St Thomas the Apostle School & Sixth Form College

# ADMISSIONS POLICY 2026/27

St Thomas the Apostle School and Sixth Form College is a Voluntary Aided Secondary School in the Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark. The school is conducted by its governing body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and instrument of government.

*Catholic families will be admitted above all others but, the College does have a considerable number of practising Christians on its roll.* We pride ourselves on the inclusive nature of our school and celebrate diversity. We welcome boys of all faiths and religions and strive to provide a first-rate education to all, irrespective of race, creed, colour, culture or special need. All applicants must declare their positive support for the College aims and ethos. This does not affect the right of parents who are not of the faith of this school to apply for and be considered for a place here.

The governing body has responsibility for admissions to the College and intends to admit 152 pupils in Year 7.

If there are more applications than places available, we will always give priority to applicants in accordance with the over-subscription criteria listed below.

## Oversubscription Criteria

*At any time 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. *Looked after Catholic children or looked after children in the care of Catholic families and previously looked after Catholic children who ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangement/residence or special guardianship order).*
2. *Baptised Catholic children in possession of a Certificate of Catholic Practice and a baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic church.*
3. *Applicants who are baptised members of the Catholic Church.*
4. *Other looked after children and other previously looked after children.*
5. *Applicants who have a sibling currently attending the school.*
6. *Applicants from other denominations of the Christian faith.*
7. *Any other applicants.*

*If the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the categories listed above leads to over-subscription, we will consider the frequency of church attendance by the applicant, together with one or both parents, the number of years the family has been attending church regularly and the age of the applicant at baptism and First Holy Communion.*

## Tie Break

If the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the categories listed above would still lead to over-subscription, we will offer places up to the admission number to those living nearest the College. The distance will be measured in a straight line from the main School entrance. Where the last remaining place is to be allocated and two or more children are deemed to live at the same distance from the school the place will be decided by the drawing of lots. Evidence of residence may be required.
In the event of parents who share parental responsibility, evidence of the child's permanent addresses will be required.

## Waiting Lists

Parents of children who have not been offered a place at the school may ask for their child's name to be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list, which will be maintained for a minimum of one term, will be operated using the same admissions criteria listed above. Placing a child's name on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place. It is possible that when a child is directed under the local authority's fair access protocol they will take precedence over those children already on the list.

## Appeals

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with section 94 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing and must set out the reasons on which the appeal is made. Appeals should be made to the Admissions Appeal Clerk at the school address. Parents/Carers have the right to make oral representations to the Appeal Panel.

## Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan

The admission of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or with an EHC Plan are dealt with by a completely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of statements and EHC plans by the pupil's home local authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the SEND code of practice. Pupils with a statement or EHC plan naming the school will be admitted without reference to the above oversubscription criteria.

## Application Procedures and Timetable

A Common Application Form (CAF) from the parents' home LA must be completed and returned to that

LA by **Friday 31 October 2025.**

**All Southwark residents must apply online at www.southwark.gov.uk/schooladmissions.**

## Supplementary Information Forms (SIFs)

*Only to be completed if you wish your application to be considered on the basis of your Christian faith.*
The College will provide two Forms, A and B.

Form A (Information About Religious Practice) should be filled in by the parents/carers and returned to the school by the closing date together with copies of the Baptism certificate as evidence of religious membership of the Catholic Church and Communion certificate (if available).

**Form A must be brought or sent to the Admissions Officer at the school by**
**Friday 31 October 2025.**

Form B (Priest's Reference) must be completed by, in the case of Catholic children, a Catholic priest and in the case of other children from other Christian denominations, a religious leader. This form should be sent direct to the school by the priest or religious leader who signed it.

**Form B must be sent to the Admissions Officer at the school by the Priest/religious leader no later than Friday 31 October 2025.**

Parents will be advised of the outcome of their applications by their home LA on Monday 2 March 2026. Unsuccessful applicants will be advised of their right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

Parents / Guardians must accept an offer of a place within 14 days of being notified by the College or the place will be offered to another child.