



St Joseph's College
London Road
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Stoke-on-Trent
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www.stjosephstrentvale.com

Admission Arrangements for 2027/28

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 Laetare Catholic Multi-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 2026. **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 2027, 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 2027 (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 2027, parents must comply with both of the following:

- a) Apply to the school by **2nd September 2026** for their child to take the entrance test. Registration for your child to sit the entrance test will open on line from June 29 2026.

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 2026 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 15th, 16th and 17th September 2026. 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 13th October 2026 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 2026. 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 have also achieved at least an average level in their Key Stage Two SATs. Key Stage Two results are not used in the admissions process. 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 fewer than the Published Admission Number of 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 (2027 Entry)

Entrance Test and Supplementary Information

- If more than 150 pupils achieve a score of **105 or more** on the entrance test, parents will be sent a letter with a link to complete the **online supplementary information**.
- The supplementary information must be completed by **31 October 2026**.
- Children who score 105 or more but **do not complete the supplementary information** will be considered **non-Christian** for admissions purposes.

- **No further reference to entrance test scores** will be used in offering places once oversubscription criteria are applied.

Admissions Categories (in order of priority)

1. **Baptised Catholic children** (evidence required) who are **looked after or previously looked after** (Note 1 & Note 3).
2. **Baptised Catholic children** (evidence required) with a **sibling attending St Joseph's College** in September 2027 (Note 3 & Note 6).
3. **Baptised Catholic children** (evidence required) whose parent is a **school staff member** at the time of application (Note 3 & Note 8).
4. **Other baptised Catholic children** (Note 3).
 - **Total for categories 1–4 cannot exceed 125.**
5. **Non-Catholic children** who are **looked after or previously looked after** (Note 1).
6. **Christian children** (proof of denomination required) with a **sibling attending St Joseph's College** in September 2027 (Note 5 & Note 6).
7. **Christian children** (proof required) whose parent is a **staff member** at the academy at the time of application (Note 5 & Note 8).
8. **Other Christian children** (Note 5)
 - Normally limited to **18 places**, including categories 6–7.
 - **If fewer than 125 Catholic places are filled**, the remaining Catholic places are added to the Christian allocation.
9. **Non-Christian children** with a **sibling attending St Joseph's College** in September 2027 (Note 6).
10. **Non-Christian children** whose parent is a **staff member** at the academy at the time of application (Note 8).
11. **Other non-Christian children or those of no faith**, including categories 5, 9, and 10.

Pupil Premium Documentary evidence is required for a child to be recognised as eligible for Pupil Premium. Confirmation will be obtained from the child's primary school, where the child is recorded as being in receipt of Pupil Premium at the time of the entrance test. Where confirmation is delayed, the school will make reasonable checks before allocation.

Catholic Admissions and Pupil Premium – Prioritisation

1. To be considered under the **Catholic admission categories**, a child **must provide a Baptism certificate**.
2. A **Certificate of Catholic Practice (CCP)** is required to be classified as a **practising Catholic**.

How applications are prioritised:

- **Practising Catholic:** Child provides both CCP and Baptism certificate. If also Pupil Premium, the child is ranked at the top of this category.
- **Baptised Catholic but not practising:** Child provides **Baptism certificate only** (no CCP). The child is still considered Catholic but is ranked **after practising Catholics** in the Catholic category. Pupil Premium children are prioritised **above non-Pupil Premium children within this group**.

- **Non-Catholic:** No Catholic documentation provided. Pupil Premium children are prioritised above non-Pupil Premium children within the non-Catholic category.

Key point: Pupil Premium boosts a child's ranking **within their Catholic or non-Catholic category**, but cannot move a child above practising Catholics unless they themselves are a practising Catholic.

- **In the event of oversubscription within categories 8-11** priority will be given to children who are **in receipt of Pupil Premium** before the distance tie-breaker is applied,

Tie-breaker:

If two or more children tie for the final place within a category, priority is given to the child living closest to the College (straight-line distance). 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).

- If distance cannot separate applicants (e.g., same address or flats), a computerised random allocation will be used.
- **Exception:** Twins or siblings from a multiple birth may be offered places together even if this exceeds the admission number.

Note 1 – Looked After Children

- Children in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation under Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.
- Includes previously looked after children who were adopted or subject to a child arrangements/special guardianship order.
- Looked after Catholic children living with a Catholic carer will be considered Catholic if the carer provides proof of Baptism or Reception.

Note 2 – SEN

- Children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan that names the academy **MUST** be admitted if need can be met. This will reduce the number of places available to other applicants.

Note 3 – Catholic Status

- 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 2026** will be treated as Catholic. Supportive documentary evidence needs to be received from the Parish Priest to confirm this.
- **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 – Certificate of Catholic Practice

- Issued by the parish priest to confirm regular practice of the Catholic faith (attendance at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, with allowance for exceptional circumstances).

Note 5 – Christian Status

- Children belonging to other Christian denominations or ecclesial communities (including all Churches Together in England, CYTÛN, or local Churches Together groups).
- Evidence required (Baptism Certificate or letter from cleric or religious leader).

Note 6 – Sibling Definition

- Siblings must already attend St Joseph's College (Years 7–11 in Sept 2027, or Years 12–13 if attended since Year 10 in September 2027)
- Includes: full siblings, half-siblings, step-siblings, adopted or fostered children.

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 – Home Address

- The address where the child usually lives with a parent or carer.
- For shared custody, the address provided on the Local Authority's Common Application Form is used. Evidence may be requested.
- 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 – Staff Children

- Applies to children whose parent has either:
 - a) Worked at the school for 2+ years at the time of application, or
 - b) Been recruited to fill a vacancy with a demonstrable skill shortage.

Note on Catholic/Christian Allocation (Example)

- Max **125 Catholic places** (categories 1–4).
- If fewer than 125 Catholic applications are received, the remaining places are added to the **Christian allocation** (categories 6–8).
- Example:
 - 125 Catholic applications → Christians receive 18 places.
 - 110 Catholic applications → 15 unfilled Catholic places are added, giving Christians up to 33 places (18 + 15).

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 2028 then the original application is withdrawn and the parents must submit a fresh application for Year 7 2028 when applications open in the autumn term of 2027. 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 2026 and 3rd October 2026 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 2027 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.)