



the DIOCESE of EAST ANGLIA

ST. MARK'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR 2026/27

Introduction

St. Mark'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.

The school aims to provide a Catholic education for all its pupils. 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 expect 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 a 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. The governing body has set its admission number at 30 pupils to be admitted to the reception year in the school year which begins in September 2026.

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 (See Note 1)

The admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school must be admitted, unless the governing body can demonstrate that the placing is unsuitable. Where this takes place before the allocation of places under these arrangements there will be a reduction in the number of places available to other children.



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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:

1. Baptised Catholic looked after and previously looked after children (See Notes 2 & 3)
2. Baptised Catholic children who are resident in the parish of St. Mark's, Ipswich and the school's Designated Area (See Notes 3 & 10)
3. Other Baptised Catholic children. (See Note 3)
4. Other looked after and previously looked after children (See Note 2)
5. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church (See Notes 4 & 5)
6. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion (See Note 6)
7. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader (See Note 7)
8. Children who have a parent or guardian employed at St. Mark's and the member of staff has either been employed for two years or was recruited to fill a vacant post for which there was a demonstrable skill shortage
9. Any other children

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

- (i) The attendance of a sibling at the school at the time of enrolment will increase the priority of an application within each category so that the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made (See Note 8)
- (ii) After children in (i) above, priority will be given within each category to children living closest to the school. Distances are measured on a straight line "crow fly" basis, from the school reception to the front gate of the property using Ordnance Survey data. In the event of distances being the same for two or more children where this would determine the last place to be allocated, random allocation will be carried out and supervised by a person independent of the school. Under random allocation, all the names will be entered into a 'hat' and the required number of names will be drawn out.

Allocation of ranking group to application

Using the principles and definitions above each application will be allocated to a group as follows:



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Ranking Group	Description
	Children who have a Statement of Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC plan) specifying the school
	<i>Application of Admissions Criteria</i>
1	Baptised Catholic looked after and previously looked after children (See Notes 2 & 3);
2	Baptised Catholic children (see Note 3) who are resident in the parish of St. Mark's, Ipswich and the school's Designated Area and who have a sibling attending St. Mark's;
3	Baptised Catholic children who are resident in the parish of St. Mark's, Ipswich and the school's Designated Area (See notes 3 & 10)
4	Other Baptised Catholic children (See Note 3) who have a sibling attending St. Mark's.
5	Other Baptised Catholic children
6	Other looked after and previously looked after children (See Note 2)
7	Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church who have a sibling at St Mark's (See Notes 4 & 5);
8	Other Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church (See Notes 4 & 5);
9	Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion (See Note 6) who have a sibling at St Mark's;
10	Other Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion (See Note 6);
11	Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader (See Note 7) and who have a sibling at St Mark's;
12	Other Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader (See Note 7).
13	Children who have a parent or guardian employed at St Mark's and the member of staff has either been employed for two years or was recruited to fill a vacant post for which there was a demonstrable skill shortage and who have a sibling at St. Mark's
14	Other Children who have a parent or guardian employed at St



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	Mark's and the member of staff has either been employed for two years or was recruited to fill a vacant post for which there was a demonstrable skill shortage
15	Any other children who have a sibling at St Mark's;
16	Any other children not included above.

Application Procedures and Timetable

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round¹, you **must** complete a Common Application Form available from the local authority in which you live. Applications can be submitted on line at www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions. You must also complete the Supplementary Information Form (SIF) attached to this policy if you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria 1 to 3 or 5 to 8. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to The Admissions Officer, St. Mark's Catholic Primary School, Stone Lodge Lane West, Ipswich, IP2 9HN by the 15th January 2026.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on the 16th April, or the next working day, by the local authority on St. Mark's School's behalf. If you are unsuccessful you will be told why (the explanation will be related to the oversubscription criteria above). You will have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

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 1 to 3 or 5 to 8 and this is likely to adversely affect the likelihood of being offered a place.

All applications which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time following the closing date for admissions – which is the 15th January 2026

Late Applications

Late applications, except those deemed by the Local Authority as exceptional and to be processed as 'on time' will be considered after the first round of offers issued on 16th April. This is because all applications received by the closing date must be considered before any late applications. If your application is late because of exceptional circumstances, please refer to these when you send in your late application.

¹ 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 Below Compulsory School Age and Deferred Entry

Children are entitled to full-time places in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents may defer the date at which their children are 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.

Admission of Children outside their Normal Age Group

Requests may be made for children to be admitted outside their normal age groups. For example, such requests might occur in cases in which 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 1st April and 31st 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 Headteacher, St. Mark's Catholic Primary School, Stone Lodge Lane West, Ipswich, IP2 9HN 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 headteacher, including the headteacher'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.

If the application is for the normal admission round the request and supporting evidence should be sent to the Admissions Officer leaving sufficient time for the governing body to consider the request before the closing date for applications.

Waiting Lists

The parents of children who are not offered a place will be offered the opportunity to place their children 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 and will be held open until the last day of the Summer Term.

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



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In-Year Applications

An application can be made at any time outside the normal admission round and children will be admitted where there are available places. Applications should be made to the school by contacting: The Head Teacher, St. Mark's Catholic Primary School, Stone Lodge Lane, Ipswich, IP2 9HN. Where there are more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out above, will be applied.

If there are no places available, the child in question will be added to the waiting list.

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

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 the place was obtained by deception.

Notes (These notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

1. 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' 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' 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 immediately following having been looked after. 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 a result of being adopted.

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 who is part of a Catholic family where a letter from a priest demonstrates that the child would have been baptised or received if it were not for their status as a looked after child (e.g. a looked after child in the process of adoption by a Catholic family).



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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. 'Catechumen' means a person under instruction in the tenets of the Catholic Church with a view to baptism. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens.
5. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.
6. 'Children of other Christian denominations' means children who belong to other churches and ecclesial communities which, acknowledge 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 CYTŪN 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.

7. 'Children of other faiths' means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of 'other Christian denominations' at 6 above and which falls within the definition of a religion for the purposes of charity law. The Charities Act 2011 defines religion to include:
 - A religion which involves belief in more than one God, and
 - A religion which does not involve belief in a God.

NOTE: 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.

8. 'Siblings' means all natural, half, step, and adopted brothers and sisters; a child of the partner of the parent/carer; and children who are fostered into the family. In all



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these cases, the child and their sibling will both be living at the same address in a single family unit. This means that children from different family units, where those separate families are living together at the same address, are not considered siblings under this criterion.

9. 'Parent/s' 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.
10. The Designated Area is shown on a series of maps available on the school's website and will be applied to the admission arrangements for 2026-27.
11. A child's "home address" refers to the address where the child usually lives with a parent or carer, and where they sleep overnight. This must be the address provided in the Common Application Form ("CAF"). Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives for part 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. If you use another address to give the impression that your child lives at a different address to their home address, such as a second home or a grandparent's address, so that you have a higher priority for a place at that school; this will be considered a fraudulent application. If we are aware of a parental dispute affecting the application, the admissions authority may not be able to deal with the application and you may need to seek independent legal advice in order to resolve the matter.