



St Joseph's College
London Road
Trent Vale
Stoke-on-Trent
ST4 5NT

www.stjosephstrentvale.com

Admission Arrangements for 2026/27

St Joseph's College is a co-educational selective Catholic School for students between the ages of 11 and 18. The college is an academy school, part of the Edmund Rice family of schools, founded by the Christian Brothers and following the charism of Blessed Edmund Rice.

The admissions authority for the school is the Board of Directors of the Edmund Rice Academy Trust who have responsibility for the Admissions to St Joseph's College. The Board of Directors has delegated responsibility for the administration of the admissions process to the Admissions Committee.

The admissions process for St Joseph's College is part of the Stoke-on-Trent Local Authority co-ordinated admissions scheme.

To apply for a place at St Joseph's College in the normal admissions round (excluding admission to Year 12), an application must be made using the school admission application process of the local authority in which you live naming St Joseph's College on the application form. Applications need to be made by 31st October 2025. **An application must be made directly to the school via their online system and completed by the same date (see note 3 and 5 below). This includes the certificate of Catholic Practice and Baptism form, to be received a maximum of 14 calendar days after the 31st October. Anything received after this date will not be considered.**

All applications which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time, after the closing date.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 1st March 2026, or the next working day, by the local authority on behalf of the school.

Please note that throughout this policy, the term parent means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for a child and any person who has care of a child.

The Admission Policy of the Governing Board of St Joseph's College is as follows:

The ethos of this academy is Catholic. The academy was founded by the Christian Brothers to provide education for children of Catholic families. The academy is conducted by its Governing Board as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with the Christian Brothers as Trustees and seeks at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ. We ask all parents applying for a place here to respect this ethos and its importance to the academy community. This does not affect the right of parents who are not of the faith of this academy to apply for and be considered for a place here.

The Board of Directors has set its admission number at 150 pupils to be admitted to Year 7 in the school year which begins in September 2026 (See Note 2 below)

St Joseph's College has no designated catchment area and the Governing Board considers applications regardless of which local authority area a pupil lives in.

For a pupil to be considered for admission in September 2026, parents must comply with both of the following:

- a) Apply to the school by **3rd September 2025** for their child to take the entrance test. Registration for your child to sit the entrance test will open on line from 1st July 2025.

And in addition to completing the online registration, parent(s) and guardian(s) must

- b) Complete and return their local authority secondary school application form by 31st October 2025 naming St Joseph's College as one of their preferred schools. The appropriate form will be available from pupils' current primary schools or the home local authority and should be returned directly to them as directed on that form. Local authority forms are not available from St Joseph's College and should not be returned directly to the school

Applications will be deemed as incomplete if both of the above application processes are not submitted as required. Incomplete applications will not be considered for admission by the Governing Board.

Stage One – The Entrance Test

The entrance test will take place on 16th, 17th and 18th September 2025. Parents will be informed of the arrangements for the test ahead of these dates and be given samples of questions. Parents will be advised by 3rd October 2025 whether or not their child has reached the required mark of 105 in order for parents to know the outcome before the deadline to submit their local authority secondary school application form of 31st October 2025. Parents will also be advised of how many pupils have reached the required mark of 105 in the test so that an assessment can be made of the likelihood of a child being allocated a place at the college using the oversubscription criteria listed in Stage Two of this policy.

To reach the required standard, pupils must achieve an age adjusted score of 105, based on the average of the tests taken. To help clarify the standard required to pass the entrance test, 95% of pupils who pass the entrance test will be expected to achieve at least an average level 4 in their Key Stage Two SATs. All entrance test papers will be marked anonymously and markers will not be able to identify any individual child.

Pupils who do not achieve the required score of 105, but achieve a score of 104 or 103 will have their paper re-marked.

Parents who consider that their child has a disability and/or a Special Educational Need which could disadvantage them during the entrance test process should provide further written information and evidence of the disability or Special Educational Need to the Governing Board at the time of applying for their child to take the test. Evidence would be required from qualified educational or medical practitioners confirming the nature of the child's disability or Special Educational Need. Consideration will then be given to making any reasonable adjustments or other practical arrangements for them taking the test to ensure that no pupil is placed at a disadvantage. For further information please see access arrangements for the test at <https://www.stjosephstrentvale.com/admissions/>

If the number of pupils who achieve the required score is less than 150, then places at St Joseph's College will be offered to every one of those pupils.

The parents of pupils who have not achieved the required score of 105 will be notified of this in writing and their applications will not proceed to Stage Two of the admissions process.

Stage Two – Oversubscription Criteria for Years 7 to 11

If the number of pupils who have achieved 105 or more in the entrance test exceeds the admission number of 150, their parents will be sent a letter advising them of the outcome and a link to complete the supplementary information via our online system. The information must be completed, by 31st October 2025. The Governing Board will then give priority to applications in accordance with the criteria listed below. If a child has achieved a score of 105 or more in the entrance test **and the parents do not complete the online application with supplementary information, then the child will be considered to be a non-Christian.** No further reference to academic performance or scores achieved in the entrance test will be made with relation to offering places in line with the oversubscription criteria.

1. Baptised Catholic children (see Note 3 below) who are looked after or previously looked after (See Note 1 below)
2. Baptised Catholic children (see Note 3 below) who have will have a brother or sister attending St Joseph's College in September 2026 (see Note 6 below)
3. Baptised Catholic children (see Note 3 below) of a member of staff of the school at the time of application (see Note 8)
4. Other Baptised Catholic children (**see Note 3 below**) limited to 125 to include categories 1, 2 and 3 above. **In all categories, for a child to be considered as a Catholic, evidence of Catholic Baptism or Reception into the Church will be required.**
5. Non-Catholic children who are looked after or previously looked after (See Note 1 below)
6. Christian children (see Note 5 below) who will have a brother or sister attending St Joseph's College in September 2026 (See Note 6 below)
7. Christian children (see Note 5 below) of a member of staff of the academy at the time of application (see Note 8)
8. Other Christian children (See Note 5 below) limited to 18 which includes other Christians at categories 5, 6 and 7 above **and whose supplementary information is accompanied by proof of membership to other Christian denominations. This may be in the form of a letter from the Cleric in charge or other appropriate evidence. Failure to provide appropriate proof may affect the oversubscription criterion that the child's name is placed in.**
9. Non-Christian children who will have a brother or sister attending St Joseph's College in September 2026 (See Note 6 below)
10. Non-Christian children of a member of staff of the academy at the time of application (see Note 8)
11. Other non-Christian children or of no faith which includes categories 5, 9 and 10 above

OVER-SUBSCRIPTION

If there is over-subscription within categories 1 – 4, the Governing Board will give priority to children whose supplementary information is accompanied by a Certificate of Practice (see note 4 below). Diocesan Education Service's website at <http://www.bdes.org.uk/admissions.html>

'Certificate of Catholic Practice' means a certificate issued by the family's parish priest (or the priest in charge of the church where the family attends Mass) in the form laid down by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. It will be issued if the priest is satisfied that at least one Catholic parent or carer (along with the child, if he or she is over seven years old) have (except when it was impossible to do so) attended Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation for at least five years (or, in the case of the child, since the age of seven, if shorter). It will also be issued when the practice has been continuous since being received into the Church if that occurred less than five years ago. It is expected that most Certificates will be issued on the basis of attendance. A Certificate may also be issued by the priest when attendance is interrupted by exceptional circumstances which excuse from the obligation to attend on that occasion or occasions. Further details of these circumstances can be found in the guidance issued to priests <http://www.bdes.org.uk/admissions.html>"

If there is oversubscription in categories 5– 8 the Governing Board will give priority to children whose supplementary information is accompanied by proof of membership to other Christian denominations. This may be in the form of a letter from the Cleric in charge or a supporting statement from their religious minister evidencing their practice of faith. (See note 5 below).

If there is oversubscription in categories 9-11 the Governing Board will give priority to those who live closest to the College (see note 7)

Where children tie for the final places to be offered within a category, the Governing Board will give priority to children living closest to the college, determined by shortest distance. Distances are calculated on the basis of a straight-line measurement between the front door of the applicant's home address and the front gate of the academy. The local authority uses a computerised system, which measures all distances in miles. Ordnance Survey supplies the co-ordinates that are used to plot an applicant's home address within this system (See Note 7).

In a very small number of cases it may not be able to decide between the applicants of those pupils who are qualifiers for a place, when applying the published admission criteria.

For example, this may occur when children in the same year group live at the same address, or if the distance between the home and college is exactly the same, for example, blocks of flats. If there is no other way of separating the application according to the admissions criteria and to admit both or all of the children would cause the legal limit to be exceeded, the local authority will use a computerised system to randomly select the child to be offered the final place. As an exception, the Governing Board will give careful consideration to offering places above the Admission Number to applications from children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted even when there are no other vacant places

Note 1

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 the local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (eg children with foster parents) at the time of making the 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 and includes those children who appear (to the Board of directors) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

For the purposes of this policy, a looked after child living with a family where at least one of the carers is Catholic will be considered as Catholic. The carer must forward a copy of their own Catholic Baptismal or Reception certificate directly to the school in order for this priority to be given to the child as failure to do so will result in the looked after child being ranked as a non-Catholic

Note 2

Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan that names the academy **MUST** be admitted. This will reduce the number of places available to other applicants.

Note 3

In all categories, for a child to be considered as a Catholic, evidence of Catholic Baptism or Reception into the Church will be required. For a definition of Baptised Catholic see the Appendix. Those who face difficulties in producing written evidence of Baptism or Reception into the Church should contact their Parish Priest.

Parents making an application for a Catholic child should also complete the supplementary information via the online application. If you do not provide the information required by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, this is likely to affect the criteria that your child is placed into, which is likely to affect your child's chance of being offered a place at St Joseph's College

For the purposes of this policy, a looked after child living with a family where at least one of the carers is Catholic will be considered as Catholic. The carer must forward a copy of their own Catholic Baptismal or Reception certificate directly to the school in order for this priority

to be given to the child as failure to do so will result in the looked after child being ranked as a non-Catholic.

Note 4

The evidence for assessing practice of faith will be gathered from the supplementary information supported by a Certificate of Practice completed by the priest.

A child and a parent who are or who have gone through the process of Rite of Christian Initiation for Children (RCIC) or Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA), and have been accepted into the Catholic Church on or before the date of 31st October 2025 will be treated as Catholic. Supportive documentary evidence needs to be received from the Parish Priest to confirm this.

Note 5

“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 creedal 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.

Parents making an application for a Christian or a non-Christian child should also complete the online supplementary information. Proof of membership to other Christian denominations will be requested. This may be in the form of a letter from the Cleric in charge or other appropriate evidence. Failure to provide appropriate proof may affect the oversubscription criterion that the child’s name is placed in.

Note 6

For an applicant to be given priority as a brother or sister, the brother or sister already attending St Joseph’s College needs to be in Years 7 to 11 in September 2026 or, if in Years 12 or 13, have attended the school since Year 10 and still attending St Joseph’s College in September 2026.

For all applicants the definition of a brother or sister is:

- A brother or sister sharing the same parents
- A half-brother or half-sister, where two children share one common parent
- A step-brother or step-sister, where two children are related by a parents’ marriage or civil partnership, or where they are unrelated but their parents are living as partners.
- Adopted or fostered children

Please note that in all circumstances the siblings must share a common address

Note 7

A child’s home address refers to the address where the child usually lives with a parent or carer and will be the address provided on the Local Authority’s Common Application Form. Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives for part of the week with each parent, the home address will be the address provided on the Local Authority’s Common Application Form, provided that the child resides at that address for any part of the school week. Parents may be requested to supply documentary evidence to satisfy the Governing Body that the child lives at the address put forward by the parents.

Note 8

This criteria will be applied in the case of a member of staff who has either:

- a) Been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or

- b) Been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

APPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN TO BE ADMITTED INTO A CLASS OUTSIDE OF THEIR NORMAL AGE GROUP

Parents have the right to request, but not insist, that their child be considered for admission to a class outside of their normal age group. This could be the case, for example, if a child is gifted and talented, has experienced problems such as ill health, or is already being educated in a class outside of their normal age group at their current Primary School. Parents who wish for their child to be considered for admission to a class outside of their normal age group must make an application for the normal age group in the first instance. Parents must then submit a formal request to the Board of Directors for the child to be considered for a different age group class instead. This request should be in the form of a written letter of application outlining the reasons why they wish their child to be considered to be admitted into a class outside of their normal age group and enclosing any supportive evidence and documentation that they wish to be taken into account as part of that request.

The Board of Directors will consider requests submitted for a child to be admitted into a class outside of their normal age group and advise parents of the outcome of that request before national offer day, having taken into account the information provided by the parents, the child's best interests and the views of the Headteacher.

If the request is refused, the original application for the normal age group class will progress through the Local Authority co-ordinated admissions scheme, be considered by the Board of Directors and the parents advised of the outcome.

If the request is agreed and the year group for which the parents have requested a place is a current year group in the school, then the application will be considered by the Board of Directors and the parents advised of the outcome.

If the request is agreed and the year group for which the parents have requested a place is for a future year group, ie Year 7 September 2027 then the original application is withdrawn and the parents must submit a fresh application for Year 7 2027 when applications open in the autumn term of 2026. Please note that parents only have the right to re-apply for a place. Where the Board of Directors agrees to consider an application for Year 7 the following year, that application is considered alongside all other applications received and parents will be advised of the outcome of that application on national offer day. No place is reserved or held for the child in advance.

If parents are considering submitting an application for their child to be admitted into a class outside of their normal age group, it is strongly recommended that they also read the DFE guidance which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summer-born-children-school-admission>

APPEALS

Parents who wish to appeal against the decision of the Governing Board to refuse their child a place in the academy may apply in writing to the Governing Board at the Academy address. Appeals will be heard by an independent panel.

REPEAT APPLICATIONS

Any parents can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the admissions round. Parents do not have the right to a second appeal in respect of the same academy for the same academic year unless, in exceptional circumstances, the admission authority has accepted a second application from the appellant because of a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parents, child or academy but still refused admission.

LATE APPLICATIONS

Applications to sit the entrance test received between 19th September 2025 and 3rd October 2025 will be accepted, subject to arrangements being made for the pupil to sit the test on an alternative date and achieving the required mark of 105 or more.

Late applications will be dealt with in accordance with the Local Authority's co-ordinated admissions scheme. This states that late applications will be considered alongside those received by the closing date only in the event of one of the following:

1. The family moved into the area after the deadline for the receipt of applications;
2. Exceptional circumstances, stated in writing with evidence, prevented the form from arriving on time;
3. An error on the part of the school
4. The application is received before Own Admission Authority schools have ranked their application.

Such considerations will be the exception rather than the rule. Otherwise late applications will be considered at the end of the allocation process.

You are encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.

APPLICATIONS OTHER THAN THE NORMAL INTAKE TO Y7 (In-year applications)

An application can be made for a place for a child at any time outside the normal admission round and the child will be admitted where there are places available and they have successfully reached the required mark of 105 on the in-year entrance test. Further information regarding instructions on how to apply for a place in the school at any other time other than the normal intake is available on the school's website at <https://www.stjosephstrentvale.com/information/admissions/>

To apply for a place in the school in-year, parents will need to complete the school's own application form which is available on our website at <https://www.stjosephstrentvale.com/admissions> and return it directly to the school ensuring that any required supplementary information is attached.

If there are no places available, the child will be added to the waiting list provided they have sat and passed the entrance test.

Parents will be advised of the outcome of their application in writing and, where the Governing Board's decision is to refuse their child a place, have the right to appeal to an independent appeal panel.

There is no charge or cost related to the admission of a child to this school.

WAITING LISTS

Waiting lists for admission will remain open until the end of December 2026 and will then be transferred to an in year waiting list which will be held until the end of the academic year. The waiting list will be kept by the Governing Board in admission criteria order. This means that a child's position on the waiting list could go up or down. Inclusion of a child's name on the waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

Children who are the subject of a direction by a local authority to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol take precedence over those on a waiting list.

IN YEAR FAIR ACCESS POLICY

Refer to the agreed policy with the LA for admission of previously excluded or hard to place children. There is no charge or cost related to the admission of a child to this College.

APPENDIX

DEFINITION OF A “BAPTISED CATHOLIC”

A “Baptised Catholic” is one who:

- Has been baptised into full communion (Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church, 837*) with the Catholic Church by the Rites of Baptism of one of the various ritual Churches in communion with the See of Rome (i.e. Latin Rite, Byzantine Rite, Coptic, Syriac, etc, Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1203*). Written evidence* of this baptism can be obtained by recourse to the Baptismal Registers of the church in which the baptism took place (Cf. *Code of Canon Law, 877 & 878*).

Or

- Has been validly baptised in a separated ecclesial community and subsequently received into full communion with the Catholic Church by the *Rite of Reception of Baptised Christians into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church*. Written evidence of their baptism and reception into full communion with the Catholic Church can be obtained by recourse to the Register of Receptions, or in some cases, a sub-section of the Baptismal Registers of the church in which the *Rite of Reception* took place (Cf. *Rite of Christian Initiation, 399*).

WRITTEN EVIDENCE OF BAPTISM

The Governing Board will require written evidence in the form of a Certificate of Baptism or Certificate of Reception before applications for school places can be considered for categories of “Baptised Catholics”. A Certificate of Baptism or Reception is to include: the full name, date of birth, date of Baptism or Reception, and parent(s) name(s). The certificate must also show that it is copied from the records kept by the place of Baptism or Reception.

Those who would have difficulty obtaining written evidence of Catholic Baptism/Reception for a good reason, may still be considered as Baptised Catholics but only after they have been referred to their parish priest who, after consulting the Vicar General, will decide how the question of Baptism/Reception is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church.

Those who would be considered to have good reason for not obtaining written evidence would include those who cannot contact the place of Baptism/Reception due to persecution or fear, the destruction of the church and the original records, or where Baptism/Reception was administered validly but not in the Parish church where records are kept.

Governors and Boards of Directors may request extra supporting evidence when the written documents that are produced do not clarify the fact that a person was baptised or received into the Catholic Church, (i.e. where the name and address of the Church is not on the certificate or where the name of the Church does not state whether it is a Catholic Church or not.)