



Brentwood Diocesan Education Service

“Supporting Catholic schools to provide excellent education where pupils flourish, and Christ is made known to all.”

Admissions Guidance

The diocesan advice has not changed and is in line with guidance received from the CES.

1. The Governing Body of a Catholic school are the admitting authority and they must agree the admissions criteria for the school. This is effectively the admission criteria for oversubscription.
2. The Governing Body must have regard to the advice provided by the Diocese but the diocese is not the admitting authority. The diocese have instructed all schools to use the CES Model documentation in constructing their admission criteria for oversubscription. A link to the new model documentation was shared with all schools on 9/7/21 and another link is provided below:

<https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/education/school-admissions-2/>

3. The admission criteria must be consulted on at least every 7 years but should be reviewed by the Governing Body every year to make sure that it is still fit for purpose.
4. The Admission Code says that if any significant changes are made to the criteria for oversubscription that the admitting authority must consult on the proposed changes. So if the school wanted to change the admission criteria the consultation period is between 1st October this year and the end of January 2022. However, if a school, for example consulted on a significant change to its admission criteria then because of the law on admissions (Admission Code 2021) that change would not come in to effect until September 2023. The consultation for September 2022 took place last year.
5. The guidance on the use of the Certificate of Catholic Practice (CoP) is very clear. It only needs to be used if a school is oversubscribed with Catholics. If the school is not oversubscribed with Catholics they would all get a place anyway if they could prove they were Catholic (with reference to their Baptismal Certificate).
6. In requiring the CoP the Governing Body needs to consider the number of Catholic applications they are getting compared to places available. If for example for a three year period the number of Catholics applying has been around 60% of the places available then there is little chance of a jump to 100% in one year. Although, to some extent this can also be predicted for secondary schools, by looking at the number of Catholics in the Catholic Primary feeder schools and historical patterns around applications. Local context is also important especially if large numbers of new homes are being built on your doorstep.
7. By comparison if the number of Catholics are around 85% or 90% then a more cautious view may be taken by the admitting authority just in case the numbers of Catholic applications increased. This would be particularly the case in a single form entry primary school where a small number of pupils could make a significant difference to the percentage. Again the local context will be important.



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8. At the end of the day distinguishing between practising and non-practising Catholics is only needed if all Catholics may not get a place at the school. Sometimes there may be more Catholic applications than places available and the school will not know what ranking the school has been given by the parents in their application. It is therefore understandable why schools would wish to continue to use the CoP in such circumstances.