



St Matthew Academy

ADMISSIONS 2020/21

Policy

Our motto is 'Let your light shine'. It is taken from St Matthew's Gospel and captures our belief in the uniqueness of each individual. Our aim is to ensure that the talents and strengths of each pupil are encouraged, developed and celebrated

Successful, confident learners

High expectations, outstanding achievements

Inclusive, caring, Catholic community

Nurturing talent, cultivating ambition

Excellence for all

Date of Approval	Spring 2019
Review Date	Spring 2020

THE ADMISSION OF PUPILS TO THE ST MATTHEW ACADEMY SEPTEMBER 2020/21

1. Admission Arrangements

The admission arrangements for St Matthew Academy for the year 2020/21 and, subject to any changes approved by the Secretary of State, for subsequent years are:

- a) St Matthew Academy has an agreed admission number of 60 pupils for Year R (Reception) and 120 pupils in Year 7. St Matthew Academy will accordingly admit up to 60 pupils to Year R and pupils in Year 6 will have the automatic right to transfer to Year 7. The Academy will then admit additional pupils up to a maximum of the 180 places available in Year 7 overall.

2. Process of application

Reception places (Year R) at the Academy are co-ordinated through Lewisham LA and parents must complete the Common Application Form (CAF) issued by the London Borough of Lewisham. Applications for Year 7 are co-ordinated through the applicant's home local authority and parents must complete the CAF issued by their home borough. All Parents will be required to complete a supplementary information form to provide information not captured on the LA's application form that relates to the religious criteria for admission. The supplementary form must be returned to the Academy by the closing date for admissions. St Matthew Academy will use the following timetable for applications each year (exact dates within the months may vary from year to year) which will be consistent with the common timetable agreed by the Lewisham LA.

3. Secondary Places in Year 7

- a) July - St Matthew Academy will publish in its prospectus information about the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria, for September in the following year. This will include details of open evenings and other opportunities for prospective pupils and their parents to visit the academy. The St Matthew Academy will also provide information to the LA for inclusion in the composite prospectus, as required.

- b) September/October - St Matthew Academy will provide opportunities for parents to visit the Academy.

- c) The CAF has to be returned to the child's home LA. The forms have to be returned, or an online application made, by a national closing date 31 October.

- d) Lewisham LA sends applications to the Academy.

- e) January - The Academy advises the Lewisham LA of the ranked order of places to be offered.

f) February – Lewisham LA applies its agreed scheme for its own schools, informing other LEAs of offers to be made to their residents.

g) March - offers of secondary places are sent out in writing to parents by the **home** LEA.

4. Reception Places for September 2020

a) Children who will be 5 years old between 1st of September 2020 and 31st August 2021 will be admitted together in September.

b) In the event of oversubscription, admission to the Reception class will be decided on the basis of the criteria set out below. The CAF has to be returned to the child's home LA. The forms have to be returned, or an online application made, by a national closing date. Offers will be sent to parents, on or around the 16 April.

c) **Admission of children below compulsory school age** - The governors will provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year; parents may also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

5. Consideration of applications

St Matthew Academy will consider all applications for places. Where fewer applications than the agreed admission number are received, St Matthew Academy will offer places to all those who have applied.

6. Procedures where St Matthew Academy is oversubscribed

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admissions number, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below. After the admission of pupils with statements of Special Educational Needs where St Matthew Academy is named on the statement, places will be allocated in the order in which they are set out below:

Criteria for Reception and Year7

- i) Catholic looked after children* and children looked after by Catholic families;
- ii) Baptised Catholic children;
- iii) Other looked after children*;
- iv) Baptised Eastern Orthodox children;
- v) Children of other Christian denominations whose applications are supported by a Minister of Religion;

- vi) Other applicants.

**'A looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order. 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 definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).*

If it is necessary to distinguish between applicants within any of the above categories, places will be allocated first to those applicants who have a sibling who will be attending the Academy at the proposed date of admission of the applicant. After siblings, the remaining places will be allocated to those whose home addresses are closest to the Academy, as measured by straight line distance from the main entrance of the Academy to the main entrance to the child's normal place of residence. If it is necessary to distinguish between two applicants with a sibling connection, this will be done on the basis of closeness to the Academy as determined by straight line distance as described above. Where the last remaining place is to be allocated and two or more children are deemed to live at the same distance from the school the place will be decided by the drawing of lots.

Oversubscription Criteria

1) First priority of admission will be given to looked after Catholic children or looked after children in the care of Catholic families and previously looked after Catholic children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.

2) Second priority of admission will be given to baptised Catholic children who will have a brother or a sister in Years 7 – 10 at the time of application.

3) Third priority of admission will be given to committed and practising baptised Catholic children from families where at least one parent/carer is a practising Catholic.

In interpreting commitment and practice the Governors take into account frequency of regular attendance at Sunday Mass, as indicated on the Supplementary Information Form. A higher priority will be given where there is a higher regular frequency of attendance at Sunday Mass, as verified by the nominated priest.

When the College is oversubscribed with applicants whose commitment and practice has been verified by the Parish Priest the Governors will refer to the preceding paragraph in prioritising places and will then take the following factors into account, in the order of priority shown:-

a) Serious medical grounds supported by a consultant's letter at the time of application, considered at the discretion of the Governing Body. This supporting evidence should set out the particular reasons why this college is the most suitable and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school.

b) Children of staff who have been employed at the College for at least 3 years.

c) Proximity to the College.

Any places unfilled under (1), (2) and (3) will be offered in accordance with the following practice in the order of priority shown:-

4) Baptised Catholic children whose frequency of attendance at Sunday Mass is irregular or occasional.

5) Baptised Catholic children who may not be attending Sunday Mass at the time of application.

Sub categories (a), (b), and (c) apply in prioritising applications in the above two groups.

6) Other looked after children and other previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.

7) Siblings of children in Years 7-10 who are not included in No.2 above.

8) Non baptised children who have regular attendance at Sunday Mass, as verified by their nominated priest.

9) Baptised/Dedicated children of other Christian denominations whose practice can be supported by

a priest, minister or pastor of the denomination.

10) Baptised/Dedicated children of other Christian denominations who are not practising.

11) Children of other faiths.

12) Any other applicant.

Sub categories (a), (b) and (c) apply in prioritising applications in the above four groups.

(b) For the purposes of the criteria set out in sections 6(a) and 6(b) the following definitions will apply:

- i) 'A looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order. 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 definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). Children in public care (Looked After Children) are children who are (a) in the care of a local a
- ii) Baptised Catholic children are those children with a baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church.
- iii) Eastern Orthodox children are those with a certificate of baptism from an Eastern Orthodox parish.
- iv) A sibling is a person who has the same natural father or mother or legal guardian as a student on the roll of the Academy at the time of admission and who shares permanent domicile with that parent/legal guardian and that student.

7. Operation of waiting lists

a) Subject to any provisions regarding waiting lists in the LA's co-ordinated admission scheme, the Academy will operate a waiting list. Where in any year St Matthew Academy receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until 3 months after the normal annual admission date. This will be maintained by St Matthew Academy and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application. This does not guarantee that a place will become available.

b) Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out in paragraphs 6(a) & 6(b). Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

8. Arrangements for appeals panels

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with section 85(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing and must set out the reasons on which the appeal is made. Appeals should be made to the Admissions Appeal Clerk at the school address. Parents/Carers have the right to make oral representations to the Appeal Panel.

Infant classes are restricted by the legislation to 30 children. Parents should be aware that an appeal against refusal of a place in an infant class may only succeed if it can be demonstrated that: -

- a) the admission of additional children would not breach the infant class size limit; or

b) the admission arrangements did not comply with admissions law or had not been correctly and impartially applied and the child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had complied or had been correctly and impartially applied; or

c) the panel decides that the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

9. Arrangements for admitting pupils to other year groups, including to replace any pupils who have left St Matthew Academy

Subject to any provisions in the LA's co-ordinated admission arrangements relating to applications submitted for years other than the normal year of entry, the Academy will consider all such applications and if the year group applied for has a place available, admit the child. Applications made in year (casual applications) must be made using the common application form of the LA where the child resides. The Academy's supplementary form must also be completed and returned to the school to enable the school to rank the application in the event of there being more than one application for a place. If more applications are received than there are places available, the oversubscription criteria shall apply. The offer of a place at the school will be made by the LA on behalf of the school. Parents whose application is turned down are entitled to appeal and will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on the waiting list for 3 months.

10. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan

The admission of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or with an EHC Plan are dealt with by a completely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of statements and EHC plans by the pupil's home local authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the SEND code of practice. Pupils with a statement or EHC plan naming the school will be admitted without reference to the above criteria.

11. Admission of children outside of their normal age group

Parents who are seeking a place for their child outside of their normal age group, e.g. the child has experienced problems such as ill health or the parents of a summer born child choosing not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday, may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to Reception rather than Year 1.

Governors will make decisions on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group, and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. They will also take into account the views of the academy's Headteacher. When informing a parent of the decision which year group the child should be admitted to, the governors will set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

Where the governors agree to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school the local authority will process the application as part of the main admissions round, (unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible) and on the basis of the determined admission arrangements, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.