



St Mary's RC Primary School

Nursery Admission and Policy Arrangements 2026-2027

St Mary's is a Catholic School in the trusteeship of the Diocese of Salford. It is maintained by Tameside Local Authority and is a voluntary aided School. The Governing Body is the Admissions Authority and is responsible for taking all decisions on applications for admissions.

Although nursery education is non-statutory, the Governing Body places the same importance on Nursery admission arrangements as for places in the main school. **Parents are reminded that a place in the Nursery does not mean the child will be guaranteed a place in the Reception class.** Admission to the Reception class will be in accordance with strict criteria published in the main Admissions Policy.

Each year the Governing Body states the number of pupils it plans to admit to the Nursery within the Foundation Stage. For the school year commencing September 2026, the Governing Body has retained its planned Nursery Admission Number as in previous years, at **26**.

Prospective parents should contact the school as soon as possible to be included on the Interest List. An Application Form will be sent to all parents on this list, and copies of the Form will also be available at the school. Parents must complete the Application Form in full and return it to the school no later than 28 February 2026.

All Roman Catholic applicants will be required to produce a valid Baptism Certificate as evidence that the child has been baptised, before 28 February 2026. Parents' or other family members' baptismal or denominational affiliation to Roman Catholicism has no status in this respect, nor has a family history of attending St Mary's.

Parents applying for a place on the grounds of specific medical or social reasons must provide written evidence from a doctor or other agency stating that he/she has exceptional needs which means that admission to St Mary's School is essential. A panel of Governors will make a decision as to whether to admit a child under this criteria using the information provided.

Admission to the Nursery will be made by the Governing Body in accordance with the criteria published in Section 4 (below), following a strict order of priority. When the number of applications exceeds the 26 places available, the Governing Body will apply the stated over-subscription criteria. No criteria other than those stated in this document will be applied. All terms are clearly defined in the relevant sections below.

Notification to parents who have applied for a place will be issued by the school at or before the time on which Tameside Local Authority notifies parents about Reception Class admissions.

Parents are required to accept or decline the allocated place using the form sent with the allocation letter. The form must be returned to the school within three weeks from the date

of the offer letter. If the place is not accepted, the place will be offered to the next applicant on the waiting list. Given the pressure for nursery places, parents are requested to advise the school at any stage, if an application is to be withdrawn or a place is not to be accepted for any reason.

Parents do not have the right of appeal against the decision of the Governing Body to refuse admission to Nursery. Children who are not offered a place in the Nursery may ask to be entered on the Waiting List.

As part of our Induction procedures, successful candidates will be invited to visit the Nursery with their parents during the term prior to admission.

Admission to the Nursery will be given in strict accordance with the following criteria:-

- 1. Baptised Catholic Looked After Children and Baptised Catholic previously Looked After Children.***
- 2. Baptised Catholic children who have a sibling in the school at the time of admission.**
- 3. Baptised Catholic children resident in the parishes of St Mary and St John Fisher and Holy Family (which falls within the Tameside Metropolitan Borough)**
- 4. Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children.**
- 5. Other children who have a sibling in the school at the time of admission.**
- 6. Other Baptised Catholic Children.**
- 7. All remaining applicants.**

Within each criterion, children are further sub-grouped in an age order, as follows:-

- A. Children born between 1 September 2022 and 31 December 2022
- B. Children born between 1 January 2023 and 31 March 2023
- C. Children born between 1 April 2023 and 31 August 2023

*A Looked-After Child is a 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 functions (under section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, or (c) who was in state care outside England but has now been adopted. A previously Looked-After Child is one who immediately moved on from that status after becoming subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order.

Waiting List

When the school has allocated all of its 26 nursery places, it will operate a Waiting List. If a place does become available, this will be allocated to a child at the highest position on the Waiting List, according to the above criteria. Parents will be contacted on a regular basis to see if they wish to remain on the Waiting List. Please note that new arrivals who apply may have a higher priority under the oversubscription criteria, so they will be ranked higher than those who have been on the list for some time.

Additional Information

Home Address

The address from which distance will be measured will be the permanent residential address, at the time of application, of the parent with whom the child is normally resident. Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week, the home address is the address from which the child travels to school for the majority of school days per week. If the number of days is exactly equal the home address will be that of the parent who receives the Child Benefit. Distance will be measured as a straight line from the child's home address, using the address point assigned by the National Land and Property Gazetteer, to the main gate to the school property. Measurements will be made using the local authority's school admissions data mapping software, which uses a Geographical Information System based on Ordnance Survey.

Parent

Throughout this policy the term 'parent' includes: (i.) All natural parents, whether they are married or not; (ii.) Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child; and (iii.) Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

Siblings: Sisters and Brothers

For the purposes of this policy, the words "brother" and "sister" refer throughout to natural sister or natural brother, half-sister or half-brother, adopted sister or adopted brother, step-sister or step-brother, foster sister or foster brother, or the child of the parent/carer's partner. The child for whom the school place is sought must be living in the same family unit and at the same permanent address as the brother or sister. This allows for the priority admittance of children whose brothers and/or sisters will still be attending the school at the time of admission.

Twins and other multiple births

In cases where twins, triplets, other multiple birth siblings, or other siblings whose date of birth falls within the same academic year, are split when allocations take place, parents will be offered a choice of breaking the sibling link and being offered places at two or more schools or all siblings being offered a place at another school. The Governing Body will decide if they wish to offer a place to a child in the nursery where it may otherwise split twins.

Proof of Address

The Application Form asks parents to provide TWO proofs of address from the following list:

- Mortgage Statement*TV licence* Tenancy agreement or letter from landlord*
- Home contents insurance certificate* Buildings insurance certificate*
- Council Tax Statement* Council Tax benefit statement*
- Recent utility bill (gas, electricity, water, land-line phone bill but not a mobile phone bill)**
- Letter from a solicitor confirming exchange of contracts on a house**
(*issued within the last 12 months; ** issued within the last 3 months)

Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children

A Looked After Child is a 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 functions (under Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). A previously Looked After Child is one who immediately moved on from that status after becoming subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order. Included in this definition are those children who appear (to the Governing body) to have been in state care outside of England and who ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

Future Applications

Please note that an offer of a place does not guarantee a place for siblings in future years.

Admission Criteria for Free Early Education Funding

All children are entitled to a free part-time nursery education place. That entitlement is from the term **after** their third birthday. Some places may be available for three year olds in the term after their 3rd birthday if there are places available.

Each child is entitled to a maximum of 15 hours free early years education per week from the term following their third birthday.

Entitlement to 30 Hours Free Childcare - From September 2017 families of 3 and 4 year olds who meet the eligibility criteria may also be entitled to an additional 570 hours of free childcare, giving a total of 1140 hours e.g. 30 hours per week for 38 weeks. For more information go to <https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare> If you are entitled you will receive a code with a validation date, this must be submitted to the school office prior to your child starting Nursery.

If you are not entitled to 30 hours free childcare, but wish for your child to attend full time you may do so for an additional fee. Details can be obtained from the school office.

The Free Early Education place for your child is up to a maximum of 15 or 30 hours free per week, depending on eligibility, for up to 38 weeks per year.

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

Is an additional sum of money paid to childcare providers for 3 and 4 year-olds of families in receipt of certain benefits Additional funding may be available through the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP), paid to early years' providers for the provision of extra support for your child. EYPP is used to improve teaching and learning facilities and resources so as to impact positively on your child's progress and development.

If you think you might be entitled to EYPP please apply Yes, when completing the Parental Agreement and Funding Claim Form.

Disability Access Fund (DAF)

3 and 4-year-old children who are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance and are receiving the free entitlement are eligible for the Disability Access Fund (DAF). DAF is paid to your child's early year's provider as a fixed annual sum of £615 to support providers to make reasonable adjustments and build the capacity of their setting to support children with disabilities.

If you think you might be entitled to DAF please apply Yes, when completing the Parental Agreement and Funding Claim Form.

Policy Approval

This policy was approved by the Governing Body on 29th November 2025.