



Maria Fidelis Catholic School FCJ Admissions Policy

Year 2027-28

Maria Fidelis Catholic School was founded by the Sisters Faithful Companions of Jesus to provide education for children of Catholic families. The school is conducted by its Governing Body as part of the Catholic Church, in accordance with its Trust Deed and Instrument of Government. The school seeks at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ.

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic applicants, in strict accordance with the Over-subscription Criteria set out below.

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for girls and boys. 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 supported by all families in the school. All applicants are therefore expected to give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school.

The published admission number (PAN) for the school is 120 children. The Governing Body has sole responsibility for admissions to this school and intends to admit 120 children to Year 7 in September 2027. Priority will always be given to Catholic applicants.

Over-subscription Criteria

When the number of applicants exceeds the admission number, offers of places are made using the following order of priority:

1. Catholic "looked-after" children and Catholic children who have been adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders.
2. Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice.
3. Other baptised Catholic children.
4. Other "looked-after" children and other children who have been adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders.
5. Catechumens and baptised children of Eastern/Orthodox Churches with a baptism certificate or a letter from their priest confirming enrolment in the catechumenate of the Catholic Church.
6. Christian children of other denominations whose application is supported either by a certificate of baptism or by a letter from a religious leader confirming membership of the faith community.
7. Any other children.

Children who attend Roman Catholic and Church of England church schools from Camden or neighbouring boroughs (in no particular order), and any other Camden primary school will be given priority in each category.

Where the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the categories listed above would lead to oversubscription, the following provisions will be applied:

Tie Break

In the event of there being insufficient places to admit all candidates in any of the categories detailed above, priority will be given to those living closest to the school measured 'as the crow flies' from the home address to the centre of the school. The address given must be the one in which the child normally lives. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system. In the minority of cases when applicants' distance measurements are exactly the same, in blocks of flats for instance, the computer system will randomly order the priority of applicants.

If there are insufficient places available and one twin/sibling is offered the last place, the Governing Body will agree to exceed the published admission number and admit the additional child/children.

Exceptional Need

The Governing Body will give top priority, after the appropriate category of looked-after children, to children whose exceptional medical, social or pastoral needs justify a place at the school. To demonstrate an exceptional social or medical need, which can only be met at this school, the Governing Body will require compelling written evidence at the time of application from an appropriate professional e.g., doctor, priest or social worker.

Sibling Priority

The attendance of a sibling at the school at the time of enrolment will increase the priority of an application within each category.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

The admission of pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*. If your child has an EHCP you must contact your Local Authority SEN Officer. Children with this school named in their EHC Plan will be admitted.

Children educated outside their chronological age group

Any application for a child to be educated out of his/her age group will be considered by Governors on an individual basis and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Parents should write to the Chair of Governors during the Autumn term in the (academic) year of application, giving reasons and providing compelling professional evidence.

Change of details

If any of the details on your form change between the date of application and the receipt of the letter of offer or refusal, you **must** inform the school immediately. If misleading information is given or allowed to remain on the form, Governors reserve the right to withdraw the place.

Fair Access

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 admissions round the

Governing Body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol that has been agreed by both the Diocese and the Governing Body for the current school year. The Governing Body has this power even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

In Year Admissions

Applications for in-year admissions are made directly to the school. If a place is available and there is no waiting list, the child will be admitted. If more applications are received than there are places available then applications will be ranked by the Governing Body in accordance with the oversubscription criteria above. If a place cannot be offered at this time, then you may ask us for the reasons and you will be informed of your right of appeal. You will be offered the opportunity of being placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained by the Governing Body in the order of the oversubscription criteria as modified above and not in the order in which the applications are received. Names are removed from the list at the end of each academic year. When a place becomes available the Governing Body will re-rank the list and make an offer.

Admission to the Sixth Form

For further information please see the Sixth Form Admissions Policy available on the School's website.

Interpretation of terms used in the Admission Policy and Oversubscription Criteria

'Looked after child'

has the same meaning as in section 22 of the Children Act 1989, and means any child in the care of a Local Authority or provided with accommodation by them (e.g., children with foster parents at the time of making an application to the school).

Other references to previously looked after children in the Code

All references to previously looked after children in the Code mean children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after **as well as** 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.

This means that the other provisions in the Code which apply to previously looked after children (PLAC), for example, in relation to the admission arrangements of schools with a religious character, selective arrangements, and boarding priority, apply to international previously looked after children (IAPLAC) in exactly the same way as they do to PLAC.

Adopted

An adopted child is any child who has been formally adopted and whose parent/guardian can give proof of legal adoption.

Child Arrangements

A Child Arrangements order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 Order Section 8 settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live. Children "looked after" immediately before the order is made qualify in this category.

Special Guardianship Order

A special guardianship order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 Section 14A which defines it as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s). Priority in this category will only be given to children who were looked-after up until this order was made.

Definitions

Candidates	The child on whose behalf an application is being made.
Applicants	The parents and/or legal guardians submitting an application for a place on behalf of a child. Or a young person of 16 years or over submitting their own application.
Catholic	A person who is a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome, including Eastern Catholic Churches. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of baptism or a certificate of reception into a Catholic Church. For the purposes of this Policy, it also includes a “looked after” child who is in the process of adoption by a “Catholic family” where at least one of the parents is a baptised Catholic.
Certificate of Catholic Practice	A certificate given by the family’s parish priest (or the priest in charge of the Church where the family practises) in the form laid down by the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales. It will be issued if the priest is satisfied that at least one Catholic parent or carer (along with the child, if he or she is over seven years old) have (except when it was impossible to do so) attended Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation for at least five years (or, in the case of a child, since the age of seven, if shorter). It will also be issued when the practice has been continuous since being received into the Church if that occurred less than five years ago. It is expected that most Certificates will be issued on the basis of attendance. A Certificate may also be issued by the priest when attendance is interrupted by exceptional circumstances which excuse from the obligation to attend on that occasion or occasions. Further details of these circumstances can be found in the guidance issued to priests at www.rcdow.org.uk/education/governors
Catechumens	A member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a Certificate of Reception into the order of catechumens.
Siblings	A brother or sister to include step brothers and sisters, half brothers and sisters or adopted brothers and sisters, who live at the same home as the child.
Family	Those individuals who live at the residential address of the parents and/or legal guardians who are submitting an application for a place on behalf of a child.
Residential Address	Residence is defined as where the child lives for more than 50% of the school week.

Application Procedure for year 7 entry in September 2027

All applicants must complete a Common Application Form (CAF) which is available from and returnable to the Local Authority in which they are resident.

In addition, applicants should complete the Maria Fidelis Supplementary Information Form (SIF) which is supplied in the application pack. The CAF and the SIF are also obtainable from your Local Authority and are available on line.

- The CAF must be completed and submitted to the Local Authority by **31 October 2026**.
- The Supplementary Information Form (SIF) is available from the school or the Local Authority and should be completed and returned to the school by the closing date (**23 October 2026**) with all other relevant paperwork.

If the applicant does not complete both the CAF and the SIF and return them by the closing date, the Governing Body may be unable to consider your application fully and it is very unlikely that your child will get a place at the school. Late applications will be considered after the initial allocation process has been completed.

- Applications for **Criterion 1** must be accompanied by written proof of the child's status from the appropriate authority.
- Those wishing to be considered under **Criterion 2 or 3** should also provide the school with a copy of the child's baptismal certificate. If the certificate is not available, applicants should indicate in writing the reasons for this being the case.
- Those applying under **Criterion 2** should obtain a Certificate of Catholic Practice from the parish in which the family normally worships or from the diocesan website, fill in the top part and ask their parish priest to sign it.

The Local Authority will write to you on behalf of the Governing Body with the outcome of your application on 1 March 2027 and the information will also be available online. You should indicate your acceptance of the place as soon as possible. Information concerning the Appeals Procedure will be sent out to those who are unsuccessful in obtaining a place. The school maintains a waiting list, ranked according to the published criteria, and places will be offered as and when vacancies occur. The waiting list will remain open for twelve months following the normal date of admission. If you wish your child's name to stay on the waiting list you must apply to the school in writing before the twelve-month period expires.