



St Thomas More Partnership of Schools

Admissions Policy

2020-21

## **1. Rationale**

St Thomas More Partnership of Schools is a Partnership of Catholic Schools which were originally constituted to provide an education to the children of Catholic families.

In developing a policy for admissions there are various things to consider: the place of siblings, of other Christian denominations, the place where families live. These priorities are shown in the oversubscription criteria of the schools.

The Partnership recognises that each school needs its own admissions policy in order to take into account local circumstances, however all the policies should be based on the same principles.

The principles outlined, in order, below, are not the oversubscription criteria which are found in the individual policies of the schools in the Partnership. Therefore there is no mention of Looked After Children as the status of these children is outlined in the Admissions Code and are therefore included in the appropriate place in individual school policies.

## **2. The Principles**

The individual admissions policies of the schools in the Partnership are based on the following principles, in order of application in the Policies:

1. The Partnership is a group of schools that has been founded for the education of the children of Catholic families and as such are afforded the highest importance in the criteria.
2. Supporting families is a priority of the Partnership and so siblings, Catholic and non-Catholic are next in the oversubscription criteria.
3. The contribution that is made by practising Christians of other denominations to the ethos of the schools in the partnership is valued very highly. The children of practising Catholic families of other denominations therefore follow.
4. The wider community of Catholic families within the catchment area is also supported by giving priority to pupils in the feeder primary schools.
5. The Partnership serves a catchment area based on West Gateshead and extending up the Tyne Valley into Northumberland. Each school in the Partnership has a catchment area which is defined in terms of one or more parishes.
6. For the secondary school there is no preferment given to where pupils live, except for whether or not it is in the catchment area. The tie breaker is therefore random allocation. For the primary schools who serve a more local community the tie breaker is distance.

**SACRED HEART CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Burnopfield,  
Newcastle Upon Tyne,  
Tyne and Wear,  
NE16 6NU**



**ADMISSION POLICY 2020-21**

## **Admission Arrangements for Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School in September 2020-21**

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below. The school is conducted by its governing body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and articles of association, and seeks at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ.

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. At a Catholic school, Catholic doctrine and practice permeate every aspect of the school's activity. It is essential that the Catholic character of the school's education be fully supported by all families in the school. We, therefore, hope that all parents will give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school. This does not affect the right of an applicant who is not Catholic to apply for and be admitted to a place at the school in accordance with the admission arrangements.

### **1. The Admission Authority**

- 1.1. Sacred Heart RC Primary School Byermoor is a member of the St Thomas More Partnership of Schools.
- 1.2. The governing body is the Admissions Authority. The Admissions Authority for Sacred Heart is therefore the Board of Directors of the St Thomas More Partnership of Schools, who are responsible for determining the school's admissions arrangements.

### **2. Catchment Area**

- 2.1. The catchment area for Sacred Heart RC Primary School Byermoor is the parish of Sacred Heart Byermoor.
- 2.2. A map showing the boundary of the parish is available on the school website and from the St Thomas More Partnership of Schools website.

### **3. Published Admission Number**

- 3.1. The School will admit **30** pupils into reception in September 2020.

### **4. Applications for a place in Reception**

- 4.1. Applications procedures and timetables will follow the locally agreed co-ordinated scheme with Gateshead LA. Details on this scheme can be found on the Gateshead Council website.

- 4.2. If there are more places than applicants then all applicants will be accepted.
- 4.3. If there are more applications than places available then the Governors will apply the oversubscription criteria as outlined in section 13 of this policy.
- 4.4. If there are more applicants than available places the School will treat all applications equally, regardless of the order of preference given by the parents. All the applications are placed in order using the oversubscription criteria. Allocation of places is then coordinated by the Local Authority.
- 4.5. Late applications can be made and will be handled as in the Co-ordinated Scheme. Parents are advised to ensure that the application is submitted before the closing date.
- 4.6. The Governors reserve the right to declare an application null and void or to withdraw an offer of a place if any of the information submitted is false.
- 4.7. Parents will be notified on, or around, the 16 April 2020 whether or not their child has been offered a place at the school.
- 4.8. Applicants refused admission into reception are entitled to appeal to an independent appeals panel. Further details of the appeals process are available by writing to the Chair of Governors at the school address.
- 4.9. Infant classes may not, by law, contain more than 30 pupils with a single qualified teacher (subject to the provisions in the School Admissions Code for 'excepted children'). Parents do have a right of appeal in accordance with the infant class size regulations if the school is oversubscribed and their child is refused a place.

## **5. Admission of Children below Compulsory School Age and Deferred Entry**

- 5.1. A child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday. A request may be made for the date at which a child, below compulsory school age, is admitted to the school, to be deferred to later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age, or beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which an offer was made.. A child may take up a part-time place until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age.
- 5.2. Upon receipt of the offer of a place a parent should notify the school in writing, as soon as possible, that they wish to either defer their child's entry to the school or take up a part-time place.

## **6. Admission of Children outside their Normal Age Group**

- 6.1. A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.
- 6.2. Any such request should be made in writing to the Head Teacher of the school. The governing body will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the Head Teacher who has statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the governing body will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals.

## **7. Summer Born Children**

- 7.1. The parents of a summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1 April and 31 August, may request that the child be admitted out of their normal age group, to the reception class in the September following their fifth birthday and that that the child will remain in this cohort as they progress through school.
- 7.2. Parents who want to make this request should make an application for their child's normal age group at the usual time. The application to the local authority should include this request and in addition it should be made in writing to the Head Teacher of the school. The local authority will liaise with the governing body who will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the Head Teacher, who has statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the governing body will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals.
- 7.3. Parents will be informed of the outcome of the request before primary national offer day.
- 7.4. If the request is agreed by the governing body, the application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. If the request is refused, the parent must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or to refuse it and make an in year application for admission to year one for the September following the child's fifth birthday.
- 7.5. Where a parent's request is agreed, they must make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year.
- 7.6. One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parents, therefore, should consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all

their preference schools, rather than just their first preference schools.

## **8. Fair Access Protocol**

- 8.1. The school is committed to taking its fair share of children who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as set out in locally agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal admission round the governing body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol that has been agreed by both the Diocese and the governing body for the current school year. The governing body has this power, even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

## **9. Waiting List**

- 9.1. If the school has reached its admission number a Waiting List will be maintained from 12 May 2020.
- 9.2. Any parent can request that their child be placed on the waiting list.
- 9.3. Children will be placed on the waiting list according to the oversubscription criteria.
- 9.4. The date of application, and the date the child is placed on the list, will not be used in any selection process.
- 9.5. The school will continue to maintain the waiting list during the corresponding school year and outside the normal year of entry.
- 9.6. Pupils who are allocated a place at the school under the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol must take precedence over all those on the waiting list.
- 9.7. Inclusion on the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

## **10. Repeat Applications**

- 10.1. Repeat applications for entry into a particular year group in the same academic year will not be considered unless there is a material change in the circumstances of the child or parent. An application may be made for a subsequent academic year.
- 10.2. A material change in circumstance may be a change of address or a change in the baptismal status of the child.

## **11. In year applications**

- 11.1. An application can be made for a place for a child at any time outside the admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. For information on making an in-year application, parents should contact the local

authority, Education Support Service, Dryden Centre, Evistones Road, Low Fell, NE9 5UR on 0191 433 8589.

11.2. Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria will be applied.

11.3. If there are no places available, a request can be made that the child is added to the waiting list (see above).

## 12. Right of Appeal

12.1. Where a parent has been notified that a place is not available for a child, every effort will be made by the local authority to help the parent to find a place in a suitable alternative school. Parents who are refused a place have a statutory right of appeal. Further details of the appeals process are available by writing to the Chair of Governors at the school address.

## 13. Oversubscription Criteria

### 13.1. Children with an Education, Health and Care plan

The admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school must be admitted. Where this takes place before the allocation of places under these arrangements this will reduce the number of places available to other children.

Order of Priority	Oversubscription Criteria	Notes
1	Looked after children and previously looked after children.	See notes 14.2 and 14.3
2	Catholic children whose home address is within the catchment area served by the school.	See notes 14.3 and 14.9
3	Catholic children whose home address is outside of the catchment area served by the school.	See note 14.3 and 14.9
4	Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church	See notes 14.4 and 14.5
5	Children who have an older brother or sister in the school at the time of admission.	See note 14.7
6	Children who are practising members of another Christian denomination and whose home address is within the catchment area served by the school.	See notes 14.6 and 14.9
7	Children of another Christian denomination and whose home address is outside the catchment area	See notes 14.6 and

	served by the school.	14.9
8	All other children.	

#### 14. Additional Notes

- 14.1. An Education, Health and Care Plan is a plan made by the local authority under section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014, specifying the special educational provision required for a child.
- 14.2. 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 a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents) at the time of making 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.
- 14.3. '**Catholic**' means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of baptism in a Catholic Church or a certificate of reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy, it includes a looked after child living with a family where at least one of the parents is Catholic.
- For a child to be treated as Catholic, evidence of Catholic baptism or reception into the Church will be required. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism should contact their Parish Priest who, after consulting with the Diocese, will decide how the question of baptism is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church.
- 14.4. **Catechumen** means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. For the purposes of admissions this refers to the child on whose behalf the application is being made. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens.
- 14.5. **Eastern Christian Church** includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism or reception should contact the Diocese who will decide how the question of baptism or reception is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church.
- 14.6. **Definition of other Christian denominations:** 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 credal 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 CYTÛN 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.

Applicants must provide a baptismal certificate or where child baptism is not practised, a letter confirming their church membership from their minister or faith leader.

14.7. **Definition of Sibling:** Sibling means a child who lives as a brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, half brothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters whether or not they are living at the same address; and the child of a parent's partner where that child lives for a least part of the week in the same family unit at the same address as the applicant. It also includes the child of a parent's partner where that child lives for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same home address as the child who is the subject of the application.

14.8. Where there are places available for some, but not all applicants within a particular criterion priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. Distance will be measured as the crow flies in a straight line from the centre of the home residence to the main entrance of the school, (using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system).

In the event of distances being the same for two or more children where this would determine the last place to be allocated, random allocation will be carried out in a public place and supervised by a person independent of the school.

14.9. 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 in the Common Application Form ("CAF"). 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 given in the CAF, provided that the child resides at that address for any part of the school week.