

Admissions Policy For Sept 2025 Entry

St Mary Magdalene CofE Primary School



Approved by:	Admissions	Date: 24.1.24
Last reviewed on:	Jan 24	
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Based on a policy from:	SDBE	
Written by:	Anna Harding	

St Mary Magdalene CE Primary School Admissions Policy for Sept 25 Entry

As a Church of England School, we recognise that each person is valuable, precious and **unique** before God. Our school is a community based on **trust, honesty and love**. We aim to live in **peace** with each other and to **forgive** those who have wronged us, as taught and demonstrated in the life of Jesus. We seek to foster in our members **wonder** in discovery, **thankfulness** for what we have, **compassion** for others and **hope** for the future. We therefore strive to ensure that our delivery of the curriculum meets the needs of each individual and helps foster an environment where the motivation for all to achieve and reach their full potential is at the core of our commitment.

Vision Statement

Building on a foundation of Core Christian Values, we inspire and equip our children to acquire confidence, encouraging a thirst for lifelong learning.

'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me,' Philippians 4: 13.

St Mary Magdalene Church of England Primary School (*The School*) has a distinctive Christian ethos which is at the heart of this School and provides an inclusive, caring and supportive environment where children learn and flourish in a setting shaped by Christian values. We welcome applications from all members of the community and we ask all parents to respect the Christian ethos of our school and its importance to our community.

The Governing Body of St Mary Magdalene Church of England Primary School (*The Governing Body*) is responsible for the admission of pupils to *the School* and admits **30** pupils to the Reception Class each academic year. This admission limit has been agreed between the Governing Body and the Local Authority and applies to the year **2025/2026**

The Governing Body is required to abide by the maximum limits for infant classes (5, 6 and 7 year olds), i.e. 30 pupils per class.

As far as possible the School will ensure that pupils with disabilities have access to the same opportunities as other pupils. **A child with a statement of special educational needs whose statement names the school must be admitted to the school in accordance with section 324 of the Education Act 1996. This is a separate process from the coordinated admission arrangements (see note 1).** Any such child admitted before the normal admission round will reduce the number of places available to other children.

The School is part of the locally agreed co-ordination scheme and the timescales for applications to be received and processed are those agreed with the local authority. Applications for Reception Class places for September **2025**, for children whose birth dates fall between 1st September **2020** and 31st August **2021**, must be made on the Home Local Authority's (*Home LA*) Common Application Form (CAF) and returned by **15th January 2025**; if applying for a place at this School, parents must name *the School* as one of the preferences on the CAF. Parents (*see note 2*) who wish to apply for a Foundation place (please refer to statement B below) must also complete the school's supplementary form and return this to the School by **12th January 2025**. The Supplementary Form will be available on-line on the Schools' website at www.smmsprimary.co.uk or on the Southwark website:- www.southwark.gov.uk. It can be collected personally from the office or, if contacted, we can email the forms. Failure to return the supplementary form by 12th January **2025** will mean that the school cannot consider the application under the Foundation criteria, in this case the application will be considered under the Open place criteria based on the information on the Common Application Form. On-line applications may be made via [Southwark Admissions](#).

Please note that parents applying for place under criterion B 3 (foundation siblings) will be required to demonstrate a current and continuing commitment to church membership by the family and a further church reference in the form of a fully completed supplementary form will need to be completed.

The Governors of *the School* will consider late applications in accordance with the procedure in the local authority's co-ordinated scheme as published in the LA school admissions booklet.

Completion of an application form does not mean that a child is guaranteed a place at *the School*. When offered a place at *The School*, the offer will be conditional until the following proof of address has been given. Original copies of documentation will be required. *Proof must be dated within the last 3 months at the time of receipt of the confirmation of offer letter from the School (with exception of Child Benefit/Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit documentation which must be dated within the last 12 months at the time of receipt of the confirmation of offer letter from the School):*

- Birth Certificate
- Child Benefit, Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit documentation, if the parent or guardian is in receipt of one of these benefits.
- Council tax bill
- One other document from the following: - gas/electric bill, TV licence, landline telephone bill, bank statement or store card or credit card statement.

Occasionally we may have reason to suspect that a family does not live at the address stated. If this is the case, this information will be passed on to Southwark LA who will carry out an investigation. Should we discover that a parent is making a fraudulent claim the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

(A) Open Places

The Governing Body has designated **15 places** each year as open places, to be offered to pupils who do not qualify for a foundation place, but whose parents have chosen St Mary Magdalene Primary School for the type of education it provides. Parents applying for an open place do so knowing that the school aims to provide an education based on Christian principles and, therefore, the Governing Body hopes that all the pupils will take part in the Christian worship of the school and will attend religious education lessons.

If there are more than 15 applicants, places will be allocated according to the following criteria. They are stated in order of priority:

- 1 Looked after children or previously looked after children (see note 5).
- 2 Children who have siblings at the school at the time of admission (see note 6).
- 3 Children with known exceptional medical or social needs (see note 7)
- 4 Children living nearest the School (see note 8)

Commented [AH1]: The order of Open places and Foundation places has been reversed with the intention of welcoming more families from our local community.

Commented [AH2]: The Admission committee suggested a change to an equal number of open and foundation places. Previously there were 20 foundation places and 10 open places. This may make some families believe that they are unlikely to get a place at our school if they do not go to church. Our ethos and Christian Distinctiveness will remain unchanged.

B) Foundation Places

The Governing Body of St Mary Magdalene Primary School has designated **15** places to be offered to pupils whose parents (*see note 2*) are faithful and regular worshippers (i.e. attendance at Church or Church meeting (*see note 3*) twice a month for at least **one** year by the closing date for application see note 3.1) at any Anglican Church or other Christian denomination, as recognised by Churches together in England or the Evangelical Alliance or Affinity (*see note 4*). Written evidence of the parents' commitment to their place of worship in the form of a minister's reference will be required. If there are more than 15 applicants, places will be allocated according to the following criteria.

These are stated in order of priority:

- 1 Looked after children or previously looked after children (see note 5).
- 2 Children whose parents' are faithful and regular worshippers at St. Mary Magdalene Church (*see above*).
- 3 Children who have siblings at the school at the time of admission (see note 6).
- 4 Children with known exceptional medical or social needs (see note 7).
- 5 Children living nearest the School (see note 8).

If there are less than 20 qualified applicants for foundation places, any unfilled places will become additional open places. Those applicants for foundation places who do not fulfil the Foundation Place criteria (B) will be considered under the Open Place criteria.

Tie Breaker

In the event that two or more applicants have equal right to a place under any of the above Foundation or Open criteria, the Governing Body will apply the same subsequent criteria, in order of priority, to these applicants.

If having applied all the above criteria, two or more applicants still have an equal right to a place and there are insufficient places to admit all applicants, the Governors will draw lots to decide between applicants. *This will be overseen by a person independent of the admissions process.*

(C) Successful applicants

Offer letters will be sent out from the Home LA by first class post by the timescales previously agreed by the LA. If an on line application has been made, the results should be available on line by the same date. Acceptance of the offer of a place must be returned to the Home LA by **the agreed timescale set by the LA. Failure to do this may result in the offer being withdrawn and offered to the next child on the waiting list.** Once the

School has received confirmation that these places have been accepted, the parent will be contacted by the School requesting proof of address and identity (*see opening remarks*).

All successful applicants will be offered a start date in the September after their 4th birthday. Parents can however request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the academic year or until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age. Parents can request that their child takes up the place part time until the child reaches compulsory school age. If you wish to discuss this further, please contact the office on 02076391724 to arrange an appointment.

If a parent subsequently decides *not* to take up the offer of a place in the Reception Class for **2025/26**, they are requested to inform the Home LA and the School as soon as possible so that the place may be offered to the next child on the waiting list.

D – Deferred Places

The School admits children to the Reception class in the September of the school year in which a child attains the age of 5 years. (The school year runs from 1 September to the 31st August.) All parents/carers are entitled to a full-time place for their child in the reception class from September, but may defer entry until the beginning of the term after their child is five years old (i.e., when the child reaches compulsory school age) or until the beginning of the summer term whichever is earlier. Children may attend part-time until their child reaches compulsory school age. Parents/carers who have been offered a place at the School and wish to defer entry for their child and/or attend part-time must put this in writing to the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity and before the start of the autumn term.

E) Waiting Lists

Parents may request that their child be put on the waiting list. The waiting list will be maintained until the end of the Autumn Term (31st December). A child's position on the waiting list is determined by the school's admission policy **not** by the length of time the child has been on the waiting list. Any child who is added to the waiting list will be ranked according to the oversubscription criteria as in **(A)** and **(B)**. Children who are the subject of a direction by a local authority to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol **must** take precedence over those children on the waiting list. If the school were not in a position to make an offer of a place during the academic year for which the application was made, and the parent still wishes their child to be considered for a place at the School, a new application must be made to St Mary Magdalene Primary School (*see (F)*).

(F) Appeals

Parents who are not successful in gaining a place for their child have the right to appeal against the decision to an independent appeal panel. Parents wishing to appeal should contact the school to obtain an appeal form. The form should be sent to reach the Clerk to the Admission Appeal Panel, care of the School, **within 20 school days of the date of the letter from the Home LA** confirming that your application for a Reception Class place at this School was unsuccessful. Should a subsequent appeal be unsuccessful the parent can make a request to the Home LA for their child to be put on the waiting list as in (D).

(G) In-Year (Casual) Admissions

Applications for admission to the School for Reception aged children (September following their fourth birthday) may be made to the School at any time. Applications for places outside the normal round of admissions (in year admissions) will be allocated in accordance with the school's published admission criteria and processed as per Southwark's agreed protocol. The waiting list for In-Year Admissions will be held until the end of the academic year in which the application was made. (An academic Year is 1st September to 31st August) A child's position on the waiting list is determined by the school's admission policy **not** by the length of time the child has been on the waiting list. Children who are the subject of a direction by a local authority to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol **must** take precedence over those children on the waiting list. Should there be more applicants for places in any year group, priority will be given according to the criteria in **(A)** and **(B)** above. The right to appeal against non-admittance exists as in **(E)** above. Should a subsequent appeal be unsuccessful the parent can make a request to St Mary Magdalene Primary School for their child to be put on the waiting list as in (D).

Where there are no spaces for In-Year admissions children will be placed on a waiting list for the remainder of the academic year. Parents must re-register their interest the following September if they would like to keep their child on the waiting list.

NOTES:-

- 1 An application for a child who has a statement of special educational needs (SEN) is dealt with by a separate process from the coordinated admission arrangements. If you are a Southwark resident, please contact the SEN department at Southwark Children's Service for more advice. *Telephone no 02075255000(switchboard).*
- 2 A parent(s) is any person who has parental responsibility for or is the legal guardian of the child.
- 3 The definition of a meeting in this instance will be deemed to be a Sunday or midweek worship service or a meeting for prayer and bible study.
- 3.1 *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 for that worship, 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".*
- 4 For up-to-date information please access the Churches Together England website at www.cte.org.uk or telephone 020 7529 8131 or 020 7529 8133; or the Evangelical Alliance at www.eauk.org or telephone 02072072100; or 'Affinity' at www.affinity.org.uk or telephone 01633893925.

- 5 Looked after children are children who are in the care of a local authority, or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions as defined by Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of making an application to the school. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after immediately prior to being adopted, or who became subject to a residence order, (now termed child arrangement order under the Children & Families Act 2014), or special guardianship order. The Governors will require written confirmation that the child is looked after, or previously looked after, and will be so at the time of making an application to the school.
- 6 Half-brothers and/or sisters and step brothers and /or sisters who share the same home and are at the school at time of admission. It also includes adopted brothers and/or sisters who share the same home as a child already attending the school at the time of admission (i.e. on the date of the applicant starting at the school. Siblings in year 6 who will be transferring to secondary school will not be regarded as a sibling under this criterion).
- 7 Written supporting evidence should be supplied, at the time of application, from a relevant professional, e.g. a child or educational psychologist, a child psychiatrist, a general practitioner, an orthopaedic consultant or social worker which sets out why St Mary Magdalene Primary School is the most suitable school and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school
- 8 Nearness of the School measured by a straight line route from home to the main school gate in Brayard's Road. The Governors outsource the measuring of the home to school distances to a company who uses a computerised Geographical Information System (GIS). This system measures the distance from each applicant's home to the designated main entrance of the school by the shortest straight line route in metres. A centroid (centre point), supplied by Ordnance Survey (OS), determines the start point of the home address. If a child lives in a block of flats where a communal entrance is used, the centroid for the block and not the individual flat is used for calculation purposes. When dealing with multiple applications from a block of flats, lower door numbers will take priority. The home address is where the parent/carer lives and the child permanently resides unless otherwise directed by a Court Order. This will also apply to informal care arrangements. Where a child spends time with both parents or carers in separate homes and both have parental responsibility, the school will need to establish where the majority of school nights (Sunday to Thursday) are spent. This will then be treated as the home address.