

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Governors' Admissions Policy for Saint George Catholic Voluntary Aided College, Southampton, for entries in September 2024

At Saint George we ASPIRE to become all that God has created us to be.

St George is a Catholic voluntary aided school open to boys and girls aged 11 to 16 of all abilities. St George is in the trusteeship of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth and is a maintained school of Southampton City Council Local Authority. The fundamental aim of St George is to present a clear Christian philosophy and way of life, providing opportunities in which Christian values may develop. We ask all parents applying for a place at St George to respect our Catholic ethos and its importance to the College community. This does not affect the right of parents who are not of the faith of St George to apply for and be considered for a place here.

The Governing Body St George is responsible for all admissions of children and it has determined the following admissions policy:

- The Governing Body has an approved PAN (Published Admissions Number) of 190 children to **Year 7 in 2024-2025**.
- Should there be more applications than places available, children will be admitted by category in the following order of priority: (see Notes and Definitions in section B below)

- 1) Baptised Catholic Looked After Children (LAC) and previously Looked After Children
- 2) Baptised Catholic children. If applications in this category exceed places, priority will be given in the following order: siblings, attending a named feeder school, all other children.
- 3) Looked After Children (LAC) and previously Looked After Children
- 4) Children who will have a sibling(s) at St George at the intended time of entry
- 5) All other children who attend a named feeder Catholic Primary School
- 6) Children of staff at St George
- 7) Children of other Christian denominations
- 8) Children of other faiths
- 9) All other children who do not fall within the above categories

When applications any category/sub-category exceed the places available and it is necessary to decide between applications, the distance from home to St George will be used to determine the order of priority. (see Notes and Definitions in section B below)

A. EVIDENCE REQUIRED WITH APPLICATION

- All applicants in categories 1 and 2 will be required to present a baptismal certificate with their application (see section C below for details of Supplementary Information Form), or written confirmation from a priest on headed paper, that the applicant has been received into the Catholic Church. This may be signed electronically and emailed to the school from the email account of the Church.
- All applicants applying for a place at St George as a member of other Christian Denominations (category 7) or other faiths (category 8), will need to provide a letter confirming membership of that Christian denomination or faith that has been signed by the appropriate minister of religion or faith leader. The letter should be provided at the same time that the SIF (see section C below) is returned to St George. The letter must be on headed paper. This may be signed electronically and emailed to the school from the email account of the religious community.
- Applicants in Category 3 and Category 9 are not required to submit a Supplementary Information Form (SIF).
- Please note that if you do not complete the Supplementary Information Form and return it to the College, with all supporting documentation, by the closing date, your child may not be placed in the appropriate category and this will affect your child's chance of being offered a place.

B. NOTES AND DEFINITIONS

1. **Baptised Catholic Looked After Children (LAC) and previously Looked After Children** - please refer to definitions 2 and 3 below.
2. **Baptised Catholic children** - For the purposes of these admissions arrangements, a Catholic means a person baptised in a church which is in full communion with the See of Rome or a person received into full communion with the Catholic Church.
3. **Looked After Children (LAC) and previously Looked After Children** - 'A looked after child' 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 a local authority in the exercise of their social services function (e.g. child with foster parents) at the time of making an application to a school. 'Previously looked after children' are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted. This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders) or became subject to a child arrangements order¹⁸ or special guardianship order¹⁹. Child arrangements orders are defined in s.8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by s.12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians). Previously looked after children also includes those children who appear (to the governing body) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as result of being adopted.
4. **Children who will have a sibling(s) at St George at the intended time of entry** - A sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, adoptive brother or sister, step brother or sister, foster brother or sister or the child of the parent/ carer's partner where the child for whom a school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling.
5. **All other children who attend a named feeder Catholic Primary School** - named feeder Catholic Primary Schools are: Holy Family Catholic Primary School Southampton, St Anthony's Catholic Primary School Titchfield Common, St Swithun Wells Catholic Primary School Chandlers Ford, Springhill Catholic Primary School Southampton, St Patrick's Catholic Primary School Southampton and St Peter's Catholic Primary School Winchester.

6. **Children of staff at St George** - The criteria for the category of children of staff at St George is as follows:
- a) The member of staff:
 - i. has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application to the school is made; or
 - ii. has been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a skill shortage, as demonstrated by there being fewer than five applicants suitable for short-listing.
7. **Children of other Christian denominations** - Children who belong to other churches and ecclesial communities which, acknowledging God's revelation in Christ, confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures, and, in obedience to God's will and in the power of the Holy Spirit commit themselves: to seek a deepening of their communion with Christ and with one another in the Church, which is his body; and to fulfil their mission to proclaim the Gospel by common witness and service in the world to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. An ecclesial community which on principle has no credal statements in its tradition, is included if it manifests faith in Christ as witnessed to in the Scriptures and is committed to working in the spirit of the above. All members of Churches Together in England and of CYTÛN are deemed to be included in the above 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. **Children of other faiths** - Children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of 'other Christian denominations' and which falls within the definition of a religion for the purposes of charity law. In addition to religions who believe in one God, the Charities Act 2011 defines religion to also include:
- A religion which involves belief in more than one God and
 - A religion which does not involve belief in a God
- Case law has identified certain characteristics which describe the meaning of religion for the purposes of charity law, which are characterised by a belief in a supreme being and an expression of belief in that supreme being through worship.
9. Distance from Home to St George to be measured in a straight line from the centre points of the child's residence to St George's entrance gates by Southampton City Council's computerised mapping system (GIS). The child with the shortest straight-line distance by this measure will be awarded the place. Where two applicants cannot be separated by the distance measurement, random allocation, supervised by the LA, will be used.
10. Where fewer places can be offered within a particular category when there are children from multiple births, the Governors will exercise their discretion to treat this as an exceptional case and admit such children so as not to split the family.
11. Students who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which names St George will be given a place. They will count towards the Published Admission Number.
12. Children residing within a split family: Parents must nominate one of their addresses as the child's address for the application if the child spends part of the week with each parent. This must be the address of a parent not another family member. Address checks will be carried out and we may require further evidence. In the event of a dispute, residence will be determined by the Local Authority on the information that it holds.
13. St George does not have a catchment area.

C. PROCEDURE FOR MAKING AN APPLICATION

There are two steps parents must follow to apply for a place at St George:

1. **Online/paper application to the Local Authority** - All applications must be made, preferably online, to the Local Authority in which the child lives. Southampton City Council's website is www.southampton.gov.uk and Hampshire's website is www.hants.gov.uk. If you cannot make an online application, you can ask your Local Authority for a paper Common Application Form. Parents will receive information on this process from their Local Authority.
2. **Completion of a SIF, with evidence, submitted to St George** - Enclosed with this Admission Policy document is a Supplementary Information Form (SIF). **For categories other than 3 and 9, applicants should complete a SIF (Supplementary Information Form), with evidence where necessary, submitted to St George. THE SIF, PLUS ANY NECESSARY EVIDENCE, SHOULD BE RETURNED DIRECTLY TO ST GEORGE BY 31ST OCTOBER 2023.** The SIF provides governors with essential information, enabling them to place your application in the correct category. It is advised that photocopies of original paperwork are submitted, as St George cannot return these documents.

Parents will be notified of the outcome of the application on **1st March 2024** by the Local Authority.

You must inform the Local Authority whether you wish to accept or refuse the place offered by completing the form issued by the Local Authority Admission service. This must be returned to the Local Authority by the date specified in your allocation email/letter.

D. LATE APPLICATIONS

The closing date for applications is 31st October 2023. Applications received after that date will be late applications and will be dealt with after all on time applicants have been offered a school place. If a school has places available after admitting all on-time applications, late applications will be considered on accordance with the priorities set out above.

E. IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS

All In-Year admissions must be made to the Local Authority in the first instance. A Supplementary Information Form (SIF) should also be completed. This can be requested from St George or obtained via the College website. It must be returned to St George with any necessary supporting evidence. Please note that if you do not complete the Supplementary Information Form and return it to the College, with all supporting documentation, your child may not be placed in the appropriate category and this will affect your child's chance of being offered a place. If there are no places available, the child will be added to the waiting list. You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing, within 15 days of receipt, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

F. FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOL

St George subscribes to the Southampton City Council's Fair Access Protocol which allocates hard-to-place students into secondary schools. A panel sits regularly to review these cases and makes recommendations as to which school the student should attend. Those allocated a place at St George in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol must take precedence over those on a waiting list.

G. WAITING LIST

A waiting list will be maintained by St George and all unsuccessful candidates will automatically be placed on the waiting list unless a parent or a guardian requests otherwise. The list will be ranked according to the Admission Policy set out above, and not by the date of the application. This is a requirement of the School Admissions Code 2021. Looked after and previously looked after children must take appropriate precedence over those on the waiting list. An applicant's position on the waiting list can change because the list will be re-ranked every time a fresh application is received. The waiting list will be held only until 31st July 2025.

H. ADMISSION OF OUT OF NORMAL AGE GROUP STUDENTS

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. This can be done by writing to the school giving reasons for the request.

Requests for admission outside of the child's chronological year of entry will be considered in accordance with para. 2.17 (School Admissions Code). The Admissions Committee must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interest of the child concerned along with the account and views of the Head of School. 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. Further information on education outside of normal age group is available on the Southampton City Council website.

I. RIGHT OF APPEAL

In the case of a refusal a written explanation will be sent to the parents. Parents have the right to appeal to an independent panel against a decision not to offer a place to their child.

Any parents wishing to appeal against a decision may do so by contacting School Admissions at Southampton City Council for the appropriate form.

The Admissions Policy is reviewed annually and applies to the academic year identified in the top of the document.

This Admissions Policy relating to September 2024 admissions was approved and determined by the Governing Body on 6th December 2022.

The Governing Body reserves the right to withdraw any school place offered if it is reasonably established that false or misleading information has been used to gain a place at St George, even if the child has started.