

2020-21



 St Mark's
WEST ESSEX CATHOLIC SCHOOL
An Academy Trust School



Admissions Criteria

St Mark's, as an Academy Trust School, is controlled by the Governors who constitute its admissions authority. As trustees of the Diocese of Brentwood, the Governors exercise their responsibility and right to admit pupils to the school. The number intended to admit will be 172.

As soon as an 'application for admission' has been made by the parents/carers/foster-carers of a child in Year 6 **to the Local Education Authority (Essex County Council) on the Common Application Form, a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) should be completed and returned to the Admissions Officer at the school by 31 October 2019.** (SIFs can be obtained from St Mark's Reception Office, by phoning the school, writing/e-mailing: admin@st-marks.essex.sch.uk or downloaded from the school's website: www.st-marks.essex.sch.uk)

Applications are welcomed from parents of children who are baptised Catholics, practising Catholics, committed Christians of other traditions, committed followers of other faiths, or those who seek a faith-based school environment for their children.

Where applications for admission exceed the number of places available, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out below, to decide which children to admit; this is in accordance with statutory School Admissions Code:

- 1) *Looked After Children or previously Looked After Children***
- 2) *Catholic children attending a Catholic primary school or non-Catholic primary school in the catchment area, with those living closest to the school, being accorded the highest priority**
- 3) *Catholic children from elsewhere who cannot reasonably attend another Catholic school nearer their home, with priority given to those who have the furthest to travel to the nearest alternative Catholic school*
- 4) *other children attending a Catholic primary school in the catchment area, with those living closest to the school, being accorded the highest priority**

- 5) *children of committed Christians of other traditions or committed adherents of other faiths, whose application is supported by a minister or religious leader, with those living closest to the school being accorded the highest priority**
- 6) *children whose parents wish them to continue their education in a Catholic secondary school environment, with those living closest to the school, being accorded the highest priority**
(*see under '**Distance**')

Please note:

Those who will have a brother or sister in the school at the time of admission will have preference in the categories in which they fall (See School Admissions Code). For clarification of the definition of 'siblings' this will include adopted and step-children.

Looked After Children**

This category is defined as a 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after, became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

Distance from school is determined by the LA using a Geographical Information System which measures the distance from the main entrance of the school to the main entrance of the home address. 'Catchment area' includes the six Catholic Parishes of Harlow and Epping.

Waiting lists will be held throughout the Autumn Term in the case of over-subscription.

Any unsuccessful applicants will be informed of their right to appeal against the decision.

Admissions outside the normal time of entry

Any applications for existing year groups (years 7-11) should be made direct to the school in the first instance. A place will normally be offered if there is room in the relevant year group.

Admissions to Sixth Form (years 12 and 13)

See website for details.

What Happens Next?

On receipt of the **Supplementary information Form (SIF)** the school Governors will place the child into the correct category for admissions, as identified in the schools' Admissions Criteria, and inform the local authority via Planning and Admissions at Essex Education services of their decision. The local authority will send out offers for places in March of the year of admission.

On being offered a place at St Mark's, a programme of events will begin, including the child and parents being invited to an informal meeting during which governors of the school outline the support it promises to provide for the child and parents and what is expected of them in return. To formalise this agreement a Contract of Mutual Support is signed, a copy of which is retained by both parties.

During the summer term, prior to the child's Taster Day in July, the Head of Year 7 will visit the child in the primary school to talk to him/her about the transfer and to talk to the Year 6 teacher about the child's strengths and needs. There will also be additional informal opportunities for families to get to know the school, and the staff, such as invitations to afternoon tea and tours of the school.

Parents of children being admitted into Year 7 are invited, with their child, to the school during the July prior to September entry when they will be able to meet their child's Form Tutor, clarify procedures and discuss any individual concerns they may have. Children, nominated by the primary school, who may find the change of school a challenge, attend an additional visit organised by our Learning Support Team.

This planned programme of transition allows a smooth transfer for the child – and parents.





Parental Involvement

Support from parents and teachers helps pupils to feel secure and enables them to learn and develop in a purposeful and secure environment. Parents are always kept informed and encouraged to be involved in the life of the school. Throughout the year various scheduled events take place, to which parents are invited: parent-teacher consultation and curriculum information meetings; celebrations of achievement; sports competitions; performing arts events, to name just a few. In addition, the school will contact parents for further involvement, and parents are invited to contact the school, where the need arises.

Appointments can be arranged to see Form Tutors and the Head of Year if parents have any concerns. Likewise parents will be contacted if the school feels the child is experiencing any difficulties. Annual consultation evenings also provide parents with an opportunity to discuss their child's progress with subject teachers. Parents who require an interpreter at consultation evenings should contact Miss Clare Kilvington, Pastoral Administrator.

A particularly joyful occasion to which parents are invited is the celebration of Mass for Year 7 pupils and parents which takes place after their six week Induction period and formally welcomes them into the community of St Mark's.

Parental support of school policies regarding dress, behaviour, attendance, punctuality and study programmes is vital so that by working together the home and school truly create a partnership which enables the children to achieve their best with confidence and enthusiasm.

There is an active and thriving Friends of St Mark's Association, which elects its own committee. All parents of pupils attending the school are automatically members. The Friends provide opportunities for parents and staff and others to meet each other socially, and to support the school in its various social, educational and fund-raising functions. The Friends organise meetings throughout the year where matters of common interest are discussed. Parents' views on all matters of school policy are welcomed, as are specific offers of help. The Friends hold an AGM each September. Information about forthcoming events and activities, is distributed by Parent Mail, 'pupil post', as well as the school website.



Attendance and Punctuality

Good attendance and punctuality is vital for progress and continuity and good habits for the future. Parents and pupils are issued with the school calendar in advance so appointments can be made during holiday times or on staff training days – INSET Days.

Under exceptional circumstances parents may need to seek permission to take their children out of school during term time. Such requests need to be submitted in writing well in advance of the planned absence. Every application will be treated on its individual merit and the decision whether to authorise the absence which will be communicated home, however, the Governors discourage such requests which disrupt the education of pupils at St Mark's.

New legislation does not allow for the school to sanction holidays.

The School Day

The hours spent on teaching during the normal school week, excluding assemblies, registrations and breaks: 25 hours.

8.50 - 9.10	Registration (AM) and Assembly
9.10 - 10.10	Period 1
10.10 - 11.10	Period 2
11.10 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.30	Period 3
12.30 - 13.30	Period 4
13.30 - 14.20	Lunch
14.20 - 14.30	Registration (PM)
14.30 - 15.30	Period 5
15.30	End of School Day





Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The purpose of assessment is to help children learn by:

- providing regular, frequent and appropriate opportunities for assessment, including self-assessment
- using the information obtained to affirm and build upon the pupil's achievements
- using the information obtained to inform planning of lessons to meet the individual needs of the child
- advising pupils on how to maintain progress
- keeping a clear and accessible record of each pupil's personal progress
- identifying under-achievement so that steps can be taken to support the child in meeting his/her targets
- providing pupils, parents and other involved agencies with regular information on the achievement/progress of the individual.

The formal reporting of pupil progress is termly and managed through annual teacher/parent consultation evenings, the annual written report to parents from all subject and pastoral staff and interim reviews.

Homework

All pupils are expected to complete homework; wherever possible, parents should take a daily interest in their child's progress especially through encouragement and support. To assist pupils in the organization of their homework they are issued with a login to 'Show my homework', which can be accessed through the school's website.

For those pupils who need additional support, a Homework Club runs daily before school, at lunchtime and after school in the Learning Support Department. Pupils also have access to ICT facilities and resources to help them complete homework tasks, before and after school in the Learning Resources Centre.

The importance of homework cannot be emphasised enough; it helps to develop good study habits in all pupils and demonstrates an ability to work independently.

Uniform

School uniform has many functions: it shows that a pupil is part of the St Mark's community; it is smart and formal and helps pupils to adopt a 'work-related' mindset; it is an equalizer – it removes any concern about peer comparisons of 'designer labels' and removes the pressure on parents to purchase such. It is expected that pupils will be correctly dressed for school; a full list of uniform requirements and our uniform standards are available in this booklet and can also be found on the school's website.

The School's official outfitter is 'Create Identitee' at Greenway Business Centre, Greenway, Harlow, CM19 5QE, telephone **01279 456016**
www.createidentitee.co.uk

They can guide you through all aspects of our school uniform at 'Create Identitee' where you will be assured that it follows correct school regulations.

BOYS:

Black blazer with school badge.

Mid-grey school trousers (NOT black, charcoal or silver).

White shirt and school tie. Top/neck button should be done up and tie length should fall to the navel.

GIRLS:

Black blazer with school badge.

White shirt and school tie. Top/neck button should be done up and tie length should fall to the navel.

Mid-grey straight school skirt with back pleat and side pocket.

Please note the length of the skirt should be on the knee.

Other lengths are unacceptable.

Mid grey school trousers. There is a choice of 2 styles; available at 'Create Identitee'; no others will be acceptable.

OPTIONAL:

Mid-grey school 'V' neck jumper with burgundy trim. For Year 7 boys and girls and any older pupils wishing to wear it. Please note, although the jumper is an optional extra, pupils who wish to wear it in the cold weather must wear the correct St Mark's uniform jumper available from the school's supplier.

Please inform sales staff that you require St Mark's uniform to ensure correct styles are purchased. You can also order online at:

www.createidentitee.co.uk

Badges and ties are available from St Mark's School, badges are £3.50 and ties are £4. Create Identitee are also able to provide blazers with the badges machine stitched on already and also stock badges and ties.

FOOTWEAR

SHOES: When buying shoes parents/carers should consider the health and safety aspects of what is appropriate for school wear. Shoes should be strong and all black leather. The shoe should have a conventional plain black heel, approximately 2 to 3 centimeters. The school retains the right to decide if a style is inappropriate, ie canvas/trainers; mules; ankle boots; patent; wedges; fashion branded shoes; colour laces, coloured stitching. If in doubt, please ask.

SOCKS:

BOYS: Plain black or grey ankle socks.

GIRLS: Plain black or grey ankle or knee length socks OR black or grey tights (**NOT** to be worn with socks).

JEWELLERY

Only the following items are permitted:

A watch, plain, gold/silver.

One pair of small, plain, gold/silver stud earrings, one in each ear.

NO nose studs please, or body piercing.

MAKE-UP

Nail varnish or false nails are not allowed.

In Years 7 – 9, **NO make-up is allowed.** Girls in Years 10 and 11 may wear a discreet natural make-up. The school retains the right to decide an acceptable look.

No tattoos are permitted.

HAIR

Hair should be conventionally cut, well-groomed, natural in colour and style. Hair should be cut no shorter than a 'number 2' with no lines or designs cut into the hair and of a consistent and conventional length throughout.

For health and safety reasons pupils with long hair will require a simple band to keep hair off the face when taking part in practical activities.

Hairbands: Plain, simple hairbands in school colours (burgundy, black or grey).

PE Uniform

BOYS & GIRLS:

Black top with red hoops, bearing school emblem and pupil initials.
Black socks.

Black shorts or for girls black skort with school emblem.

Appropriate footwear.

OPTIONAL PE ITEMS

The following items are optional, however, if pupils do wish to wear sweatshirts/tracksuit bottoms in PE activities they **MUST** be school PE kit items as listed:

Quartzip Sweat Top with school logo.

Tracksuit Top with School Logo.

Tracksuit Bottom with school logo.

OUTDOOR

In cold or wet weather; it is recommended that outside coats / jackets should be sensible and fit for purpose, weatherproof and free from fashion logos. Examples of inappropriate wear include hooded sweat tops, leather / denim jackets, cardigans / sweatshirts.

All clothing and personal belongings should be clearly marked with the pupil's name. At the end of each term unclaimed items are sent to charity shops – if in good condition – or disposed of.



The Lower School Curriculum Years 7, 8 and 9

SUBJECT	NUMBER OF LESSONS PER WEEK	NATIONAL CURRICULUM
English	4	Yes
Mathematics	4	Yes
Religious Education	2	No
Science	Years 7 & 8: 3 Year 9: 4	Yes
Technology	2	Yes
Modern Foreign Languages (German, French, as additional, for some after Year 7)	2	Yes
History	1	Yes
Geography	1	Yes
Computing	Years 7 & 8: 1	Yes
Physical Education	2	Yes
Music	1	Yes
Art	1	Yes
PSCHE/Citizenship	1	No/Yes
Total	25 periods	

The Curriculum Groupings

The following subjects are taught in mixed ability classes in Years 7, 8 and 9: Art, Design and Technology, Geography, History, Computing, Music, Physical Education, English (Years 7 and 8), PSCHE. The other curriculum subjects organise their teaching groups in a number of different ways for each year group. Some of these groupings involve 'setting' pupils into ability grouping. Setting enables the school to ensure that the needs of the child, in relation to different subjects, can be adequately catered for.

Year 9 pupils will start their GCSE in Core Subjects (RE, Maths, English and Science) from the beginning of the academic year.



Support and Guidance

Throughout the pupils' time at St Mark's they are supported by a wide ranging group of people; including teachers, support staff and external agencies who work with the school in the best interests of the child.

The Pastoral team of Head of Year and Form Tutors are the first contact for pupils and parents. Year 9 pupils trained as Buddies for Year 7, and assigned to tutor groups, are a valuable means of support as a friend/big brother or sister figure helping the children ease their way into life in their new school. For those with specific learning needs the Head of Learning Support and the Learning Support Assistants offer additional support. High Achieving pupils are monitored and supported, as are those for whom English is an additional language.

There is a variety of opportunities for children who may require some support for emotional or behavioural needs during their time at school: Learning Mentors who work closely with pupils; counsellors from Young Concern who see pupils in school on a weekly basis, to help them develop and progress, depending on need. The school also has links with health professionals, the Education Welfare Service and family support teams who can be accessed by referrals from the school. The School Nurse runs clinics for pupils, as advertised, and parents can arrange to meet with the Nurse and their child.

Personal, Social, Citizenship and Health Education (PSCHE) and Careers

PSCHE is for all pupils at St Mark's, and the topics covered during the year are an additional way by which the school is able to support the needs of pupils. The aim of PSCHE is the personal, social, Citizenship and health development of all pupils through broad cross-curricular areas, including the Every Child Matters agenda and the Healthy Schools programme. Themes covered include: Being Safe, Economic Well-being, Environmental Education, Health Education, Time Management, Careers guidance and Citizenship.

The Work-related Curriculum

St Mark's has a strong tradition of preparing and supporting its pupils for the world of work.

At Key Stage 3 pupils learn about enterprise and work related topics in PSCHE and dedicated Business and Enterprise activities. In Year 9 a carefully planned programme, including careers information, allows pupils to make informed choices for Key Stage 4 Options.

At Key Stage 4, Careers Education is delivered to Year 10 and 11 pupils via a range of activities: the taught curriculum, individual meetings and interviews, work experience placements, Interview Day and Business and Enterprise activities. All of these are supported through direct contact with the local business and industrial community. A Careers Library is available, which is networked to the computer system and allows pupils to access information about careers and choices at 14+, 16+ and 17+.





Extra-Curricular Activities

The extended curriculum is a valued part of school life at St Mark's and gives pupils the opportunity to experience new places and events and to develop new skills and talents.

In addition to the many lunchtime and after-school activities, pupils have the opportunity to take part in the annual musical performance; dance shows; theatre trips; residential trips to Europe and beyond . . .

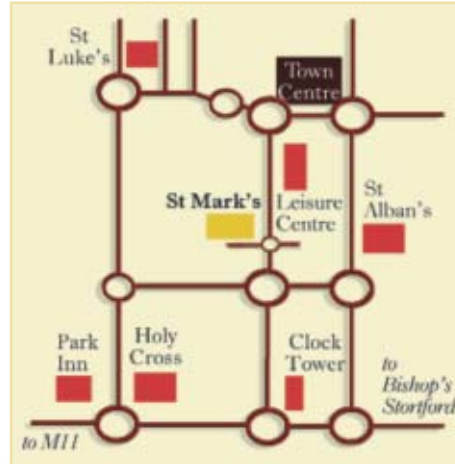
Here is an example of a term's timetable of clubs to give an indication of what's on offer:

Club	Day	Time
Art: coursework support	Monday	Lunchtime
	Thursday	3.30-4.30
Badminton	Wednesday	Lunchtime
Band	Thursday	Lunchtime
Basketball	Tuesday & Thursday	Lunchtime
Choir	Tuesday	1.45-2.15
Drama	Monday	1.45-2.15
Football:	Monday	Lunchtime
	Thursday	3.30-4.30
	Wednesday	3.30-4.30
	Monday	3.30-4.30
Homework Support	Tuesday	3.30-4.40
	Monday-Friday	Lunchtime and after-school
Maths Club	Thursday	1.45-2.15
Netball	Monday	3.30-4.30
	Tuesday	Lunchtime
Netball Shooting practice	Friday	Lunchtime
Trampolining	Monday	3.30-4.30

And finally, why you should choose St Mark's for your child:

1. A CATHOLIC school which celebrates CHRISTIANITY and RESPECTS other faiths.
2. A LOCAL and POPULAR school, judged by OFSTED as being a GOOD school with OUTSTANDING features.
3. A FRIENDLY, PURPOSEFUL and SAFE learning environment.
4. A CARING ETHOS where all staff serve your children.
5. A school that recognises that everyone is an INDIVIDUAL.
6. A school that is committed to SUCCESS AND ACHIEVEMENT FOR YOUR CHILD at ALL KEY STAGES.
7. A THRIVING 6TH FORM CENTRE offering a large range of subjects at post-16.
8. DEDICATED, HARDWORKING STAFF all working for the benefit of all pupils.
9. An EXTRA-CURRICULAR programme which engages children and is part of the enjoyment of school.
10. A school which VALUES THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL.





St Mark's

WEST ESSEX CATHOLIC SCHOOL
An Academy Trust School

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For an Application Form, or to arrange a visit, please contact:
Ms Clare Kilvington (Pastoral Administrator).