently attend St Teresa's School and who are not included in 1, 2 or 3 above.
5. Children from the Pre-school Class who are not included in 1, 2 or 3 above.
6. Children of other Christian* Denominations whose application is supported by their Minister of Religion, provided the parents are in sympathy with the Roman Catholic ethos of the School.
7. Children from all, or no, denomination in order of application to the school.

Chronology is applied when dealing with applicants with similar criteria and all applicants are placed on the Waiting List according to the date that the completed Registration Form is received.

The School cannot guarantee when a place will become available but will maintain contact with the parents/guardians in order to keep them informed of any changes to the Waiting List. The Waiting List is determined by the above Oversubscription Criteria with regard to priority of admission.

Staff Children

Places for staff children will be allocated on an individual basis and may take precedent over the subscription criteria listed above. Determination of staff places will be made by the Governing Board.

Pupil Visit

All children registered for a place at St Teresa's School will be invited for a Pupil Visit. This may be a part day, or a full day, during which the child will sit short assessments in literacy and numeracy. These assessments are carried out in order to establish if a child might be in the spectrum of children deserving of, or in need of, extra assistance outside of the usual curriculum. The Head Teacher will share the findings of the Assessment Tests with the parents/guardians.

A Pupil Visit is not required for children who already attend the Pre-school Class prior to entry to Reception.

Where a child is registered to start mid academic year a Pupil Visit is still required but the time scale for an offer of a place may differ.

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- *Catholic means baptised in accordance with the rites of the Catholic Church or enrolled in a Baptismal Programme. This includes members of the Eastern Orthodox, Ordinate, Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome.

St Teresa's School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

- *Siblings means brother or sister who lives as brother and sister, adopted siblings, step brothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters. It does not include other relatives e.g. cousins.
- *Christian means a member of one of the churches in full membership with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland at the time when the admission decision is made.

Entry

Entry to all years is at the discretion of the Head Teacher and depending upon availability of places. However, the main entry points are into Pre-school (term in which child turns 3) and Reception in the Trinity Term. Mid-year entry is welcomed, assuming spaces are available.

Offer of a Place

- An offer of a place will be made by the end of the Lent Term, unless a child is starting mid-year.
- Should places be oversubscribed, the Oversubscription Criteria, as detailed above, will be applied.
- A Pupil Visit by a child is a prerequisite for an offer of a place.
- Children who are successful in obtaining a place in the Pre-school Class and who wish to proceed to Main School will be allocated places using the same criteria as other prospective pupils.
- If it is felt St Teresa's would not be able to benefit a prospective pupil, a place may not be offered.
- Should a child not be offered a place, the parents/guardians will be informed by the Head Teacher as soon as possible after the Pupil Visit.

Deposit

A refundable deposit is required following the offer of a place. The deposit amount is £300 per child and will form part of the general funds of the School. The deposit is not refundable if the pupil does not take up a place at the School. The deposit will be credited, without interest, to the leavers Fee Note, less any amounts owing following the pupils final term in Year Six. The same will apply if a pupil leaves prior to the end of Year Six, assuming the correct notice requirements are met, as set out in the Memorandum of Terms and Conditions, and no other monies is outstanding.

A child's place is not secured until the £300 deposit and Enrolment Form have been received and funds cleared.

Special Educational Needs, Disability and English as an Additional Language

St Teresa's will do all that is reasonable in order to accommodate children who have disabilities for which, with reasonable adjustments, the School can cater for adequately. The School needs to be aware of any known disability which affects a child's ability to take advantage of the education provided. Parents/guardians of a child with a disability need to provide the School, at registration, of full details of that disability so that the School can assess those needs and consult the parents/guardians about adjustments that can reasonably be made to ensure that the School can adequately provide for the pupil should an offer of a place be made.

The School is usually able to accept boys and girls with mild learning difficulties. An offer of a place will be dependent upon whether or not it is deemed by the School to be in the best interests of the child and whether the School is able to meet the needs of the child. Unless classes are full, the School will look to accept all children in cases where it is felt that admission will help an individual child reach their full potential.

St Teresa's School will make provision for children who have English as an additional language (EAL) in the assessment procedure. If an offer is subsequently made and the pupil takes up his or her place at St. Teresa's School, the School will make provision for appropriate support which may be subject to an additional charge.

Appeals against a Decision to Refuse Admission

If an application for admission is unsuccessful, parents/guardians have the right of appeal. Such appeals against non-admission will be heard by a Governors' Appeals Panel. The School will not be obliged to state its reasons for failing to admit an applicant. Parents/guardians who intend to make an appeal against the School's decision to refuse admission must submit a Notice of Appeal to the Chair of Governors within 21 days of receiving the refusal letter. Appeal hearings will be held within six weeks of the closing date for receiving the notice of appeal.

Open Mornings

Open Mornings are held at various times through the school year (at least once per term) and are advertised in the local area, via posters and signboards and on the School website. Visits by interested families at other times can be arranged by making an appointment via the school office.

Bursaries and Discounts

There are limited bursaries available to current and prospective pupils each year. These are means tested and parents/guardian will be required to submit an application on a yearly basis. Children may be awarded any percentage of a full tuition fee for a year. A copy of the Bursary Policy is available by request from the School Office. Discounts are available to siblings (details are available on the web site <http://www.st-teresas.bucks.sch.uk/admissions/fees-and-bursaries>).

Early Education Funding

From September 2018, government legislation made it possible to claim Early Education Funding for children in Reception classes in independent schools, until they reach statutory school age (i.e. the term after their fifth birthday.) We offer funded hours in Reception to help those families who are committing to joining St Teresa's main school.

- 15 hours of universal funded education are available for all families
- 30 hours of extended funded education are available for eligible families
- It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that their 30-hour (extended) eligibility code remains current. If the code does not remain current, any outstanding balance will be payable by the parents.
- The Reception class is not sessional. Our funded offer in the Reception class begins at 8.20am each day.
- All children in the Reception class are expected to attend for full days.
- An Additional School Charge will be invoiced. This charge will cover the costs of unfunded hours, specialist teachers, consumables, lunches, snacks etc. The charge will be variable depending on funding available per term and the type of funding you are entitled to, For one, two or three terms, depending on the child's date of birth, this funding means that the amount paid to the school by the parents will be lower.
- The existing charges for Trips and Workshops will remain.
- Wraparound and Clubs will not be part of our funded offer.

Parents are under no obligation to take up this offer. The registration fee and enrolment deposit must be paid in order to secure a place in the main school for all children of statutory school age.