

ADMISSIONS POLICY

2026-2027

VERSION	DATE	AUTHOR	RATIONALE/SUMMARY OF CHANGES	RATIFIED	NEXT REVIEW DATE
V1	September 2026	Bronwen O'Donoghue	New policy to reflect membership of EMMAUS CAT	November 2026	September 2027

Admission authority	Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust
School	St John's RC Primary School, Chorlton-cum-Hardy
Admission year	September 2026 to August 2027
Published Admission Number (Reception)	60 children

1. Purpose, Catholic character and legal framework

St John's RC Primary School is a Roman Catholic school serving the parish communities of Our Lady and St John the Evangelist, Chorlton-cum-Hardy. **The school welcomes applications from families of all faiths and none.** Its Catholic character is reflected in its lawful published oversubscription criteria when there are more applications than places.

Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust is the admission authority and is responsible for determining and applying the admission arrangements, subject to the School Admissions Code, admissions legislation, its funding agreement and applicable diocesan guidance. The local governing body and school implement only those functions delegated to them by the Trust. Manchester City Council coordinates the normal Reception admissions round for Manchester residents and communicates coordinated offers.

The Trust will have regard to guidance from the Diocese of Salford concerning faith-based admission arrangements, including the evidence used to establish Catholic status. This document must be read with the School Admissions Code 2021 and School Admission Appeals Code 2022 (or any subsequent statutory replacements).

2. Equality and fair access

The admission authority will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty, giving due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. No child will be disadvantaged unlawfully because of disability, special educational needs, race, religion or belief, or another protected characteristic. Applications will not be refused because a parent does not subscribe to the Catholic faith, or because of behaviour, attainment or health conditions, except where relevant legislation permits.

3. Admission number and children with EHCPs

The Published Admission Number (PAN) for Reception entry in September 2026 is 60 children. The PAN applies to the normal year of entry and is not a general statutory cap on other year groups. When places are available, applicants must be admitted, subject to lawful exceptions.

Children whose Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) names St John's must be admitted under the Children and Families Act 2014; they are admitted before places are allocated using oversubscription criteria. Their admission reduces the number of places remaining for other applicants. Challenges to the school named in an EHCP are made through the SEND statutory route, not the ordinary admission appeal procedure.

4. Applications for Reception

Parents resident in Manchester should submit the common application through Manchester City Council by the published closing date. Families residing elsewhere apply through their home local authority. Parents seeking priority under the Catholic criteria should also submit the school's supplementary information form (SIF) with appropriate evidence of Catholic baptism or reception into the Catholic Church, as instructed on the SIF. The SIF does not replace the local authority application and cannot be a general condition of applying to the school.

The information requested by the SIF must be confined to what is needed to apply the published faith-based criteria. If evidence is not supplied, the application will still be considered and ranked using the criteria which can be established from the evidence available. The admission authority will verify information where necessary and give parents a fair opportunity to clarify a material discrepancy.

The local authority's published normal-round deadlines and procedures apply. Late applications are considered under the coordinated scheme. Applications will be ranked against the same oversubscription criteria; the Trust will not operate a first-come-first-served system.

5. Oversubscription criteria

If there are more applications than places after the admission of children whose EHCP names the school, places will be offered in the following descending order. For these criteria, "Catholic child" has the meaning in section 6.

1. Catholic looked-after children and Catholic previously looked-after children, including eligible children adopted from state care outside England.

2. Catholic children with a sibling attending St John's on the date of admission who are resident in the parish of Our Lady and St John the Evangelist, Chorlton-cum-Hardy.

3. Other Catholic children with a sibling attending St John's on the date of admission.

4. Catholic children of eligible school staff, as defined in section 6.

5. Other Catholic children resident within the parish of Our Lady and St John the Evangelist, Chorlton-cum-Hardy.

6. Other Catholic children.

7. Other looked-after and previously looked-after children, including eligible children adopted from state care outside England.

8. All other children.

Where more applicants meet a category than can be admitted, the distance tie-break in section 7 will apply. No additional priority will be inferred from a desire for a Catholic education within category 8.

6. Definitions and supporting evidence

Catholic child

A child baptised in the Catholic Church, or who has been formally received into the Catholic Church. Evidence will normally be a baptismal certificate or written confirmation of reception into the Catholic Church. A parent's faith or support for the Catholic ethos alone does not establish the child's Catholic status for oversubscription purposes. The definition and documentary evidence must be approved in accordance with Diocese of Salford guidance.

Looked-after and previously looked-after children

A looked-after child is a child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions within the meaning of section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of application. A previously looked-after child is a child who ceased to be looked after immediately because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order. This also includes a child who appears to the admission authority to have been in state care outside England and ceased to be in that care as a result of being adopted. Evidence may be requested to establish eligibility and will be handled confidentially.

Sibling

A sibling is a brother or sister living at the same address as the applicant who will attend St John's when the applicant is admitted. This includes full, half, step, adopted and foster siblings living as part of the same family household. Children only attending nursery do not count for the sibling criterion.

Children of staff

The child of a member of staff employed at St John's where the staff member has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time the admission application is made, OR where the staff member was recruited to fill a vacant

post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. Staff priority applies only within category 4 and not to non-Catholic children.

Parish residence

For categories 2 and 5, parish residence means the child's permanent home address is within the defined parish boundary of Our Lady and St John the Evangelist, Chorlton-cum-Hardy. The admission authority will use the diocesan-approved parish boundary in force for these determined arrangements.
https://boundaries.stjosephsmanchester.co.uk/html/parish?id=A007Home address

The address used is the child's permanent home address at the relevant date under the coordinated admissions scheme, and not a temporary or convenience address. Where a child lives at more than one address, the admission authority will apply a published, objective approach consistent with the Manchester coordinated scheme and will request evidence where necessary. Any address dispute must be resolved fairly on the evidence rather than by an unpublished discretionary rule.

7. Distance tie-break and equal distance

Within each oversubscription category, priority is given to the child living closest to St John's. Distance is measured in a straight line from the centre point of the child's permanent address to the centre point of the school, using Manchester City Council's computerised measuring system and Ordnance Survey data, as described in the original determined policy. The same method will be applied consistently to all applicants.

Where two or more children within the same priority category have exactly equal measured distance and there are insufficient places for all, the final place will be allocated by independently supervised random allocation, with a documented and auditable procedure.

8. Multiple births and infant class size

Where one child from a multiple birth is offered the last available place, the admission authority will consider the other child or children in accordance with the statutory exceptions to infant class size limits and the School Admissions Code. In particular, a child admitted as the sibling of a multiple birth where the other child was the last pupil offered a place may be an excepted pupil for infant class size purposes. The school will not operate a blanket rule that an infant class can never exceed 30 in such circumstances. Statutory infant class size legislation remains applicable.

9. Waiting lists

Where Reception is oversubscribed, the admission authority will maintain a waiting list until at least 31 December of the admission year, in accordance with the School Admissions Code and the Manchester coordinated scheme. Parents may request continued inclusion thereafter if a waiting list is operated. Children will be ranked only by the published oversubscription criteria; their position may move up or down as applications or circumstances change. Date of application and the existence of an admission appeal do not confer priority. Looked-after children, previously looked-after children and children admitted under a Fair Access Protocol take precedence over the waiting list as required by the Code.

10. In-year admissions and Fair Access

An in-year application is an application outside the normal point of entry or for a year group other than Reception at the normal time. Applications should be made through the published in-year route indicated by Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust and Manchester City Council. Manchester City Council deal with these applications. Applications will be decided under the Trust's lawful arrangements and within the statutory timescales; parents will normally be informed in writing of the outcome within 10 school days, and must be notified within 15 school days. A refusal letter will explain the reason, the right to appeal and how to do so.

The Trust will cooperate with Manchester's Fair Access Protocol so that vulnerable and hard-to-place children can be allocated a school place quickly, including where the school is full, in accordance with law and the statutory protocol. Fair Access does not replace the normal process for most applicants.

11. Admission outside the normal age group

Parents may request admission outside their child's normal age group, including where a child is summer-born or has experienced significant developmental, medical or educational circumstances. The admission authority will consider each request on its individual merits and in the child's best interests, taking into account the parents' views, information about the child's development and educational history, any professional evidence supplied and the views of the headteacher. The Trust will notify parents of the decision and reasons in writing. A decision on age group is separate from the decision whether a place can be offered. Parents have the statutory right to appeal against refusal of a place, but no independent admission appeal against the age-group decision itself.

12. Starting school, deferred entry and part-time attendance

A child normally becomes entitled to a full-time Reception place in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents may also request part-time attendance until compulsory school age but must do so through the Flexi-schooling policy. https://spaces.schoolspider.co.uk/uploads/5174/page/83032687_page_file.pdf

Parents of summer-born children wishing to delay Reception entry by a full year must request admission outside the normal age group and follow the published process; agreement to a Reception place the following year is not automatic.

13. Nursery

Admission to any nursery provision is governed by separate arrangements. Attendance at the nursery does not guarantee a Reception place and does not create a sibling priority. The statutory school admission appeals process does not ordinarily apply to nursery admissions.

14. Independent admission appeals

Right of appeal and administration

Where admission is refused, parents have the right to appeal to an independent admission appeal panel, except where the law provides otherwise (including certain applications for children permanently excluded twice). Refusal notices must explain the reasons and give information about how and by when to appeal. The Trust is responsible for securing independent arrangements complying with the School Admission Appeals Code 2022.

Parents must have at least 20 school days from the date of written notification of refusal in which to lodge an appeal. Appeals in the normal Reception round that are lodged by the published deadline must be heard within 40 school days of that deadline. Appeals lodged late should be heard within 40 school days of the deadline where possible, or within 30 school days of being lodged. In-year appeals must be heard within 30 school days of lodging. The annual appeals timetable must be published by 28th February each year.

An independent panel of at least three members, properly constituted under the Appeals Code, will determine the appeal. Parents will receive at least 10 school days' notice of the hearing unless they agree to shorter notice, and will have the opportunity to present a case and supporting evidence, ask questions and be accompanied or represented. The panel's written decision and reasons will normally be sent within five school days after the hearing, wherever possible. Decisions are binding on the admission authority and parents.

Ordinary admission appeals: two-stage test

At stage one, the panel considers the lawfulness and application of the admission arrangements and whether admitting additional children would prejudice efficient education or the efficient use of resources. Where an appeal is not upheld

at that stage, at stage two the panel balances the prejudice to the school against the individual parent's reasons for wanting a place and may uphold the appeal if the parent's case outweighs the prejudice.

Infant class size appeals

For an appeal against a refusal because admission would breach the infant class size limit and no reasonable measures can avoid the breach without prejudice, the panel may uphold the appeal only if: (a) admission would not breach the infant class size limit; or (b) the admission arrangements were unlawful or incorrectly applied and the child would otherwise have been offered a place; or (c) the decision to refuse was one that no reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances. Such appeals cannot be allowed simply because a parent has compelling reasons for preferring the school.

Further appeals and complaints

A second appeal for the same school in the same academic year is not normally available unless the admission authority accepts a further application because of a significant and material change in circumstances. An unsuccessful appeal does not remove a child from any applicable waiting list. Complaints that an academy admission appeal was not carried out properly can be made to the Department for Education; a complaint is not a fresh consideration of the merits of admission.

15. Publication, determination and review

Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust must determine arrangements annually by the statutory deadline and publish the determined arrangements, including the PAN, admission criteria, SIF (if used), in-year application arrangements and appeals information, in accordance with the relevant Codes. It must consult where required and consider diocesan guidance on faith-based elements. Once determined for an admission year, material changes must not be implemented informally; an approved variation or other lawful mechanism may be required. This revised draft does not itself amend the determined 2026–2027 arrangements until the proper process has been completed.

16. Contacts and reference documents

School: St John's RC Primary School, Chorlton-cum-Hardy | 0161 881 1040 | admin@stjohnsrc.net | www.stjohnsrc.net

Manchester City Council school admissions: www.manchester.gov.uk/schools-education-and-childcare/school-admissions

Department for Education: School Admissions Code 2021; School Admission Appeals Code 2022; admission appeals guidance.

Diocese of Salford: School Admissions Guidance (2024).