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## ST BERNADETTE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICY 2025-26

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below. The school is conducted by its governing body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and instrument of government and seeks at all times to be a witness to Our Lord Jesus Christ.

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. At a Catholic school, Catholic doctrine and practice permeate every aspect of the school's activity. It is essential that the Catholic character of the school's education be fully supported by all families in the school. We therefore hope that all parents will give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school. This does not affect the right of an applicant who is not Catholic to apply for and be admitted to a place at the school in accordance with the admission arrangements.

The governing body is the admissions authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round<sup>1</sup>. The governing body has set its admission number at 60 pupils to be admitted to the reception year in the school year which begins in September, 2025.

The governing body will, where logistically possible, admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the last child ranked within the school's Published Admissions Number ("PAN").

### **Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (see note 1)**

The admission of pupils with a Statement of Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school must be admitted. Where this takes place before the allocation of places under these arrangements this will reduce the number of places available to other children.

### **Oversubscription Criteria**

*Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority.*

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<sup>1</sup> This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year



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- a. Catholic children in care and Catholic children who have previously been in care. (see notes 2&3)
- b. Baptised Catholic children from the parishes of Our Lady of Lourdes and Christ the King in Milton Keynes and St Mary's, Woburn Sands.(See note 3)
- c. Baptised Catholic children from other parishes (See note 3)
- d. Other children in care and other children who have previously been in care. (see notes 2)
- e. Children with a sibling in the school at the likely time of admission.
- f. Children of school staff.
- g. Children who have attended St. Bernadette's School Nursery.
- h. Children from other Christian denominations whose parents are in sympathy with the ethos of the school and wish them to receive a Catholic education and whose application is supported by a letter from their priest or minister of religion on Church headed paper with the Church stamp/seal.
- i. Children from other faith backgrounds whose parents are in sympathy with the ethos of the school and wish them to receive a Catholic education and whose application is supported by their minister of religion on Church headed paper with the Church stamp/seal.
- j. Any other children whose parents wish their child to receive a Catholic education.

*Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.*

- (i) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can most appropriately be met at this school, the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made. (see note 6)
- (ii) Siblings of children already in the school at the likely time of admission. (see note 4).
- (iii) Random allocation by lottery under the independent supervision of a member of Milton Keynes Council Staff once the admission number of 60 has been reached. This will be within each particular category



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## Application Procedures and Timetable

To apply for a place at St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School in the normal admission round<sup>2</sup>, you must complete the application form available via [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/school-admissions](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/school-admissions). You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form attached to this policy (appendix 1) in order to support the application of oversubscription criteria. The Supplementary Information Form (SIF) is also available from the school office and via the school website: <https://www.stbernadetteschool.com/school-admissions/>. It should be returned to the school office either in hard copy or by email – [office@stbernadetteschool.com](mailto:office@stbernadetteschool.com) by 15<sup>th</sup> January.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 16<sup>th</sup> April or the next working day, by the local authority on our behalf. If you are unsuccessful (unless your child gained a place at a school you ranked higher) you will be informed of the reasons, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above.

***If you do not provide the information required in the SIF and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child will not be placed in criteria a to c or h to i, and this could affect your child's chance of being offered a place.***

**All applications which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025.**

### Rights of Appeal

There are established arrangements for appeal against the decision not to offer places at the school. Details are available from the school. Although letters offering places at the school are normally sent out by MK Council it is the responsibility of parents to check with the Milton Keynes website to determine whether their child has been awarded a place at St. Bernadette's. The school does not inform parents. It should be noted that, in the event of an unsuccessful appeal, the school does not consider any further application in the same school year (1 September- 31 August) unless there has been a significant change in circumstances.

### Late Applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with Milton Keynes' Local Authority Primary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. You are strongly encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.

### Admission of Children Below Compulsory School Age and Deferred Entry

A child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday. A child's parents may defer the date at which their child, below compulsory school age, is admitted to the school, until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age, or beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which an offer was made. A child may take up a part-time place until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age. Upon receipt of the offer of a place a parent should notify the school, as soon as possible, that they wish to either defer their child's entry to the school or take up a part-time place.

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<sup>2</sup> This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.



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## Admission of Children outside their Normal Age Group

A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 31<sup>st</sup> August, may request that the child be admitted out of their normal age group, to reception rather than year 1.

Any such request should be made in writing to the Admissions and Appeals Committee of the Governing Board via the school office at the same time as the admission application is made. The governing body will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the head teacher, including the head teacher's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the governing body will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

## Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful children will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out above and **not** in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Waiting lists for admission will operate throughout the school year. The waiting list will be held open until the last day of the summer term. Parent/carers must inform the school in writing prior to the last day of the summer term if they wish their application to remain on the waiting list for the following academic year.

**Inclusion in the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.**

## In-Year Applications

An application can be made for a place for a child at any time outside the admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. Application should be made to the school by contacting [office@stbernadettesschool.com](mailto:office@stbernadettesschool.com) 01908692438. Please request and complete the In-Year Application Form which can also be downloaded via the school website: <https://www.stbernadettesschool.com/school-admissions/>

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out above, will be applied.

If there are no places available, the child will be added to the waiting list (see above).

You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

## Fair Access Protocol

The school is committed to taking its fair share of children who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as set out in locally agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal admission round the governing body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The governing body has this power, even when



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admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number (subject to the infant class size exceptions).

### **Applications for Children of UK Service Personnel and Crown Servants**

Applications for Children of UK Service Personnel and Crown Servants returning to England can be accepted prior to providing an intended address or moving into the area.

### **Pupils Attending St Bernadette's Nursery**

For children attending the school's nursery, application to the reception class of the school must be made in the normal way, to Milton Keynes Local Authority. Attendance at the school's nursery does not automatically guarantee that a place will be offered at the school.

**The governing body reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place or, where a child is already attending the school, the place itself, where it is satisfied that the offer or place was obtained by deception.**

### **Admissions to St Bernadette's Nursery:**

- Admission for the 30 hour free entitlement is set at a maximum of 20. Working parents with Eligibility Codes will be prioritised - for oversubscription the policy is applied (except 'g'). If unsuccessful in application for 30 hours, parents will be invited to be included in the 15 hours selection process,
- Admission for the 15 hour free entitlement is set at a minimum of 10 - for oversubscription the policy is applied (except 'g')

At the point of allocation, 30 hours applications will be allocated first, up to a maximum of 20 places. Once the 30 hours places have been allocated, all remaining places (up to a maximum of 30 in total) will be made available for 15 hours applications.

This provides a fair balance between those requiring 15 hours and those requiring 30 hours.

If the nursery is undersubscribed, the governing board may apply a degree flexibility in order to meet the needs of parents, by adjusting the set maximum numbers for 15 or 30 hours. This would be dependent upon staffing availability, financial constraints and adherence to ratio requirements.

Application forms for nursery can be obtained from the school office or downloaded from the school website <http://www.stbernadettesschool.com/school-admissions/> Applications should be submitted by 24<sup>th</sup> April.

Please note that this is a different form to the main school application form. 30 hours applications require additional information, including either a valid eligibility code or agreement to pay for the additional 15 hours provided in the afternoon. Parents who are not eligible for the full 30 hours funding, must agree to fund the additional 15 hours themselves. See Appendix 2 for details.



**Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria and application process)**

1. A Statement of Special Educational Needs is a statement made by the local authority under section 324 of the Education Act 1996, specifying the special educational provision for a child. An Education, Health and Care Plan is a plan made by the local authority under section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014, specifying the special educational provision required for a child.

2. A 'looked after child' (LAC) has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any child who is (a) in the care of a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents) at the time of making application to the school.

A 'previously looked after child' (PLAC) is a child who was looked after, but ceased to be so because he or she was adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order.

Children who are looked after (LAC) and all previously looked after children (PLAC) includes those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (IAPLAC).

3. 'Catholic' means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of baptism in a Catholic Church or a certificate of reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy, it includes a looked after child living with a family where at least one of the parents is Catholic.

For a child to be treated as Catholic, evidence of Catholic baptism or reception into the Church will be required. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism should contact their Parish Priest [who, after consulting with the Diocese, will decide how the question of baptism is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church].

4. 'sibling' includes:

- (i) all natural brothers or sisters, half brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address; and
- (ii) the child of a parent's partner where that child lives for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same home address as the child who is the subject of the application.

5. A 'parent' means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for a child, and any person who has care of a child.

6. To demonstrate an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the governing body will require compelling written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.

7. By 'Christian', we mean 'Christian' – All members of Churches Together in England and CYTUN are deemed to be included in this definition, as are all other churches and ecclesial communities that are in membership of any local Churches Together Group (by whatever title) on the above basis.

8. A child's "home address" refers to the address where the child usually lives with a parent or carer and will be the address provided in the Common Application Form ("CAF"). Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives for part



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of the week with each parent, the home address will be the address given in the CAF, provided that the child resides at that address for any part of the school week.

9. We may ask to see official documentation, such as a medical card if there are reasons why a child does not live at his or her parent's address. For example, if s/he is resident with a grandparent, you need to use this on the application form. If you do not declare any arrangements like this or use a relative's address for your application, we may consider that you have made a false declaration and withdraw the offer of a place. Childcare arrangements are NOT sufficient reason for listing another address. The school reserves the right to check the validity of any address given by asking for evidence such as inclusion on the Electoral Roll, or a recent utilities bill confirming your name and address. If you are moving into the catchment area, we will ask for evidence of your move before considering an application. Typical evidence is a letter from your solicitor confirming that you have a legally binding agreement to buy a house or a formal lease agreement for at least six months.



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## Supplementary Information Form For All Applications (Appendix 1)

The following information will be used in accordance with the published admission criteria. Additional data is also required by the DfE for Census Returns. Please see above definitions to support completion of this form

<b>SECTION A : To be completed by the parent/s</b>	
Child's Surname:	Child's Forename(s):
Date of Birth:	Female/Male (Please delete as appropriate)
One of Twin/multiple birth: Yes/No	Name of Twin/multiple birth sibling:
Name, Year group and Class of any other sibling at the school:	
Country of Birth:	First Language (The language the child was exposed to in early years - i.e. the language used to communicate with the child until the age of 1 year):
Home Language (The Language the child now speaks primarily at home):	National Identity:
Normal Home Address:	
Post Code:	Tel. No.:
Email:	
Parent/Carer 1 Name:	Parent/Carer 2 Name:



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Parish of Residency:	Church/Place of Worship:
Is the child baptised? YES/NO Date:  If YES which denomination:	Child's Church of Baptism:  Address:
<b>Please attach a copy of your child's Birth Certificate to this form</b>	

<b>SECTION B: For Catholic families</b>
Please attach a copy of your child's Baptismal Certificate to this form
<b>SECTION C: For families of other Christian denominations or other faith backgrounds</b>
Please refer to our published Admission Criteria. A letter from your minister of religion on Church headed paper with the church stamp or seal will support your application.

Our Privacy Notices can be found on our website: <https://www.stbernadetteschool.com/school-policies/>



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## Essential Paperwork to Confirm 30 hours Place at St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School Nursery (FS1) (Appendix 2)

Name of Child		
Child's Date of Birth		
<b>SECTION A: COMPLETE FOR 30 HOURS FUNDED PLACE</b>		
Name of parent		
Parent's National Insurance Number		
Parent's Date of Birth		
30 hours free childcare eligibility code		
Date of completion of this form		
I agree to the school checking my eligibility code	Sign:	
I agree to confirm eligibility via my Childcare Service Account every 3 months. I understand that failure to do this will result in me becoming automatically ineligible for the free childcare.	Sign:	
I agree to inform the school if I am no longer eligible for 30 hours free childcare	Sign:	
<b>SECTION B: COMPLETE FOR ALL 30 HOURS PLACES (FUNDED OR NOT)</b>		
If I am <b>not eligible</b> for 30 hours free childcare or <b>become ineligible</b> , I agree to pay for the additional 15 hours per week at £75 per week - paid in advance for each half term	Sign:	
I understand that the 30 hours childcare covers 8:45 - 2:45 each day.	Sign:	
I will pick my child up at 2:45 every day (Circle your choice of yes or no)	Yes	No
I will pick my child up at 3:00 every day at an additional cost of £12.50 per week (Circle your choice of yes or no)	Yes	No
I will pick my child up at 3:15 every day at an additional cost of £25 per week (Circle your choice of yes or no)	Yes	No

Go to <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk> to check for 30 hours eligibility. From this website, you can check for eligibility, apply and receive the Eligibility Code.

Our Privacy Notices can be found on our website: <https://www.stbernadetteschool.com/school-policies/>