

St Thomas More's Catholic Primary School



**ADMISSIONS POLICY
2026-2027**

St Thomas More'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 articles of association, and seeks at all times to be a witness to Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Application Procedures and Timetable

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round, you must complete a Common Application Form available from the local authority in which you live. You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form attached to this policy if you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria 1 to 6 or 8. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to the school by the Essex County Council published closing date for 2026.

Essex County Council coordinates arrangements for Reception intake admissions to all primary schools within its jurisdiction. Applications for admission to the Reception class will be managed in accordance with the arrangements published by the Local Authority. The Governing Body of St Thomas More's Catholic Primary School, Colchester, is responsible for all admissions. The admission number for entry is 30. Where applications for admissions exceed the number of places available, the Governing Body will allocate places in the following categories in the order set out below:

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

CATEGORY 1 Looked after children or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order and who are a baptised Catholic or from a Catholic¹ family.

CATEGORY 2 Baptised Catholic¹ children resident in the Parishes of St James the Less and St Helen (Colchester), St John Payne (Greenstead) and St. Monica's (Wivenhoe, Parish of St Sabina's Brightlingsea and Wivenhoe) where one or both parents³ are known to be Practising Catholic² as evidenced by the 'Certificate of Practice' *. (Your Priest can provide you with this).

CATEGORY 3 Baptised Catholic¹ children resident in the Parishes of St James the Less & St Helen (Colchester) St John Payne (Greenstead) and St Monica's (Wivenhoe, Parish of St Sabina's Brightlingsea and Wivenhoe).

CATEGORY 4 Baptised Catholic¹ children resident in the District of Colchester where one or both parents are known to be Practising Catholic² as evidenced by the 'Certificate of Practice' *. (Your Priest can provide you with this).

CATEGORY 5 Baptised Catholic¹ children resident in the District of Colchester.

CATEGORY 6 Children of a parent who is a Catechumen, as evidenced by the 'Certificate of Practice' *. (Your Priest can provide you with this).

CATEGORY 7 Other looked after children or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order.

CATEGORY 8 Children baptised or being brought up according to the beliefs of another Christian denomination whose parents are in sympathy with the aims and ethos of St Thomas More's School and whose application is supported by a letter from their Minister of Religion. First priority in this category will be given to those children who are members of the Eastern Rites Churches.

CATEGORY 9 Any other applications.

¹ A Catholic means a child baptised, or received into the Church, by a Priest, which is in communion with the See of Rome.

² In accordance with the Code of Canon Law practising means attending Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days.

³ Parents include guardians and carers or any person who has parental responsibility or care of the child.

*** Governors will give no preference to applicants where both parents are Catholics.**

TIE BREAK

In the event of over subscription in any category the following criteria in the order given below will be used to determine priority.

1. Those children who have brother(s) or sister(s) in the School in any but the final year (Year 6). A brother or sister includes a half brother or a half sister, an adopted brother or sister and a foster brother or sister provided they are resident at the same address.
2. Children of teaching staff who:
 - a. have been employed at the school for two or more years at the time of application for the school place or
 - b. the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage
3. The straight line distance from home to school will be taken into account, with those living nearer the school having a higher priority. All straight line distances are calculated electronically by the LA using data provided jointly by the Post Office and Ordnance Survey. The data plots the co-ordinates of each property and provides the address-point between which straight line distance is measured and reported to three decimal places. In the unlikely event of two applicants with an identical distance competing for a single place at a school, random allocation will be carried out and supervised by a person independent of the school. All the names will be entered into a hat and the required number of names will be drawn out.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan

If our school is named on your child's Education, Health and Care Plan, their admission is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*. Please contact the school for further advice or the SENDIASS service (Special Education Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service). Information for parents about SENDIASS can be found through <http://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/listing/send-information-advice-and-support-service/send.iass@essex.gov.uk>

Telephone: 0333 0138913

Notes:

- The acceptance of a child into the School does not automatically guarantee a place for brothers and sisters - e.g. admission to Reception class does not automatically gain admission to other years for other siblings.
- In applying for a place at the School the Governors assume that you will support the Catholic ethos of the School, the teachings of the Church, and School policies from time to time in force.
- 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 8, and this is likely to affect your child's chance of being offered a place.
- Parents will be informed of the result of their application by the LA.
- Parents whose application has been unsuccessful have the right of appeal. Details of this are available from the School.

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 them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents) at the time of making an 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. 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."

Timing of Admission

As required by law, this school provides for the full-time admission of all children offered a place in the reception year group from the September following their fourth birthday. Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in the school year. Where entry is deferred, the school will hold the place for that child and not offer it to another child. The parent would not however be able to defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the beginning of the final term in the academic year for which the offer was made.

Parents can also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. For parents opting to take up a part time place this would be mornings only.

Where parents choose to defer entry, the school may reasonably expect that the child would start at the beginning of a new school term/half term.

Admission of Children outside their Normal Age Group

A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside of their normal age group, for example, 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 Mrs Bridget Harris, Headteacher at the school, 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 head teacher, including the head teacher'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.

Late Applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with the Local Authority Primary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. You are encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.

Mid-Year Applications

An application can be made for a place for a child at any time outside the admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. All applications for places must be made by completing the Mid-Year Application Form, available from the school website.

Waiting List

The School will maintain a waiting list for all year groups should applications be received after a year group has reached its published admission number (PAN) of 30. The school regularly contacts parents on the waiting list to check if the place is still required and the list is reviewed annually in accordance with the admissions criteria.

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

Fair Access Protocol

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 admission round the governing body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The governing body has this power, even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number (subject to the infant class size exceptions).

The governing body reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place, or the place itself where the child is already attending the school, where it is satisfied that the offer or the place was obtained by deception.