

**St John Vianney  
Catholic Primary School**



*"Seeking Growth Together"*

**Admissions Policy 2023-24**

St John Vianney's is a Catholic School in which the practice of the Catholic faith is fundamental to the whole life of the school, and the teachings, liturgy, prayers, ceremonies and religious instruction to that faith are observed.

1. St John Vianney's is a Catholic Primary school situated in the Diocese of Lancaster and is maintained by the Blackpool Local Authority.
2. The Governing Body is responsible for admissions within the requirements of the law. In doing so, the Governing Body has a regard for:
  - a) The advice of the Diocesan Trustees on the nature and purpose of Catholic schools;
  - b) The Governing Body's responsibility towards the school and the Catholic community it serves;
  - c) The Catholic character of the school and its Mission Statement.
3. The School serves, in the first instance, Catholic children from the Parishes of St John Vianney and St Monica.
4. The Governing Body has set the planned admissions number for September at 60. The Children's Services Authority and other parties required by law have been consulted on this. The Governors are required to admit children only to their relevant year groups.
5. No more than 30 children will be admitted to any one Reception Class.
6. Information relating to admissions in September 2022 will be available from the school/ local authority in September 2023.
7. During the Autumn term the school will forward a copy of the pack produced by Blackpool Local Authority, 'Admission to Primary School' to each of the applicants registered with them and parents/carers should complete the online form referred to in the pack no later than January 2023, the closing date for applications, as confirmation that they are seeking a place for their child/ren. The specific date in January will be communicated at the time of the admissions process opening.
8. Children who are admitted will normally enter reception year in September 2024.
9. Parents/carers will be informed of whether their child has been offered a place in writing on National Offer day. This date will be communicated at the time of the admissions process opening. If a place has been offered, parents/carers must write to the school confirming their intention to accept the place by the date specified in the formal offer letter.
10. For unsuccessful applications the letter will give the reason for the decision and will tell parents of their right to appeal. Guidance on how to appeal will also be included.  
A waiting list for children who have not been offered a place will be kept and will be ranked according to the Admission Criteria. Parents may contact the school to ascertain their child's position on the waiting list. This list will cease to operate at the start of the autumn term.

An exception to these criteria may be made in the case of children/immediate family members with strong specific educational, medical, social or emotional needs whose application is directly relevant to St John Vianney School and supported by appropriate evidence (e.g. consultant's medical report).

As required by law, all children with an Education, Health and Care Plan naming the school will be admitted before the application of the oversubscription criteria.

The Governors operate an equal preference criteria.

The Governors control the admission to the school. The Admissions Committee has been delegated by them; to admit children in accordance with the following areas of priority.

### **Admission Criteria**

1. Baptised Catholic children in public care (Looked After Children), and Baptised Catholic children who have formerly been in public care. *This criterion will also apply to Baptised Catholic children who were previously in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care as they have been adopted. This is in accordance with advice from the Minister of State for Schools. These are Baptised Catholic children who were looked after outside of England by a public authority, a religious group or another provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society (eg orphanages). Parents / carers will be expected to provide evidence of previous looked after status. If this proves difficult, or not possible, they should contact the School Admissions Team for advice.*
2. Baptised Catholic children who attend weekly Mass at St John Vianney's or St Monica's.
3. Baptised Catholic children who live in the parish of St John Vianney or St Monica with a sibling in the school at the time of expected admission.
4. Baptised Catholic children who live in the parish of St John Vianney or St Monica.
5. Other Baptised Catholic children with a sibling in the school at the time of expected admission.
6. Other Baptised Catholic children.
7. Other children who are in public care, or have formerly been in public care. *This criterion will also apply to children who were previously in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care as they have been adopted. This is in accordance with advice from the Minister of State for Schools. These are children who were looked after outside of England by a public authority, a religious group or another provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society (eg orphanages). Parents / carers will be expected to provide evidence of previous looked after status. If this proves difficult, or not possible, they should contact the School Admissions Team for advice.*
8. Other children whose parents wish them to be educated within our Catholic school and with a sibling in the school at the time of expected admission.
9. Children who have a parent who is in full time employment by the school and has been for a minimum of 2 years at the time of application. *This criterion is to help prompt staff wellbeing for full time staff.*
10. Other children whose parents wish them to be educated within our Catholic school.

## **Tie breaker**

In the event of oversubscription in any of the above criteria places will be allocated according to the following tie breaker criterion:

- children living nearest to the school as measured by the distance between an applicant's home and school.

Where two or more applications are tied, the distance between home and school, which is measured as a straight line from the Ordnance Survey address point of the home address to the main entrance of the school, will be used as a tie-breaker.

NB: The Ordnance Survey address point is a point within the boundary of the property and is usually located at its centre. Distances are measured using the Council's Geographic Information System.

Verification of the child's home address will be sought through the presentation of a Child benefit Book or letter from Child Benefit Agency.

**Siblings:** Priority is given to children who have siblings attending St John Vianney at the time of application and who will be attending at the time of admission. 'Siblings' includes full brothers/sisters, half, step, adopted and foster brothers/sisters who are living at the same address. Full brothers/sisters who do not live at the same address will still be given priority. Half and step brothers/sisters who do not live at the same address are not given priority.

**Twins, etc:** Where there are twins, etc wanting admission and there is only a single place left within the admission number, then the Governing Body will exercise as much flexibility as possible within the requirements of infant class sizes. In exceptional circumstances we are now able to offer places for both twins and all triplets even when this means breaching infant class size limits. This may also apply to children who are siblings within the same year group.

'**Parents**' will be considered to be the natural birth parent/s, legal foster or adoptive parent/s.

## **Late Applications**

Applications received after the published closing date will be treated as late applications.

Only in exceptional circumstances, and where appropriate evidence is provided, will those applications received after the closing date (but before offers of places have been made) be considered concurrently with those applications received on time.

The circumstances which might justify a late application include, but are not restricted to, the illness of a single parent/carer which might have reasonably impinged upon their ability to submit an application on time or where a family has just moved into the area.

## **Change of Preference**

Once you have submitted your preferences, you may only request a change if there is a significant reason for doing so, for example, if you move address.

You will be unable to access the on-line system after the closing dates. Any requests for a change of preference should be made in writing, but evidence must be provided to demonstrate the reasons for your changes, and changes cannot be actioned after 29 March 2024.

### **Fraudulent Applications**

If it is found that a child has been allocated a place due to misleading information having been provided, for example an incorrect address, then the offer of a place may be withdrawn and the offer of an alternative school will be made by the Local Authority.

### **Waiting Lists**

Waiting lists will be set up in the week following the notification being sent to parents. As places become available, the child highest on the waiting list will be offered the place. This is not dependent on whether an appeal has been submitted. Children are placed on the waiting list according to where they fulfil the oversubscription criteria, not the date the application is received. So a late applicant can be placed higher on the list if for example, they live closer to the school.

The waiting list will be maintained until the end of the Autumn Term.

Parents are invited to contact the school if they wish to be informed of their child's position on the waiting list.

### **Appeal Arrangements**

Where the Governing Body is unable to offer a place because the school is oversubscribed, parents have the right of appeal to an independent admission appeal panel, set up under the School Standards and Framework Act, 1998 as amended by the Education Act 2002.

If an application for admission has been turned down by the Governing Body parents can appeal to an independent appeals panel. This appeal should be sent in writing to the clerk to the governors at the school within 14 days of notification of refusal. The date of notification will be considered to be 2 working days after posting by first class post of the refusal to offer a place. The parents must give their reasons for appealing in writing. The decision of the appeal panel is binding on the parents and on the Governing Body.

Please note that you cannot re-appeal for a place at a school within the same school year unless there has been relevant, significant and material change in the family circumstances.

The Admission Committee will meet to consider the applications.

Parents will be notified during the Spring term.

**Non-routine admissions:** It sometimes happens that a child needs to change school other than at the "normal" time; such admissions are known as non-routine admissions. Parents wishing their child to attend this school should arrange to visit the school. They will be required to complete a common application form, provided by the Local Authority, allowing them to express up to three preferences. The admission of all students to Blackpool schools will be co-ordinated by the Schools Admissions Team and this will be in line with the school's non-routine admissions policy. If there is no place, then the School Admissions Team will provide information about how to appeal against the decision. Appeals for children moving into the area will not be considered until there is evidence of a permanent address, e.g. exchange of contracts or tenancy agreement with rent book.