

# St Matthew Academy

## ADMISSIONS 2024/2025 Policy

St Matthew says '*let your light shine.*'

At St Matthew Academy we let our light shine by:

- Growing our inclusive, caring Catholic community
- Nurturing faith, discovering talents and cultivating ambition
- Transforming each other through integrity, courage and service

enabling everyone at St Matthew Academy to flourish.

Date of approval	Autumn 2023
Date of review	Autumn 2024

## THE ADMISSION OF PUPILS TO THE ST MATTHEW ACADEMY SEPTEMBER 2023/2024

*“Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God” Romans 15:7*

### 1. Admission Arrangements

The admission arrangements for St Matthew Academy for the year 2024-2025 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 30 pupils** for Year R (Reception) and **180 pupils** in Year 7.
- b) 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 and Year 7

Applications are coordinated through the applicant's home local authority and parents/carers must complete the Common Application Form (CAF) issued by the local authority. In addition to the Common Application Form all parents will be requested 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 information 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. If the supplementary information form is not completed, the Governing Body of the Academy will only be able to consider the application after all applicants who have completed a supplementary form.

The Academy supplementary form can be found on the St Matthew Academy website, collected from the main reception at the Academy or there is a link on the Lewisham admissions section the Lewisham website.

[https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/education/Academy s/Academy -admission/applying-to-start-secondary-Academy /supplementary-information-forms-for-secondary-Academy s--including-faith-Academys](https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/education/Academy%20s/Academy-admission/applying-to-start-secondary-Academy%20/supplementary-information-forms-for-secondary-Academy%20s--including-faith-Academys)

### 3. Year 7 places for September

- a) **July** - St Matthew Academy will publish in its prospectus information about the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria, for September 2024. This will include details of open evenings and other opportunities for prospective pupils and their parents to visit the Academy.
- b) St Matthew Academy will also provide information to the LA for inclusion in the composite prospectus, as required.
- c) **September/October** - St Matthew Academy will provide opportunities for parents to visit the Academy.
- d) The completed CAF **MUST** to be made via the on-line admissions portal of the child's home LA. All applications must be made, by the national closing date which is usually the 31 October of each year but this is subject to change the information will be confirmed by Lewisham School Admissions. Supplementary Forms must also be received by the Academy either via email, at the main reception of the Academy or by post by the national closing date.
- e) Lewisham LA co-ordinates the applications and informs the Academy.

f) **January** - The Academy advises the Lewisham LA of the ranked order of places to be offered. 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 on the National Offer Day in writing to parents by the **home** LEA. Parents who applied online will receive the result of their application by email during the evening on or around 1 March this date will be confirmed by the local authority. Parents who applied by post will receive a letter on or shortly after 1 March or in line with local authority dates.

#### **4. Reception Places for September**

a) Children who will be 5 years old between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025 will be admitted together in September 2024

b) In the event of oversubscription, admission to the Reception class will be decided on the basis of the criteria set out below. The completed CAF **MUST** to be sent via the on-line admissions portal of the child's home LA. All applications must be made, by the national closing date – This date will be confirmed by the local authority.

c) Parents will be informed of their Academy offer on National Offer Day which is on or around 16 April each year this date will be confirmed by the local authority.

#### **5. Admission of children below compulsory Academy age**

The governors will provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents can make a request to the Academy should they wish to defer the date that their child is admitted to the Academy until later in the Academy year or until the child reaches compulsory Academy age in that Academy year; parents may also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory Academy age.

#### **6. 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.

#### **7. Oversubscription Criteria**

***The suspension of the obligation to attend Sunday Mass was announced 18 March 2020 by Bishops conference of England and Wales. If a parent or carer attended Mass at a particular parish (or parishes) prior to 18 March 2020 then they will be considered to have attended Mass in that parish (or parishes) regularly since that time. This will remain the case until Sunday obligation is reintroduced by the bishops***

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admissions number, applications will be considered against the oversubscription criteria and order set out below. After the admission of pupils with an Educational Health and Care Plan where St Matthew Academy is named on the plan, places will be allocated in the order in which they are set out below:

**a) Oversubscription Criteria for Reception and Year 7**

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

**b) Tie Break**

- i) When the Academy is oversubscribed with applicants the following order of priorities will be applied:
- ii) First priority of admission will be given to baptised Catholic children who will have a brother or a sister at the Academy at the time of application.
- iii) Second priority of admission will be given to committed and practicing baptised Catholic children from families where at least one parent/carer is a practicing Catholic.
- iv) Baptised members of the Catholic church
- v) 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.
- vi) Children of staff who have been employed at the Academy for at least 2 years.
- vii) Proximity to the Academy.

**8. 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 coordinated 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 Academy to enable the Academy 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 Academy will be made by the LA on behalf of the Academy. 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.

## Guidance Notes to Support the Policy.

### 1. Definitions

**Criteria 1 - Looked after Catholic children** or looked after children in the care of Catholic families, looked after Catholic children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order and Catholic children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted

**Criteria 3 - Looked after children**, looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order and children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.

**Baptised Catholic** children are those children with a baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church.

**A Sibling** is a person who has the same natural father or mother or legal guardian as a pupil on the roll of the Academy at the time of admission and who shares permanent address with that parent/legal guardian and that pupil.

**Baptised Eastern Orthodox** children are those with a certificate of baptism from an Eastern Orthodox parish.

**Christian Denominations** will be determined from the listed members of Churches Together in England, the national ecumenical instrument, details of which can be found at:

[https://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/234772/Home/Contacts/Member\\_Churches\\_list/Member\\_Churches\\_list.aspx](https://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/234772/Home/Contacts/Member_Churches_list/Member_Churches_list.aspx)

**Proximity** if the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the categories listed above would still lead to over-subscription, we will offer places up to the admission number to those living nearest the Academy. The distance will be measured in a straight line from the main Academy main entrance. 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. Evidence of residence may be required. In the event of parents who share parental responsibility, evidence of the child's permanent addresses will be required.

### 2. Operation of Waiting Lists

a) Subject to any provisions regarding waiting lists in the LA's coordinated 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 7(a) & 7(b). Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria

### **3. 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 Academy 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.
- d) The Academy participates in the local authority's Fair Access Protocol to allocate places to vulnerable and other children in accordance with the School Admission Code 2014. Admitting pupils under the protocol may require the Academy to admit above the planned admission number for the relevant year group.

### **4. 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 coordinated 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 Academy to enable the Academy 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 Academy will be made by the LA on behalf of the Academy. 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.

### **5. Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**

The admission of pupils with an EHC Plan is 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 Academy will be admitted without reference to the above criteria.

### **6. 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 Academy 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 Academy 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 an Academy for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the Academy but it is not in their preferred age group.

