

# ST MARY ABBOTS SCHOOL

## ADMISSIONS POLICY for entry from September 2023

If you would like your child to attend St Mary Abbots School then please see details of our admission arrangements below. For more information about the School please see the Headteacher's welcome on the School website home page: <https://www.sma.rbkc.sch.uk/headteachers-welcome.html>

Where there are more applications than places available places are awarded at our school strictly in accordance with Admissions Criteria approved by the London Diocesan Board for Schools. They are statutorily binding.

For your application to be considered you must complete the **Common Application Form** and return it to the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea. Alternatively, you can apply online:

<https://www.eadmissions.org.uk/eAdmissions/app> . Further information is available on the RBKC website.

In addition, so that the governors can consider your application fully, all applicants for a Foundation Place should complete the School's **Supplementary Information Form** and should also ensure the **Clergy Form** is completed. The Supplementary Information Form and Clergy Form must be returned to the school office by the date given below under 'Date for Applications'.

**IMPORTANT:** The school places high value and importance on the continuity of a child's attendance from Reception through to the end of Year 6, and also the continuity of any sibling link throughout that period.

The Governors strongly discourage families from taking children out of the school before the end of Year 6. We ask you to bear this in mind before making an application for a Reception place if your intention is to move the child into the private sector before the end of Year 6.

*In short by removing a child from the school early:*

- It denies a place in Reception for another child who might really thrive if given the chance of seven years at SMA
- It can be severely disruptive and upsetting for your child's classmates and for your child
- It has serious financial implications for the school - any empty place in the middle of term can reduce income for a whole year

The reception class has thirty places, and they are awarded to children in the following sequence:

### **1 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (or CHILDREN IN PUBLIC CARE)**

Over-riding priority will be given to looked after children and children who were previously looked after but ceased to be so because, immediately after being looked after, they became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order. This includes those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceases to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

### **2 SIBLINGS**

That is, children with any blood, half, step, adoptive and foster siblings who live at the same home address already attending the school and who will still attend the school on the date of the candidate's proposed admission.

### **3 OPEN PLACES**

The school welcomes applications from families who practise faiths other than Christianity or who proclaim no religious faith. Open Places are therefore available to those who do not qualify for a Foundation Place. After 'Looked After Children', Sibling Places, and places taken by those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming this school have been awarded, and subject to the maximum class size of 30 children, we will offer as Open Places either two places or twenty percent of the places that remain, whichever is the lesser. In the event of over subscription, Open Places will be allocated by the Governors according to nearness of the candidate's home to the school\*.

### **4 FOUNDATION PLACES**

Foundation Places are offered to children from families who can demonstrate sustained commitment to a Christian church – that is, one which is a member of Churches Together in England (CTIE) - within the criteria set out below. By 'sustained commitment' we mean participation in Sunday worship in a church at least twice a month for at least twenty-four months before the closing applications date for Reception admissions. Evidence for such commitment and involvement must be supported by a form, supplied by the school, filled in by your Priest or Minister.

We award Foundation Places in accordance with the following order of priority:

- (a) Of the total available places for Foundation Place applicants, seventy five percent will be awarded to the children of families who can demonstrate sustained commitment to St Mary Abbots Church.
- (b) Of the total available places for Foundation Place applicants, fifteen percent will be awarded to the children of families who can demonstrate sustained commitment to other Kensington Deanery\*\* Church of England Churches.
- (c) The remaining Foundation Places will be awarded to the children of families who can demonstrate sustained commitment to churches of other denominations being members of CTIE located within the Kensington Deanery.
- (d) Foundation Places still remaining will be awarded to the families of children who can demonstrate sustained commitment to churches which are members of CTIE (including, for the avoidance of doubt, the Church of England) located outwith the Kensington Deanery.

In the event of over subscription in any of the aforesaid categories, Foundation Places will be allocated by the Governors according to nearness of the candidate's home to the school\*.

When a family has only moved into the area within the last two years, we will take into account evidence of their commitment to their previous CTIE church, as supported by a form filled in by the previous priest or minister as well as the form filled in by the priest or minister at their current church (i.e. there will be at least two clergy forms to submit for those who have moved to a qualifying church within the past 2 years).

If sustained commitment to church cannot be demonstrated in accordance with the criteria above, applications should be made for an Open Place unless the 'Looked After Children' or 'Siblings' criteria apply.

***If, once Siblings, Open and Foundation Places have been awarded as described above, vacant places still remain, they will be treated as further Open Places and filled in order of the candidates' homes nearness to the school \****

\* Nearness to the school will be calculated using a straight line (as the crow flies) measurement from the child's home 'address point' determined by Ordnance Survey Data to the centre of the school grounds as determined by the Royal Borough using its computerised measuring system. The child living closest to the school will receive the highest priority. Accessibility by car or public transport will be disregarded.

If applicants share the same address point (for example those who live in the same block of flats or shared house) priority will be given to those who live closest to the ground floor and then by ascending flat number order. Where more than one child has the same distance measurement a decision will be made using random allocation.

\*\* Kensington Deanery. A map showing the area covered by the Church of England Kensington Deanery can be consulted at the school Office and will be made available on the school website.

NB: After applying the percentages to the available spaces for Open and Foundation Place applicants, decimals will be rounded to the nearest whole number. In the case of Open Places, but not otherwise, a result which has a decimal of 0.5 will be rounded down to the nearest whole number.

### **Variation to the admissions arrangements**

In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises, the requirements of these admissions arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

## **PLEASE NOTE**

For your application to be considered you must complete the Common Application Form and return it to the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea. In addition, so that the governors can consider your application fully, applicants for a foundation place should complete the School's Supplementary Information Form, and should also ensure the Clergy Form is completed. The Supplementary Information form and any Clergy Form must be returned to the school office.

## **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

Looked after children include children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be because, immediately after being looked after, they were adopted, or became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order. By a 'looked after child' we mean one in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services function. An adoption order is one made under the Adoption Act 1976 (Section 12) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Section 46). A 'child arrangements order' is one settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live (Children Act 1989, Section 8, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014, Section 14). A 'special guardianship order' is one appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian/s (Children Act 1989, Section 14A). Applications under this criterion should be accompanied by evidence to show that the child is looked after or was previously looked after (e.g. a copy of the adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order)

## **OPEN PLACES**

Please note that the school strongly discourages prospective parents from applying for Open places if their application would otherwise qualify for consideration under one of the categories under Foundation Places. Open places are provided to enable entry into the school to those who do not practise a Christian faith.

## **DATE FOR APPLICATIONS**

Applications for places in the Reception Class for September 2023 must be submitted by 11 January 2023. No priority is awarded to early applications.

## **CHILDREN WITH A 'SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED'**

If your child has a statement of Special Educational Needs, or a statement pending, the procedure for admission is completely separate from the usual admissions criteria. Please contact the special needs officer in your home local authority for advice and guidance. Please note also that the Head Teacher has the right to consider whether the school is able satisfactorily to meet the needs of a pupil with a statement.

## **CASUAL ADMISSIONS (IN YEAR ADMISSIONS)**

Whenever, apart from the September Reception admissions, places become vacant in any of the school's classes they are known as 'Casual Admissions'. They are filled strictly in this order: Looked After Children and Special Educational Needs; Siblings; Foundation Places; Open Places – all according to the criteria above. Foundation status for casual admissions will be decided on the basis of the sustained commitment demonstrated by the family by the date that the vacancy arises.

Applications are made to the Royal Borough's Admission Team on the 'In-Year Common Application Form'. You will be notified of the outcome of your application by the Royal Borough on behalf of the governing body. If you want to apply for a Foundation Place you will also need to complete the schools Supplementary Information Form and Clergy Form so that governors can consider your application fully. If the school is full in the requested year group, children will be placed on the waiting list as described above.

## **SUMMER BORN CHILDREN ENTERING RECEPTION CLASSES**

When a reception class place is offered it is for a full-time place from the September following the child's fourth birthday. However, the place may be deferred until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age (the term after the fifth birthday). This means that parents of a child whose fifth birthday falls between 1 September 2023 and 31 March 2024 may request that their child is not admitted until later in the school year 2023-24, but no later than the term after the child's fifth birthday, when the child reaches compulsory school age. For children born between 1 April and 31 August, this is not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made. The school will hold any deferred place for the child. Where parents wish, a child may attend part-time until they reach compulsory school age.

## **ADMISSIONS OUT OF THE NORMAL AGE GROUP**

For children whose fifth birthday falls between 1 April 2023 and 31 August 2023, whose parents who do not wish them to start school in school year 2023-24, but to be admitted in September 2024 for school year 2024-25, should discuss this with the school at an early stage, and in any event by the date for admissions listed above. Decisions will be made on the circumstances of each case and the best interests of the child. Parental views, academic achievement, social and emotional development and where relevant medical views will be taken into consideration.

Parents may decide not to apply for a Reception place in the school but to apply for a Year 1 place in September 2024. Parents should be aware that the Year 1 group may have no vacancies as it could be full with children transferring from the 2023-24 Reception Year group.

The school will determine all applications in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2014