

Admissions Policy 2026/2027

Policy 1004 - Reception



Our Lady Catholic Primary School

“We learn to love and love to learn with Jesus”

1 Admission Policy: Reception 2026 Entry

Our Lady 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 always 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.

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. 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 fully supported by all families in the school. We therefore hope 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 Catholic to apply for and be admitted to a place at the school in accordance with the admission arrangements.

The governing body is the admission authority and has responsibility for admissions to the school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round. The governing body has set its Published Admissions Number (PAN) at 30 children for the school year which begins in September 2026. Applications for Reception are welcome from families whose child reaches his/her 4th birthday between 1st September 2026 and 31st August 2027.

The governing body will admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the last ranked within the school's PAN.

Pupils with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHC)

The admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. (This used to be called a Statement of Special Educational Needs). Details of this separate procedure are set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. If your child has an EHC plan you must contact your local authority SEN officer. Children with this school named in their EHC Plan will be admitted (see note 1).

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. Catholic 'looked after' children and previously 'looked after' children (see notes 2-5);
2. Baptised Catholic children, who are resident in the Welwyn Garden City Parishes of St Bonaventure or Our Lady, Queen of Apostles (see notes 6 & 13);
3. Other baptised Catholic children;
4. Other 'looked after' children and previously 'looked after' children. (see notes 2-5);
5. Children of catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church (see notes 7&8);
6. Christian children of other denominations whose application is supported by a baptism certificate or a letter confirming membership, provided by their priest or minister of religion;

7. Children of other faiths who can provide evidence of membership from their religious leader;
8. Any other children.

*Baptism certificate will be required

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

Within each of the categories listed above, the provisions below will be applied in the following order: i. The Governing Body will give top priority, within a category, to an application where compelling evidence is provided at the time of application, from an appropriate professional such as a doctor, priest or social worker, of an exceptional social, medical, pastoral or other need of the child, which can only be met at this school. ii. The attendance of a brother/sister at the school at the time of enrolment will increase the priority of an application within a category, so that the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made, after children in (i) above

Application in previous years

Whilst the school welcomes applications from all categories, it is sometimes oversubscribed with Catholic candidates.

Tie break

Priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. Distances are calculated on the basis of a straight-line measurement between the front door of the child's home address (including the community entrance to flats) and the main entrance of the school using Hertfordshire County Councils computerised measuring system on the following basis. If there is a need for a tie break where two different addresses are the same distance from a school, in the case of a block of flats for example, the lower door number will be deemed nearest as logically this will be on the ground floor and therefore closer. If there are two identical addresses of separate applicants, the tie break will be random. Every child entered onto the HCC admissions database has an individual random number assigned, between 1 and 1 million, against each preference school. When there is a need for a final tie break the random number is used to allocate the place, with the lowest number given priority.

Application Procedure

Application Procedure for entry in September 2026

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round, you **must** complete an online application form from your local authority (paper forms are also available on request.) If you are applying under criteria 2, 3, 4 or 6 you should also complete the **School's Supplementary Information Form (SIF)**. Whilst this is not compulsory, the information on the SIF enables the Governing Body to assess your application fully against the School's criteria in the event of oversubscription. Please return the SIF (in person or by post) to the school, together with all other relevant paperwork required for your application. If you do not complete both of the forms described above and return them by **15 January 2026**, the Governing Body will be obliged to consider your application using only the

documents available. If you don't return the SIF on time your child may receive a lower ranking because of this and not be offered a place.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application, on or about 19th April 2026. This information will also be available online for those who have submitted an online application. Parents should accept or decline the place as soon as possible. If you are unsuccessful (unless your child was offered a place at a school you ranked higher) you will be informed of the reasons, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above and you will have right of appeal to an independent appeal panel. Should you wish to appeal please contact the school as soon as possible for an appeal form on which you must list your reasons for making an appeal. Appeals should be submitted to the school in writing by 6th May 2026.

Late Applications

Applications received after the closing date will be dealt with after the initial allocation process has been completed. If the school is oversubscribed it is very unlikely that late applicants will obtain a place.

Reception Year Deferred Entry

A child is entitled to a full-time school place in the September following his/her 4th birthday. Applicants may defer entry to school up until compulsory school age i.e. the first day of term following the child's fifth birthday. Application is made in the usual way and then the deferral until January or April is requested. The place will then be held until the first day of the spring or summer term as applicable. Entry may not be deferred beyond compulsory school age or beyond the year for which the application has been made. Therefore, applicants whose children have birthdays in the summer term may only defer until the 1st April 2026. Upon receipt of the offer of a place a parent should notify the school as soon as possible if they wish to defer until the spring or summer term.

Part-time attendance

Applicants may also request that their child attend part-time until compulsory school age is reached. Upon receipt of the offer of a place a parent should notify the school as soon as possible if they wish to take up a part-time place.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside his/her normal age group e.g. if 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 – 31st August, may request that the child be admitted out of his/her normal age group, starting reception at 5 years of age. Any such request should be made in writing to the Chair of Governors via the School Office. The governing body will make its decision based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child, taking into account school organisation issues and the views of the parents and any professionals involved. **Parents must have received the agreement of the governing body before any admission application for delayed entry is made.** If permission is received, then the parents will make their admission application in the normal way for the year in which they wish their child to start school. No age-related priority will be given. **Applications cannot be held over from one academic year to the next.** If permission is refused, then parents must make their admission application at the normal time.

Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This 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 31st July 2026 unless applicants request in writing to remain on the list. **Inclusion in the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.**

Appeals

Parents wishing to appeal who applied through Hertfordshire's online system should log into their online application and click on the link "register an appeal". Out of county residents and paper applicants should call the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request their registration details and log into www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals and click on the link "log into the appeals system".

In-Year Applications

An application for admission can be made for any child at any time outside the normal admissions round. Applications should be made directly to the school by contacting the School Office. If a place is available and there is no waiting list, the child will be admitted. If there is a waiting list, then applications will be ranked by the Governing Body in accordance with the oversubscription criteria as set out above. If a place cannot be offered at this time then you may ask us for the reasons, you will be informed of your right of appeal to an independent panel and your child will be placed on the waiting list.

In Year Appeals

We will write to you with the outcome of your application and, if you have been unsuccessful, the county council will write to you with registration details to enable you to login and appeal at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals

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 local authority 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.

Nursery Children

For children currently attending the school's nursery, application to the reception class of the school must be made in the normal way to the local authority. Attendance at the nursery **does not** guarantee a place in Reception.

Change of Details

If any of the details on either of your forms changes between the date of application and the receipt of the letter of offer or refusal, you **must** inform the School and the local authority immediately. If misleading information is given or allowed to remain on either of your forms, the Governing Body reserves the right to withdraw the place, even if the child has already started at the School.

NOTES (these explanatory notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

1. **An Education, Health and Care Plan** is a plan made by the local authority under S.37 of the Children and Families Act 2014, specifying the educational provision required for a child.
2. **A 'Looked after child'** Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, including those 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 or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order.
3. **'Adopted'**. An adopted child is any child who has been formally adopted, having previously been in care and whose parent/ guardian can give proof of this.
4. **'Child Arrangements Order'**. A Child Arrangements order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.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.
5. **'Special Guardianship Order'**. A special guardianship order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.14A appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s). A child 'looked after' immediately before the order is made qualifies in this category.
6. **'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 full communion with the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy this includes a looked after child in the process of adoption and living with a Catholic family, where a letter from a priest demonstrates that the child would have been baptised were it not for his/her status as a looked after child. For a child to be treated as Catholic, evidence of Catholic baptism or reception in the Catholic 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.
7. **'Catechumen'** means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a Certificate of Reception into the Order of Catechumens for a child aged 7 or over. For a child under 7 years of age it will be the certificate of the parent.
8. **'Eastern Christian Church'** includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism or Reception from the authorities of that Church.

"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.

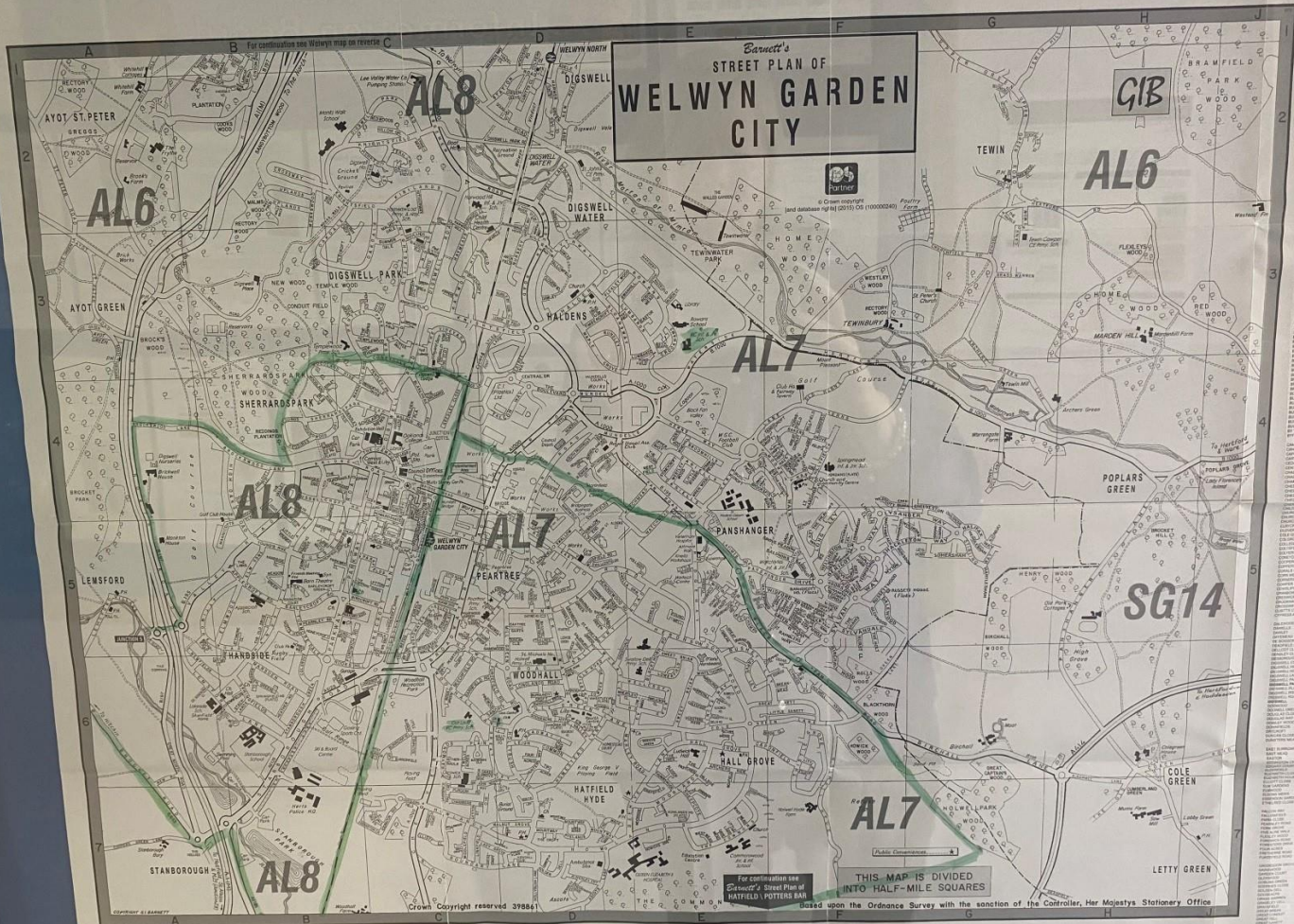
All members of Churches Together in England and CYTŪN are deemed to be included in the above definition, as are all other churches and ecclesial communities that are in membership of any local Churches Together Group (by whatever title) on the above basis.

“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 7 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.

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.

9. **‘Brother’ or ‘Sister’** includes:
 - i. All natural brothers and sisters, half-brother and sisters, adopted brothers and sisters, stepbrothers and sisters, foster brothers and sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address, and
 - ii. The child of a parent’s partner where that child lives for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same address as the applicant.
10. **A ‘Parent’** means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for the child or any adult with legal responsibility for the child.
11. **Resident’** – A child is deemed to be resident at a particular address when he/she resides there for more than 50% of the school week.
12. **Parish Boundaries** – for the purposes of this Policy, parish boundaries are as shown on the attached map and will be applied to the admission arrangements for 2024-2026.



Barnett's
STREET PLAN OF
WELWYN GARDEN
CITY

AL7

AL6

SG14

AL7

AL8

AL7

AL8

THIS MAP IS DIVIDED
INTO HALF-MILE SQUARES

For continuation see
Barnett's Street Plan of
HATFIELD & POTTERS BAR

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Diocese of Westminster Catholic Primary Schools

Supplementary Information Form 2026 – 2027



Our Lady Catholic Primary School

Woodhall Lane, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire AL7 3TF

Child's Details

Child's surname:	
Child's first name:	
Home Address:	Date of Birth:
	Postcode:

Parent/Carer Details

Parent's name:	
Address (if different from above):	
Telephone number:	

Details of Religion

Religion of child: (Please tick)	Catholic	Other Christian (name of denomination)	Other faith
Catholic Parish you live in:			
Church where child was baptised and date of baptism: (baptism certificate required)			

I confirm that I have read and understood the Admissions Policy and that the information I have provided is correct. I understand that I must notify the school immediately if there is any change to these details and that should any information I have given prove to be inaccurate that governors may withdraw any offer of a place even if the child has already started school.

Signed.....

Date.....

Please note:

- Where applicable parents can obtain a Certificate of Catholic Practice from the parish in which they worship or from the Diocese of Westminster website.
- Applicants from other Christian denominations and other faiths may attach either a certificate of baptism or a letter from their minister or religious leader, confirming membership of that faith community.
- You **must** complete your local authority's application form online (or on paper) by the closing date. If you do not do this you will not be offered a place.
- Have you enclosed: Copy of baptism certificate (where necessary) and/or Evidence of exceptional need (where necessary).

ADMISSIONS PRIVACY NOTICE FOR OUR LADY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Our Lady Catholic Primary School is a data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018 and is committed to dealing with your information safely and securely. We need to collect and share information in order to fulfil our obligations as an admission authority. We take our responsibility to protect your data seriously and we will use it in accordance with the legal requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.

We will comply with the School Admissions Code, which has the force of law. In respect of in-year admissions, the Governing Body is the admissions authority for this school. The information you provide to us on your Supplementary Information Form (SIF), any supporting papers or appeal documentation you provide will be used to:

- Process your application
- Consider Admission Appeals

We may also use this data for the following purposes:

- Forward planning as part of school budget, forecasting and reorganisation proposals
- To assist in the development of policy proposals
- For the prevention and/or detection of crime or fraud
- For research and statistical purposes when we will ensure that statistics are developed in such a way that individual children cannot be identified

In order to administer admissions to this school the following information may be collected by us:

- Name and date of birth
- Address where the child ordinarily lives at the time of application, which will be used for distance calculation purposes
- Supplementary information i.e. information on religious affiliation and status
- Parent name and contact details
- Details of baptism and/or Catholic practice
- Information on parish of residence.

Agencies we will share the information with:

- The Department for Education, to comply with statutory data collections
- The LA, to verify the information provided so that the admission scheme/process can be accurately administered
- Admission Appeal panels
- The Schools Adjudicator, in response to any objections raised
- In Year Fair Access Panel, where applicable, to enable them to appropriately place complex admissions
- The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, when investigating maladministration of school admissions and admission appeals.

School Retention Policy:

The information listed above will be retained securely by the school for 8 years, after which it will be destroyed.

For further information please refer to the Privacy Policy on the School website or contact: Chair of the Admissions Committee, via the School Office



SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM - ADMISSION TO SCHOOL

Child's Surname.....

Forenames

Date of Birth.....

Address.....
.....

Post Code

Telephone Number

Names of parents or legal guardians.....
.....

Father's daytime contact number

Mother's daytime contact number

Name of church you attend regularly.....

Denomination of Baptism

Place of Baptism

Date of Baptism

(please enclose copy of baptismal certificate)

Academic Year due to start School

Please return to the School Office.