



**DIOCESAN GUIDANCE ON ADMISSION TO CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

**This guidance was issued by the Diocese on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

**Signed by the Diocesan Director of Education**

**on behalf of the Diocesan Bishop:**

**Robert Simpson**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Simpson', written in a cursive style.

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## INTRODUCTION

It is the responsibility of each admission authority to ensure that their admission arrangements (which include the procedure followed, the admission criteria used, and any supplementary information relied upon), are compliant with admissions legislation, and in particular, the 2021 School Admissions Code (“the Code”)<sup>1</sup>.

[School admissions code - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

This guidance is provided by the diocese to support admission authorities in discharging their responsibilities. It provides guidance about the construction of admission arrangements and information on the diocese’s requirements in relation to membership and practice of the Catholic faith **to which, pursuant to the Code, all Catholic schools within the diocese must have regard**<sup>2</sup>.

This guidance will also assist admission authorities in complying with the diocesan protocols on admissions.

In the case of Catholic voluntary academies, this guidance is issued by the diocese to the board of directors and it is their responsibility to ensure that it is promulgated to local governing bodies as required. Boards of directors are also responsible for monitoring compliance by local governing bodies where necessary.

**This guidance is effective from September 2023 and replaces all previous guidance issued by the diocesan bishop.**

## FAITH BASED ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS – THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CODE

The Code provides, at paragraph 1.38, that admission authorities of schools designated as having a religious character **must** have regard to guidance from the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination when constructing faith based admission arrangements, to the extent that the guidance complies with the mandatory provisions and guidelines of the Code. Admission authorities **must** also consult with that body or person when deciding how membership or practice of the faith is to be demonstrated. The body or person who is the representative of the religious denomination for Catholic schools is the diocesan bishop.

The diocesan bishop requires schools to comply with this guidance unless there are clear and proper local reasons for not doing so. The expectation is that these clear and proper local reasons for non-compliance will be in the exception, and they will only occur following discussions with diocesan officers.

This guidance complements but does not reproduce the Code. It focuses on those areas which are of most concern to the admission authorities of Catholic schools. It is important that those individuals most directly concerned with admissions and appeals against

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<sup>1</sup> Issued under section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (“SSFA 1998”) the governing bodies of maintained schools must have regard to the Code; academies are required by their funding agreements to comply with the Code (para 4 of the Code).

<sup>2</sup> Paras 1.36-1.38 of the Code.

admission decisions are thoroughly familiar with both the Code and this guidance and that they attend appropriate training.

This guidance describes the primary legislation, regulations and case law most relevant to admission authorities. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this guidance, it does **not** provide a definitive interpretation of the law, as this is entirely a matter for the courts.

Responsibility for determining admission arrangements and publishing legally compliant policies and procedures rests with the admission authority, not with the diocese.

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES – CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AS PART OF THE MISSION**

Admission arrangements are a key element in preserving and developing the distinctive religious character of Catholic schools and supporting the Church's mission in education. There are a number of underlying principles which should inform admission arrangements in all Catholic schools, some of which are set out below:

A Catholic education must:

- encourage the formation and growth to maturity of the whole human person;
- enable physical, moral and intellectual talents to be developed harmoniously;
- teach all to know and live the mystery of salvation;
- assist all to work towards their eternal destiny;
- promote the common good of society;
- ensure that all develop a greater sense of responsibility and a right use of freedom; and
- provide formation for every person to take an active part in social life.<sup>3</sup>

In England and Wales, the bishops have also said that *“whether or not market forces are regulated in some way by a supervising authority, it remains the Christian duty of individual schools themselves to promote the common good and support “the poor, vulnerable, powerless and defenceless” by reviewing and, where necessary, amending their admission procedures; accepting that sacrifices sometimes have to be made by individual institutions for the sake of the common good; and working at local, diocesan and national levels to ensure an equitable distribution of the resources available to education.”*<sup>4</sup>

Each Catholic school is established in the diocese to form, in partnership with home and parish, an integral part of that local Catholic faith community which bears the mission of the Church to embrace the gospel of Christ, to live by its values, and to proclaim Christ as the light of all peoples. A key role of the school is to assist parents of baptised Catholics to fulfil the responsibilities taken on at their child's baptism. By striving to be a Christ-centred community providing excellent education, the school will also play its part in the witness and mission of the local Church.

<sup>3</sup> Code of Canon Law (*Codex Juris Canonici*: CJC) cann.795, 217; Gravissimum Educationis.

<sup>4</sup> The Common Good in Education, p.17.

Catholic schools are established and maintained as part of the education system in which the Catholic community undertakes a responsibility to provide for the education of Catholic children in schools whose philosophy, recruitment, admission of pupils, delivery of the curriculum and daily life are determined by the distinctive Catholic ethos of their faith community.

**As part of the diocesan community of parishes and schools, no school should act for its own perceived interests alone.**

It is the responsibility of all Catholic schools, in co-operation with each other and with other admission authorities, and with the assistance of the diocese, to ensure that the maximum number of Catholic children are able to take advantage of a Catholic education provided at a local Catholic School. Catholic Schools should therefore:

- work with each other to draw up admission arrangements which ensure that places are provided equitably for all local Catholic communities (including Eastern Catholic Churches and ethnic chaplaincies); and
- co-ordinate their admission arrangements, in consultation with the diocese, to maximise parental satisfaction with their choice of Catholic school.

#### **ADMISSION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES THE ROLE OF THE ADMISSION AUTHORITY**

Admission criteria are set by the admission authority and published in its admissions policy. In determining the admission arrangements, the admission authority must comply with the law which includes having regard to this guidance.

In the case of academy companies, the admission authority is the academy company and this is therefore where responsibility for determining admission arrangements and reviewing applications lies for all schools. The board of directors of an academy company may, however, delegate responsibility for determining the admission arrangements for individual schools, and/or taking decisions on applications, to local governing bodies, but it is important that the board of directors retains oversight.

Governing bodies in Catholic voluntary aided schools and academy companies acting through their board of directors in Catholic voluntary academies are legally required to comply with the Trust Deed and the school's constitutional documents in discharging their functions, including when determining admission arrangements. For Catholic voluntary aided schools, the constitutional document is their Instrument of Government and for Catholic voluntary academies it is the academy company's Articles of Association. Regardless of the type of school its constitutional documents will reflect the school's duty to serve as a witness to the Catholic faith, and to comply with the requirements of canon law.

Catholic school admission authorities have an over-riding duty to offer places to Catholics first. This is a requirement of the Trust Deed and therefore a legal requirement on admission authorities. Catholic schools must not operate any policies if the consequence is to offer a place to a non-Catholic whilst denying that place to a Catholic.

## DETERMINATION OF ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Admission authorities must formally determine the school's admission arrangements each year, even when the arrangements remain the same. It is important that admission authorities document the determination of the admission arrangements each year, and that records are kept in accordance with the organisation's retention policy, in order to evidence compliance with this requirement.

It should be noted that local authorities **must** refer an objection to the Schools Adjudicator if they are of the view, or suspect, that a school's admission arrangements are unlawful.<sup>5</sup> In addition, any person or body (including any diocese) that considers a school's admission arrangements are unlawful, or not in compliance with the Code or relevant law relating to admissions, can make an objection to the Schools Adjudicator.<sup>6</sup>

**If notice of an objection is either threatened or received, admission authorities should seek the advice of the diocese immediately.**

## CONSULTATION (SEE PARAS 1.45-1.48 OF THE CODE)

The Code states that where changes are proposed to admission arrangements the admission authority must consult on the arrangements before they are adopted, except where the change is to increase a school's published admissions number ("PAN").

**No changes should be proposed without the consent of the diocese and, even though the Code does not require consultation where there is an increase in PAN, admission authorities must not increase PAN without the agreement of the diocese.**

The reason for this is that canon law provides that each diocesan bishop has strategic responsibility to commission sufficient school places to meet the needs of baptised Catholic children resident in his area. The expansion of any Catholic school is part of this strategic place planning responsibility and is therefore within the canonical responsibility of the diocesan bishop. All Catholic schools are required by their governing documents to comply with the requirements of canon law.

Where an admission authority has determined a PAN that is higher than in previous years, they must notify the local authority of it, and make specific reference to the change on their website (see para. 1.51 of the Code). Where an increase in PAN would like to be explored, admission authorities must always consult with the diocese in good time to obtain its consent to the increase.

Where no changes are made to admission arrangements over a number of years, the admission authority must carry out a public consultation every 7 years. Consultation must be for a minimum of 6 weeks, and the Code sets out the specific time frame within which the consultation must take place (see para 1.46 of the Code).

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<sup>5</sup> Para. 3.2 School Admissions Code September 2021

<sup>6</sup> Section 88H of the SSFA 1998

The Code also sets out those with whom the admission authority is required to consult (see para 1.47 of the Code). This includes consultation with the appropriate religious authority. Catholic schools must therefore consult with the diocese, since the appropriate religious authority is the diocesan bishop.

It is important that the admission authority gives careful consideration to identifying those other persons or bodies with whom they need to consult and the means by which they might effectively do so. The diocese will be able to provide further guidance about those persons or bodies to be consulted and the admission authority should contact the diocese at the earliest opportunity to seek its guidance.

Once admission arrangements are determined, the admission authority must notify all those persons or bodies specified by the Code. This includes the diocese. The admission authority must also send a copy of their full, determined arrangements to the relevant local authority. The determined admission arrangements must be published on the school's website for the whole of the school year in which offers for places using those arrangements will be made (see para 1.50 of the Code).

The admission authority must also provide all the information that the relevant local authority needs to compile the composite prospectus within the time frame required by the Code.

### **ALLOCATING PLACES**

With the exception of designated grammar schools, all maintained schools, including Catholic schools, must offer a place to every child who has applied where they have enough places. Where there are insufficient places available the admission authority must allocate places on the basis of the determined admission arrangements.

**Where there are more applications than spaces available places must only be allocated on the basis of the admission arrangements as determined, there should be no allocation of places based on any other criteria or interpretation of the determined arrangements.**

A decision to offer, or refuse admission, must not be made by just one individual in an admission authority; the whole admission authority, or an admissions committee established by the admission authority, must make these decisions.<sup>7</sup> The decisions of the admission authority, or the admissions committee, must be recorded in minutes of the relevant meeting which must themselves be retained in accordance with the organisation's retention policy. A clear record of decisions should also be kept and retained as appropriate for in-year applications.

It is important that in-year admissions applications are processed as quickly as possible so as to avoid any delay in a child starting school. The Code provides that parents must be informed of decisions within 15 school days, but the aim should be to notify them within 10

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<sup>7</sup> Para. 2.7 of the Code.

school days. Admission authorities should pay careful attention to the paragraphs in the Code which relate to in-year admissions.<sup>8</sup>

Where an admissions committee has been established the relevant regulations for maintained schools require that the quorum for any meeting of such committee must be determined by the committee, but in any event must be not less than three governors who are members of the committee.<sup>9</sup> For academies, the constitution of any such committee will be set by the board of directors.

The head teacher should be a member of any such admissions committee; however, they have no individual role in school admissions and may not be delegated the power to accept or refuse admissions on their own.

It is important that parish priests are not members of any admissions committee where they might be reviewing applications made by parishioners because they will have a pastoral role to play in their capacity as parish priest which should not influence any decision to admit an individual child. In addition, parish priests are also likely to be requested to provide Certificates of Catholic Practice (if required in relation to the particular school's oversubscription criteria), and the parish priest's membership of an admissions committee might result in a conflict of interest for him.

It is often difficult to arrange meetings of the admissions committee on short notice to deal with ad hoc in-year applications. The regulations applicable to maintained schools do, however, provide that the governing body may approve alternative arrangements for committee members to participate or vote at meetings of a committee including by, but not limited to, telephone or video conference<sup>10</sup>. It should be noted that the requirement is for a *meeting* of the committee so an exchange of emails would not constitute participation in a meeting. For academies this ability will be set out in any terms of reference or committee procedures set by the board of directors.

It is therefore advisable that the admission authority, when establishing the admissions committee, include within the delegation an approval of alternative arrangements to facilitate a virtual meeting, in order to ensure that decisions in relation to in-year applications are not delayed.

The admission authority must maintain a waiting list in respect of each relevant age group i.e. the age group at which pupils are, or will normally be, admitted to the school until at least 31<sup>st</sup> December of each school year<sup>11</sup>. The diocese recommends however that a waiting list is maintained by the admission authority for the whole of the school year, this is reflected in the diocesan model arrangements. The waiting list arrangements must be set out in the admission arrangements and the arrangements must make it clear that each child added to the list will be ranked in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria. Priority must not be given to a child based on the date their application was received or

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<sup>8</sup> Paras 2.23 - 2.31.

<sup>9</sup> Reg. 22(2) School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013

<sup>10</sup> Reg. 26(10) School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013

<sup>11</sup> Para 2.15 of the Code.

their name added to the list. Looked after children, previously looked after children, and those allocated a place through any local Fair Access Protocol, must take precedence over those on the waiting list, in accordance with the school's admissions criteria (see para. 2.15 of the Code). Admission authorities should also refer to the local authority's co-ordinated scheme which may refer to arrangements for waiting lists in order to ensure that their waiting list process complies with the co-ordinated scheme.

### **THE ROLE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY**

The local authority is the body which co-ordinates applications for admission to schools within its area, in the normal admissions round.

Each year all local authorities must formulate a scheme to co-ordinate admission arrangements in respect of all publicly funded schools within their area (see para. 2.22 of the Code) and they are required to publish the scheme on their website. All admission authorities within that area, including at all Catholic schools, are required to participate in that co-ordination and provide the local authority with the information it requires, by the dates agreed within the scheme. It is important that admission authorities review the co-ordinated scheme and ensure that their admission arrangements, particularly in relation to in-year applications, follow the requirements of the co-ordinated scheme.

Local authorities must provide a common application form (CAF) to enable parents to express their preference for a place at any publicly funded school, with a minimum of 3 preferences in rank order, allowing them to give reasons for their preferences (see para 2.1 of the Code). Where additional information is required by an admission authority to enable it to allocate places, the admission authority may provide supplementary information forms (SIF). The SIF must only request information which has a direct bearing on decisions about oversubscription criteria or for the purpose of selection by aptitude or ability (see para 2.4 of the Code).

No information should be requested on the SIF if it has already been requested on the CAF. There is a request for a small amount of information on the diocesan model SIF, some of which may be available on the CAF (e.g. parent contact details), because this ensures that the information on the SIF can be cross referenced to the correct application on the CAF, it also ensures that admission authorities can contact parents with queries about the information provided, if they have any.

There is no requirement for local authorities to co-ordinate in-year applications for schools for which they are not the admission authority. Admission authorities must provide information relating to in-year applications to local authorities as set out in para. 2.24 of the Code and certain information must also be set out on the school's website (see para 2.26 of the Code).

A parent can apply to a school for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admission round. They can do so directly to the school, except where the school is part of the co-ordinated scheme (see para 2. 23).



**It is important to note that, where the local authority co-ordinates in-year applications, it does not make the decision about whether to offer a place at the school; since the governing body in the case of catholic voluntary aided schools or the academy company in the case of Catholic voluntary academies is the admission authority, it is for the admission authority to make all decisions about admission to the school, including in-year applications.**

The admission authority is legally able to delegate decisions on admissions to the local authority where the local authority's Scheme for co-ordinated admissions makes provision for such delegation.<sup>12</sup> However, the right of the admission authority of a Catholic school, to make decisions in relation to admissions has always been central to the protection of the Catholic character of Catholic schools and accordingly admission authorities should not agree to the inclusion of any such provisions in the Scheme.

Local authorities are required to formulate a Scheme by 1<sup>st</sup> January in each year and to consult (including with each admission authority) in the event that changes are made which make the Scheme substantially different from that adopted for the preceding academic year, or otherwise every six years.<sup>13</sup> It is likely that existing Schemes will already include a provision allowing for a local authority to make certain decisions on admissions; where that is the case admission authorities must, at the next opportunity, make clear to the local authority that it has rescinded any previous delegation of its authority to the local authority and will henceforth make all future decisions itself in relation to admissions and ensure that the Scheme does not include any provision which is inconsistent with this position.

The admission authority must, on receipt of an in-year application, notify the local authority of the application and its outcome ideally within two days<sup>14</sup>. This allows the local authority both to keep up to date figures on the availability of places in the area and to ensure that children in the area receive the offer of a school place and are not out of school for a significant period. It is therefore extremely important that this information is provided to the local authority without delay.

### **FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOL**

Each local authority must have a Fair Access Protocol (FAP) agreed with the majority of schools in its area (see paras 3.14 and 3.15 of the Code) and all admission authorities must participate in it (see para 3.15 of the Code). This is to ensure that, outside the normal admission round, unplaced children are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible.

It should be stressed that not all children applying for a place in-year will fall within the FAP. The list of children to be included in the FAP should be agreed with the majority of schools and is intended to apply to children who have difficulty securing a school place. The Code, at para. 3. 17, sets out a list of the children to be included in the FAP.

<sup>12</sup> The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

<sup>13</sup> Reg. 27 The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

<sup>14</sup> Para 2.30 of the Code.

Outside the normal admission round the admission authority may give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed FAP, even where this would mean admitting the child would exceed the school's PAN (subject to the infant class size exceptions).

### THE ROLE OF THE DIOCESE

A diocese is the portion of the people of God entrusted to a bishop. It constitutes a particular Church in which and from which the one and only Catholic Church exists.

The diocesan bishop governs the particular Church entrusted to him as Vicar of Christ: he has proper, ordinary and immediate jurisdiction, exercised by him personally in Christ's name. A Catholic school is one which is recognised as such by the diocesan bishop and as has already been set out, canon law provides that each diocesan bishop has strategic responsibility to commission sufficient school places to meet the needs of baptised Catholic children resident in his area.

As works of the apostolate, all Catholic schools are subject to the jurisdiction of the diocesan bishop, even those that are not in diocesan trusteeship. **Canon 806§1** provides that the diocesan bishop has the right of supervision, visitation and inspection of Catholic schools in his diocese, even those established or directed by members of religious orders. He also has the right to issue directives concerning the general regulation of Catholic schools.

Published admission arrangements must make clear how membership or practice is to be demonstrated. The Code provides that the admission authority must consult with the religious authority, which in the case of Catholic schools is the diocesan bishop, when deciding how membership or practice of the faith is to be demonstrated. Therefore, in determining faith-based admission arrangements, admission authorities may only use the methods and definitions laid out in this guidance. Admission authorities must have regard to this guidance in accordance with para. 1.38 of the Code, unless the guidance does not comply with the mandatory provisions and guidelines of the Code, or the admission authority can demonstrate that it has considered and engaged with the guidance but has a clear and proper reason to depart from it. It will be particularly difficult for an admission authority to demonstrate a clear and proper reason for departing from this guidance if that departure:

- (i) fundamentally undermines the core or underlying principles of the guidance;
- (ii) is expressly forbidden by or in conflict with the guidance; or
- (iii) is substantially different in a material respect from the guidance.

Admission authorities are required to consult with the diocese before making any changes to admission arrangements, and they must provide any changes to their admission arrangements to the diocese for approval, in advance of going out to wider consultation. Admission authorities are also required to provide the diocese with a copy of their determined admission arrangements.

The diocese recognises that dealing with admissions can be one of the most difficult tasks facing admission authorities. It is hoped that this guidance will be of some assistance. Where admission authorities are uncertain or have any concerns about any aspects of admissions they should contact the diocese for assistance.

## **DRAFTING (STRUCTURE) OF ADMISSION POLICIES**

### **GENERAL**

Governing Bodies of Catholic voluntary aided schools and academy companies in the case of Catholic voluntary academies are required by law to comply with the Trust Deed and their constitutional documents in discharging their functions, including when determining admission arrangements. For voluntary aided schools the constitutional document is their Instrument of Government and for academies is their Articles of Association. The constitutional documents reflect the school's duty to serve as a witness to the Catholic faith, and to comply with the requirements of canon law.

Admission authorities have an over-riding duty to offer places to Catholics first. This is a requirement of the Trust Deed and accordingly a legal requirement on admission authorities. Catholic schools must not operate any policies if the consequence is to offer a place to a non-Catholic whilst denying that place to a Catholic.

### **OBJECTIVITY AND CONSTRUCTION OF OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA**

Oversubscription criteria must be reasonable, clear, objective, procedurally fair and comply with all relevant legislation, including equalities legislation. Parents should be able to understand how their application will be handled and what chance their child's application has of succeeding.

The way that the oversubscription criteria will be applied should be clear to those reading them. It is advisable to set out the criteria in a numbered list, with those falling within criterion 1 being admitted before those in criterion 2, and so on.

The criteria themselves should be as simple as possible. Definitions, clarifications, and requirements in relation to supporting evidence should be included in explanatory notes which form part of the admission policy. The diocesan model admission arrangements include a short list of clear, unambiguous oversubscription criteria and any detail needed to understand how the criteria will be met is included in the notes.

Admission authorities should avoid a proliferation of unnecessary criteria. For instance, a school which is routinely heavily oversubscribed with Catholic children is unlikely to require criteria which distinguishes between different types of non-Catholic children; you should however always remember to include as the final criterion "any other children" so as to avoid inadvertently excluding any applicant. It is recommended that oversubscription criteria are reviewed at regular intervals in order to determine whether each category is still required.

Schools should use the diocesan model admission policies, attached to this guidance at APPENDIX 1. Any variation to the model policy must first be agreed by the diocese.

## **RELIGIOUS CRITERIA: DIOCESAN BISHOP'S GUIDANCE**

The religious authority for all Catholic schools is the diocesan bishop.

The Code provides at paragraph 1.38 that admission authorities of schools designated as having a religious character **must** have regard to guidance from the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination, when constructing faith based admission arrangements. It also requires the admission authority to consult that body or person when deciding how membership or practice of the faith is to be demonstrated.

In accordance with the Code therefore, the admission authority must consult with the diocesan bishop who is the religious authority for all Catholic schools, when deciding how membership or practice of the faith is to be demonstrated. In determining faith based oversubscription criteria, the admission authority should only use the methods and definitions agreed by their diocesan bishop and they must follow this guidance, unless it is contrary to the Code or the school can demonstrate that it has considered and engaged with the guidance and has a clear and proper reason to depart from it. Published admission arrangements must make clear how membership or practice is to be demonstrated in line with the guidance provided by the diocesan bishop.

### **HIGHEST PRIORITY FOR CATHOLICS**

Catholic schools in the diocese are required by the diocesan bishop to give priority to Catholic children, as defined in this guidance, when determining admission criteria.

**No exceptions will be permitted except where the diocesan bishop has issued a written dispensation.**

Admission authorities must therefore ensure that none of their criteria could have the effect of giving non-Catholic children preference over those from Catholic families.

### **DEFINITION OF 'CATHOLIC' FOR THE PURPOSES OF ADMISSION CRITERIA**

For the purposes of admission criteria, the term 'Catholic' means a baptised person who is a member of any Catholic Church that is in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes members of the twenty-one Eastern Catholic Churches which are in full communion with the See of Rome. Members of these Churches have the full rights of any member of the Catholic Church and must not be discriminated against, either directly or indirectly.

In admission arrangements, the designation 'Catholic' is to be preferred to any other, and the term 'Roman Catholic' is not to be used.

Membership of a Catholic Church is gained in one of two ways.

(a) an unbaptised person becomes a Catholic by baptism in a Catholic Church. This is recorded in the Church's Baptismal Register.

(b) other baptised Christians become Catholics by being received into a Catholic Church. This is recorded in the Church's Register of Receptions or, exceptionally, in the Church's Baptismal Register.

Admission authorities should therefore require, and must accept, either of the following as evidence of membership of a Catholic Church:

- (a) a certificate of baptism from a Catholic Church, or
- (b) a certificate of reception into the Catholic Church.

Here the term 'certificate' means a certified copy of an entry in the appropriate register.

Since it is possible for parents to obtain duplicate certificates when required, it is reasonable for admission authorities to require the production of one of these documents to support an application for admission to the school, or, in exceptional circumstances, other documentary evidence acceptable to the admission authority.

The admission authority may request additional supporting evidence if the written documents that are provided do not clarify the fact that the child was baptised, e.g. 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.

The diocesan model admission policies refer to situations where there may be difficulty in obtaining written evidence of baptism or reception into the Church. In such cases contact should be made with the parish priest who, after consulting with the bishop, 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.

### **'CATHOLIC' AS THE BASIC CATEGORY**

Normally schools should use 'Catholic' as the basic first category, and this should be followed by other (e.g. geographical etc.) criteria, worked out with the diocese and other schools in the area so that there are no groups of the faithful who are effectively denied a Catholic education.

### **'PRACTISING CATHOLIC'**

For the purposes of admission criteria, a 'practising Catholic' is a baptised Catholic child with a Certificate of Catholic Practice. A 'Certificate of Catholic Practice' means a certificate given by the family's parish priest, or the priest in charge of the Church where the family practises in the form laid down by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

A higher test than 'Catholic' (i.e. that of 'practising Catholic') must not be used unless there is an absolute shortage of places in the locality. An absolute shortage of places is not to be confused with oversubscription at a particular school. When there are sufficient places in Catholic schools within the locality for all Catholic children, other criteria should be used to distribute the available places on an equitable basis. In order for admission authorities to decide whether they need to use the test of 'practising Catholic', they will need to seek the

agreement of the diocese, since the diocese will have information about the availability of places in Catholic schools in the locality.

Schools themselves must not make judgments on pastoral matters such as Catholic practice: it is the role of a priest to determine whether applicants meet the requirements of canon law sufficient for him to provide the Certificate of Catholic Practice. The role of the admission authority is to devise and publish a policy and, subsequently, to apply that policy to all applicants, giving priority to those who have a Certificate of Catholic Practice.

Schools **must not** use criteria related to the following or similar matters: financial contributions, registration in parishes, active participation of parents or pupils in parish, parish related or other Church activities, or service in Church ministry in any capacity. Such criteria may contravene the Code, since any such requirement exceeds what the diocesan bishop has set out in this guidance as the test of what is needed to demonstrate that a person is a practising Catholic i.e. that the person is in receipt of a Certificate of Catholic Practice.

Admission authorities **must not** request certificates, references or other information from priests about sacraments other than baptism. In particular, information may not be requested relating to First Confession or First Holy Communion. Criteria based on *worship* at a particular parish or church may **not** be used. Such criteria are unlawful under the Equality Act because they disproportionately discriminate against certain ethnic groups such as members of Eastern Catholic Churches or those who choose to worship at an ethnic chaplaincy.

### **CATECHUMENS AND MEMBERS OF OTHER EASTERN CHRISTIAN CHURCHES**

Admission authorities must make explicit provision for two particular categories of persons whom the Church regards as having a particular and special status, namely **catechumens** and **members of other Eastern Christian Churches**.

**Catechumens** are persons who wish to be baptised and have been accepted into the Order of Catechumens by the appropriate liturgical rite; acceptance into the catechumenate is normally demonstrated by a certified copy of the entry in the Church's Register of Catechumens. It is worth noting that a Catechumen is not generally a child waiting to be baptised unless that child has also been entered on the Register of Catechumens as this is a regulated status.

The **Eastern Christian Churches** (other than the Eastern Catholic Churches) include the Orthodox Churches and other Eastern Churches whose sacraments are recognised by the Catholic Church; membership of an Eastern Christian Church is normally demonstrated by a certificate of baptism or a certificate of reception from the authorities of that Church.

Both of these categories should be given priority over all other non-Catholic applicants (except looked after and previously looked after children).

### **OTHER CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS AND OTHER FAITHS**

Admissions legislation allows for priority to be given not only to those who are members of the school's own faith designation, but also to those of other faiths. **Where such criteria are**

**adopted they must always rank below Catholic criteria and below looked after and previously looked after children.**

If a school is routinely heavily oversubscribed with Catholic children it will not require criteria which distinguish between different types of non-Catholic children.

Admission authorities are advised to check with the diocese in cases of doubt as to whether a Christian denomination or faith meets the requirements of the definition contained within a school's admission arrangements.

### **OTHER OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA**

In the event that the admission authority wishes to include any other criteria which are not faith based, for example to allow priority for children of staff at the school, they should always consult the diocese. This will help them to ensure that they are complying with the requirements of their bishop and, in particular, with their over-riding duty to offer places to Catholics first.

### **DIOCESAN MODEL ADMISSION POLICIES**

The diocesan model policies have been carefully drafted to help schools comply with admissions legislation, including the Code, and schools are expected to use them. This will minimise the risk of schools producing policies which are non-Code compliant. It also aims to ensure that admission authorities continue to give priority to Catholic children.

Use of the diocesan model policies will also afford a level of consistency across Catholic schools in the diocese, which in turn will provide a level of strength in upholding the Catholic requirements and mean that parents should have a clearer understanding of how their children may gain admission to their local Catholic schools.

### **STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT FOR THE SCHOOL'S AIMS AND ETHOS**

Admission authorities **must not** give priority in their oversubscription criteria to applicants who indicate that they are willing to give support to the aims and ethos of the school or include any statement to this effect on the Supplementary Information Form.

It is however important for both the Catholic character, and the school's aims and ethos, to be clear so that parents understand what is expected of them and their children, once the child is a pupil. This will enable them to be in a position to make an informed choice as to whether the school is a suitable one for their child. The diocese expects admission authorities to include a factual statement about the school's aims and ethos in the preamble to the policy and such a statement is included in the diocesan model policies.

### **PUBLISHED ADMISSION NUMBERS**

Admission authorities are required to set an admission number for each 'relevant age group' i.e. the age group at which pupils are, or will normally be, admitted. For primary schools this is likely to be reception, but there may be other entry points, and if so the admission number for that age group must also be specified in the policy.

Secondary schools are likely to have entry points at year 7 and year 12. These entry points are included in the model policy but, should there be any other points of entry, the admission number for this age group must also be specified.

### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM**

Where admission authorities require information over and above the information on their local authority Common Application Form (CAF), they are permitted to provide Supplementary Information Forms (SIF). A model SIF is included at APPENDIX 2.

The SIF may only request information that has a direct bearing on decisions about oversubscription criteria or for the purposes of selection by aptitude. It must not request information that is already included on the local authority CAF. A small amount of information is requested on the model SIF to ensure that the SIF can be matched to the correct CAF.

In the event that the SIF, together with all supporting documentation, is not returned to the school by the closing date given in the policy, a child can still be ranked within the appropriate criteria if the relevant information is provided subsequently. As long as the admission authority has the relevant information and supporting documentation at the point at which applications are processed, then the child should be ranked in the relevant criteria. If information is provided and all that is missing is a SIF, then the child should be ranked in the relevant criteria based on the information provided, regardless of the lack of a SIF.

### **'LOOKED AFTER' AND 'PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'**

Highest priority must be given to 'looked after children' and 'previously looked after children'. Admission authorities should refer to para. 1.7 of the Code and the relevant footnotes, which set out the definition of these terms. Admission authorities should also note the inclusion of children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England.

In most dioceses Catholic schools are legally required to give priority to Catholic children. The law permits Catholic schools to differentiate between Catholic and non-Catholic 'looked after' and 'previously looked after children'. They must give the highest priority to Catholic 'looked after' and previously looked after children' above other Catholic children. They must also give priority to non-Catholic 'looked after' and 'previously looked after' children above other non-Catholic children.

### **RESIDENCE IN PARISHES OR DEANERIES**

Admission authorities may give higher or lower priority to children from particular parishes or deaneries (effectively a 'catchment area') but, if so, these parishes or deaneries must be named in the over subscription criteria. Care must be taken not to appear to guarantee a place to a resident of a catchment area/parish/deanery.

Such a criterion may be particularly appropriate when taking account of alternative Catholic schools available to parents. The selection of the area covered by the parishes or deaneries



must be reasonable. To ensure this the admission authority must consult the diocese, which will be able to advise the admission authority about how the selection of the parishes or deaneries fits with the admission arrangements of other Catholic schools in the area. It is recommended that any residence requirements are reviewed periodically in order to ensure that they are still relevant, and that records are kept (and retained in accordance with the appropriate retention period) of the reasons for decisions made in case they are ever subject to challenge.

Where geographical areas such as parishes or deaneries are used, a map showing the boundaries of any such parishes or deaneries should be provided with the admission arrangements. This enables the criteria to make it clear that, if there is any dispute as to the identity of the boundary, the map given to parents at the time will prevail.

Schools which serve more than one parish or deanery may wish to ensure that children from the more distant areas of the parishes or deaneries served are not disadvantaged. There are two widely used strategies to accommodate this difficulty.

The first is that places may be offered as priority to children from a named parish or deanery for whom this is the nearest Catholic school. This potentially displaces children who live nearby but for whom there are nearer alternatives, thereby releasing places for children at a distance for whom there is no alternative.

The second option is setting 'quotas' for children in named parishes. The policy would need to be explicit about the number of places available and alert parents to the possibility of not securing a place. The procedures for offering places where the quota is exceeded should be clear and applicants should have the opportunity of being considered for any places remaining within the overall total, on an equal basis with other applicants.

Any admission authority contemplating using either option must work closely with the diocese and other local Catholic schools. This will ensure that the criteria fit well with those of other local schools and that no group of Catholics is disadvantaged by the system.

### **FEEDER PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

Attendance at one or more Catholic feeder primary schools is a legitimate criterion. However, in areas where the demand for Catholic primary education exceeds the supply of places, care must be taken not to disadvantage Catholic children who have not been able to obtain a place in a Catholic primary school.

The selection of feeder schools must be made on reasonable grounds. To ensure this, admission authorities must consult the diocese, which will be able to advise them about how the selection of the feeder schools fits with the admission arrangements of other Catholic schools in the area. In this way, admission authorities should be able to demonstrate that the selection is reasonable and avoid the inadvertent disadvantage of Catholic children not attending the feeder schools. It is recommended that feeder school criteria are reviewed periodically and that appropriate records are kept, (and retained in accordance with the school's retention policy), of the rationale for identifying specific

schools in case the decision to include a feeder school or change a feeder school policy is challenged.

It should be noted that it is not reasonable for a secondary school in a multi academy trust to list as feeder schools all primary schools in the same multi academy trust. The feeder school status provided to each school would need to be considered separately and determined to be reasonable.

### **SOCIAL, MEDICAL OR PASTORAL NEED**

Admission authorities may wish to give themselves scope to offer a small number of places to pupils in exceptional circumstances, should the need arise. Extreme caution is needed, however, as such a criterion can easily be seen as lacking in objectivity. Where admission authorities decide to include this criterion, the following factors should be borne in mind.

- The admission arrangements must make it clear what circumstances are envisaged, and what evidence will be needed to demonstrate this.
- Evidence in support of meeting this criterion must be provided at the time of application. Admission authorities should not accept a case which is put forward retrospectively.
- The needs should be the needs of the child, not the social or domestic convenience of the family.
- The case must be made for a place at the particular school in question and the evidence provided should refer specifically to the school and why it is the most appropriate school to meet the identified need.
- Admission authorities may wish to consider how they will ensure that decisions relating to social, medical and pastoral need are decided consistently. Having a consistent panel to look at these applications can assist in ensuring that decisions are made consistently year-on-year.

The diocesan model policy allows for priority to be given to a child where evidence has been provided at the time of application that the child has an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need which can most appropriately be met at the school. The child will be placed at the top of the criterion under which the application has been made, if that particular criterion is oversubscribed. Where the criterion is not oversubscribed the child would, in any event, be offered a place at the school.

### **SIBLINGS**

Priority for siblings helps bond links between the school and families. It also provides a degree of domestic convenience for parents. However, schools must not operate a 'siblings first' policy where the effect is to admit a non-Catholic sibling but thereby deny a place to a Catholic child who may be the first or only child from a Catholic family. For this reason, the diocesan model policy allows for priority to be given to siblings who will be placed at the top of the criterion under which the application has been made, if that particular criterion is oversubscribed.

It is important to use the definition of brother and sister in the diocesan model policy, it is not restrictive and aims to give flexibility to enable decisions to be made in the best interests of children regardless of their family circumstances.

### **HOME ADDRESS**

The diocesan model policy provides that the home address of the child is the address listed on the local authority's common application form. This enables parents to provide the most appropriate address for the child and ensures that arbitrary measures relating to the amount of time a child spends at a particular home are not taken into account. The definition in the diocesan model policy aims to give flexibility to enable decisions to be made in the best interests of children regardless of their family circumstances.

## APPENDIX 1

### DIOCESAN MODEL POLICIES



#### Examples of Admissions Policies

*These example policies have been drafted to comply with the 2021 School Admissions Code. They are examples of what the diocese considers good practice and are not exhaustive. No examples could deal with every local situation. They will therefore need to be adapted for local circumstances, in collaboration with other Catholic schools and in accordance with the guidance issued by the diocese. **All policies must be approved by the diocese.***

*In Catholic voluntary aided schools, the admission authority is the governing body. In Catholic voluntary academies, the admission authority is the academy company. The term “school” is used throughout the document to mean all Catholic schools, including schools in the trusteeship of a religious order. This includes maintained schools, and academies in England.*

#### **Primary**

#### **[Insert Name] CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

#### **ADMISSION POLICY [Insert year]**

**[Insert name]** 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]**<sup>15</sup> **[academy company]**<sup>16</sup> as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and **[instrument of government]**<sup>17</sup> **[articles of association]**<sup>18</sup>, and seeks at all times to be a witness to Our Lord 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 these admission arrangements.

<sup>15</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>16</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

<sup>17</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>18</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

The **[governing body]**<sup>19</sup> **[academy company]**<sup>20</sup> is the admission authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round<sup>21</sup>. The admission authority has set the school's Published Admissions Number ("PAN") at **[xx]** pupils to be admitted to [the reception year] in the school year which begins in September, 20**[xx]**.

The admission authority will, where logistically possible, admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the last child ranked within the school's PAN.

### **Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (see note 1)**

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.

### **Oversubscription Criteria**

*Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority.*

1. Catholic looked after and previously looked after children. (see notes 2&3)
2. Catholic children who are resident in the parish(es) of **[name]**. (see notes 3&11)
3. Catholic children who are resident in the parish(es) of **[name(s)] [for whom [Insert name of school] is the nearest Catholic school]**. (see notes 3&11)
4. Other Catholic children. (see note 3)
5. Other looked after and previously looked after children. (see note 2)
6. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 4&5)
7. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion. (see note 6)
8. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader. (see note 7)
9. Any other children.

***Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.***

- (i) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can most appropriately be met at this school, the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made. (see note 10)
- (ii) The attendance of a brother or sister at the school at the time of enrolment will increase the priority of an application within each category so that the

<sup>19</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>20</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

<sup>21</sup> This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made after children in (i) above (see note 8).

### **Tie Break<sup>22</sup>**

Priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. Distances are calculated **[on the basis of a straight-line measurement between the front door of the child's home address (including the community entrance to flats) and the main entrance of the school] [using the local authority's computerised measuring system on the following basis [Insert appropriate wording from the local authority definition]<sup>23</sup>**. 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 and supervised by a person independent of the school. All the names will be entered into a hat and the required number of names will be drawn out.

### **Application Procedures and Timetable**

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round<sup>24</sup>, you must complete a Common Application Form available from the local authority in which you live. You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form attached to this policy if you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria 1 to 4 or 6 to 8. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to **[person, address]** by **[closing date]**.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 16<sup>th</sup> April or the next working day, by the local authority on our behalf. If you are unsuccessful (unless your child gained a place at a school you ranked higher) you will be informed of the reasons, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

***If you do not provide the information required in the SIF and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child may not be placed in criteria 1 to 4 or 6 to 8, and this may affect your child's chance of being offered a place.***

**All applications which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is 15<sup>th</sup> January [20XX]**

### **[Late Applications<sup>25</sup>**

**Late applications will be administered in accordance with your home Local Authority Primary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. You are encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.]**

<sup>22</sup> This paragraph may need to be amended depending on whether there are any local arrangements with the local authority.

<sup>23</sup> Please delete words in square brackets as appropriate.

<sup>24</sup> This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

<sup>25</sup> This section will need to be tailored to follow the procedure within the school's home local authority to ensure that it is in accordance with the local authority's scheme for co-ordination of admissions.

## Admission of Children Below Compulsory School Age and Deferred Entry

A child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday. A child's parents may defer the date at which their child, below compulsory school age, is admitted to the school, until 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. Upon receipt of the offer of a place a parent should notify the school, as soon as possible, that they wish to either defer their child's entry to the school or take up a part-time place.

## Admission of Children outside their Normal Age Group

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. In addition, the parents of a summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 31<sup>st</sup> August, may request that the child be admitted out of their normal age group, to reception rather than year 1.

Any such request should be made in writing to **[insert name of person and address to which the request should be made]** at the same time as the admission application is made. The admission authority 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, including the head teacher's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the admission authority will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

## Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful children will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out above and **not** in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Waiting lists for admission will operate throughout the school year. The waiting list will be held open until **[insert date being the last day of the summer term]**.

**Inclusion in the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.**

## 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 available places. Application should be made **[to the school]** by contacting **[insert name and address]**, **[insert link to school website]**.<sup>26</sup>

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out above, will be applied.

If there are no places available, the child will be added to the waiting list (see above).

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<sup>26</sup> This paragraph will need to be amended if a decision is made for in-year admissions to be co-ordinated by the local authority.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

### **Fair Access Protocol**

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 admission authority is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The admission authority has this power, even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the PAN (subject to the infant class size exceptions).

### **[Nursery<sup>27</sup>**

**For children attending the school's nursery, application to the reception class of the school must be made in the normal way, to the home local authority. Attendance at the school's nursery does not automatically guarantee that a place will be offered at the school.]**

**The admission authority reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place or, where a child is already attending the school the place itself, where it is satisfied that the offer or place was obtained by deception.**

### ***Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)***

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.
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 an 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. Included in this definition are those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and who ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

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.

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<sup>27</sup> This section should be deleted where the school does not have a nursery.



4. 'catechumen' means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens.
5. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.
6. "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 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.

7. "children of other faiths" means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of 'other Christian denominations' at 6 above and which falls within the definition of a religion for the purposes of charity law. The Charities Act 2011 defines religion to include:
  - A religion which involves belief in more than one God, and
  - A religion which does not involve belief in a God.

Case law has identified certain characteristics which describe the meaning of religion for the purposes of charity law, which are characterised by a belief in a supreme being and an expression of belief in that supreme being through worship.

8. 'brother or sister' includes:
  - (i) all natural brothers or sisters, half brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address; and
  - (ii) 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.
9. A '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.
10. To demonstrate an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the admission authority will require compelling written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.

11. For the purposes of this policy, parish boundaries are as shown on the attached map and will be applied to the admission arrangements for **[insert date of policy]**.

**[Map attached]**

12. 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.

### **Secondary**

#### **[Insert name] CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICY [insert year]**

**[Insert name]** Catholic High 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 always be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below. The school is conducted by its **[governing body]<sup>28</sup> [academy company]<sup>29</sup>** as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and **[instrument of government]<sup>30</sup> [articles of association]<sup>31</sup>**, and seeks at all times to be a witness to Our Lord 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 these admission arrangements.

The **[governing body]<sup>32</sup> [academy company]<sup>33</sup>** is the admission authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round<sup>34</sup> **[(excluding admission to year 12)]<sup>35</sup>**. The admission authority has set the school's Published Admissions Number ("PAN") at **[xx]** pupils to **[year 7] [and [xx] for external applicants to year 12]** in the school year which begins in September, 20[xx].

The admission authority will, where logistically possible, admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the last child ranked within the school's PAN.

<sup>28</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>29</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

<sup>30</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>31</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

<sup>32</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>33</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

<sup>34</sup> This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year

<sup>35</sup> Delete the words in square brackets where the local authority co-ordinates year 12 admissions

### [Admission to the Sixth-Form]<sup>36</sup>

The school operates a sixth form for a total of [xx] pupils. [yy] places overall will be available in year 12. While the admission number is [zz], if fewer than [yy-zz] of the school's existing pupils transfer into year 12, additional external pupils will be admitted until year 12 meets its capacity of [yy].

Both internal and external pupils wishing to enter the sixth form will be expected to have met the same minimum academic entry requirements for the sixth form. These are [that pupils will have achieved at least 5 9\*-5 GCSEs.]<sup>37</sup>

In addition to the sixth form's minimum academic entry requirements pupils will need to satisfy minimum entrance requirements to the courses for which they are applying. If either internal or external applicants fail to meet the minimum course requirements, they will be given the option of pursuing any alternative courses for which they do meet the minimum academic requirements. Course requirements are published annually in the school's prospectus and on its website.

When year 12 is undersubscribed all applicants meeting the minimum academic entry requirements will be admitted or permitted to progress.

When there are more external applicants that satisfy any academic entry requirements, priority will be given in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out below.

Where there is a space in year 13 i.e. where there are fewer than [yy] pupils in the year group, the school will admit additional pupils up to this number using the oversubscription criteria set out below.]

### **Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (see note 1)**

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.

### **Oversubscription Criteria**

*Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority:*

1. Catholic looked after and previously looked after children. (see notes 2&3)
2. Catholic children who are resident in the deanery of **[name]** and for whom **[Insert name of school]** is the nearest Catholic school. (see notes 3&11)
3. Other Catholic children. (see note 3)
4. Other looked after and previously looked after children. (see note 2)
5. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 4&5)
6. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion. (see note 6)

<sup>36</sup> This section should be deleted where the school does not have a sixth form

<sup>37</sup> Insert here the minimum academic entry requirements applicable to your school

7. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader. (see note 7)
8. Any other children.

***Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.***

- (i) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can most appropriately be met at this school, the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made. (see note 10)
- (ii) The attendance of a brother or sister at the school at the time of enrolment will increase the priority of an application within each category so that the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made after children in (i) above (see note 8).

### **Tie Break<sup>38</sup>**

Priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. Distances are calculated **[on the basis of a straight-line measurement between the front door of the child's home address (including the community entrance to flats) and the main entrance of the school] [using the local authority's computerised measuring system on the following basis [Insert appropriate wording from the local authority definition]<sup>39</sup>**. 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 and supervised by a person independent of the school. All the names will be entered into a hat and the required number of names will be drawn out.

### **Application Procedures and Timetable**

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round<sup>40</sup>, you **must** complete a Common Application Form **[(excluding admission to year 12)]<sup>41</sup>** available from the local authority in which you live. You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form attached to this policy if you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria 1 to 3 or 5 to 7. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to **[person, address]** by **[closing date]**.

**[Please insert details of the admission procedure and timetable for admission to year 12 where this differs from that set out above, including where an application should be returned to].**

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 1<sup>st</sup> **March [insert date for year 12 applications where different]** or the next working day by the local authority on our behalf. If you are unsuccessful (unless your child gained a place at a school you ranked higher) you will be informed of the reasons, related to the

<sup>38</sup> This paragraph may need to be amended depending on whether there are any local arrangements with the local authority.

<sup>39</sup> Please delete words in square brackets as appropriate.

<sup>40</sup> This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

<sup>41</sup> Delete the words in square brackets where completion of a CAF is part of the application procedure for admission to year 12.

oversubscription criteria listed above, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

***If you do not provide the information required in the SIF and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child may not be placed in criteria 1 to 3 or 5 to 7, and this may affect your child's chance of being offered a place.***

**All applications which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is 31<sup>st</sup> October [20XX]**

#### **[Late Applications<sup>42</sup>**

**Late applications will be administered in accordance with your home Local Authority Secondary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. You are encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.]**

#### **Admission of Children Outside their Normal Age Group**

A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside their normal age group, for example if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

Any such request should be made in writing to **[insert name of person and address to which the request should be made]** at the same time as the admission application is made. The admission authority 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, including the head teacher's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the admission authority will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

#### **Waiting Lists**

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful children will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out above and **not** in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Waiting lists for admission will operate throughout the school year. The waiting list will be held open until **[insert date being the last day of the summer term]**.

**Inclusion in the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.**

#### **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 available places. Application should be made **[to the school]** by contacting **[insert name and address] [insert link to school website]**.<sup>43</sup>

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out above, will be applied.

<sup>42</sup> This section will need to be tailored to follow the procedure within the school's home local authority to ensure that it is in accordance with the local authority's scheme for co-ordination of admissions.

<sup>43</sup> This paragraph will need to be amended if a decision is made for in-year admissions to be co-ordinated by the local authority.

If there are no places available, the child will be added to the waiting list (see above). You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

### **Fair Access Protocol**

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 admission authority is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The admission authority has this power even where admitting the child would mean exceeding the PAN.

**The admission authority reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place or, where a child is already attending the school the place itself, where it is satisfied that the offer or place was obtained by deception.**

### ***Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)***

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.
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 an 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. Included in this definition are those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and who ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

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 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 laws of the Church.

4. 'catechumen' means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens.
5. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.

6. “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 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 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.

7. “children of other faiths” means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of ‘other Christian denominations’ at 6 above and which falls within the definition of a religion for the purposes of charity law. The Charities Act 2011 defines religion to include:
- A religion which involves belief in more than one God, and
  - A religion which does not involve belief in a God.

Case law has identified certain characteristics which describe the meaning of religion for the purposes of charity law, which are characterised by a belief in a supreme being and an expression of belief in that supreme being through worship.

8. ‘brother or sister’ includes:
- (i) all natural brothers or sisters, half brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address; and
  - (ii) 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.
9. A ‘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.
10. To demonstrate an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the admission authority will require compelling written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.
11. For the purposes of this policy, deanery boundaries are as shown on the attached map and will be applied to the admission arrangements for **[insert date of policy]**.

**[Map attached]**

12. 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.

### **Secondary - Feeder Schools**

#### **[Insert name] CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICY [Insert year]**

**[Insert name]** was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below. The school is conducted by its **[governing body]**<sup>44</sup> **[academy company]**<sup>45</sup> as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and **[instrument of government]**<sup>46</sup> **[articles of association]**<sup>47</sup>, and seeks at all times to be a witness to Our Lord 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 these admission arrangements.

The **[governing body]**<sup>48</sup> **[academy company]**<sup>49</sup> is the admission authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round<sup>50</sup> **[(excluding admission to year 12)]**<sup>51</sup>. The admission authority has set the school’s Published Admissions Number (PAN”) at **[xx]** pupils to year 7 **[and xx for external applicants to year 12]** in the school year which begins in September, 20**[xx]**.

The admission authority will, where logistically possible, admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the last child ranked within the school’s PAN.

#### **[Admission to the Sixth-Form]**<sup>52</sup>

The school operates a sixth form for a total of **[xx]** pupils. **[yy]** places overall will be available in year 12. While the admission number is **[zz]**, if fewer than **[yy-zz]** of the school’s existing pupils transfer into year 12, additional external pupils will be admitted until year 12 meets its capacity of **[yy]**.

<sup>44</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>45</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

<sup>46</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>47</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

<sup>48</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>49</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

<sup>50</sup> This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

<sup>51</sup> Delete the words in square brackets where the local authority co-ordinates year 12 admissions.

<sup>52</sup> This section should be deleted where the school does not have a sixth form.



Both internal and external pupils wishing to enter the sixth form will be expected to have met the same minimum academic entry requirements for the sixth form. These are [that pupils will have achieved at least 5 9\*-5 GCSEs.]<sup>53</sup>

In addition to the sixth form's minimum academic entry requirements pupils will need to satisfy minimum entrance requirements to the courses for which they are applying. If either internal or external applicants fail to meet the minimum course requirements, they will be given the option of pursuing any alternative courses for which they do meet the minimum academic requirements. Course requirements are published annually in the school's prospectus and on its website.

When year 12 is undersubscribed all applicants meeting the minimum academic entry requirements will be admitted or permitted to progress.

When there are more external applicants that satisfy any academic entry requirements, priority will be given in accordance with the oversubscription criteria 1 and 3-7 set out below.

Where there is a space in year 13 i.e. where there are fewer than [xx] pupils in the year group, the school will admit additional pupils up to this number using the oversubscription criteria 1 and 3-7 set out below.]

### **Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (see note 1)**

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.

### **Oversubscription Criteria**

***At any time where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority:***

1. Catholic looked after and previously looked after children. (see notes 2&3)
2. Catholic children who attend a feeder Catholic primary school, namely, **[name(s) of feeder schools]**. (see note 3)
3. Other Catholic children. (see note 3)
4. Other looked after and previously looked after children. (see note 2)
5. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 4&5)
6. Children of other Christian denominations and children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion or other religious leader. (see notes 6&7)
7. Any other children.

***Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.***

- (i) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at

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<sup>53</sup> Insert here the minimum academic entry requirements applicable to your school.

this school, the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made. (see note 10)

- (ii) The attendance of a brother or sister at the school at the time of enrolment will increase the priority of an application within each category so that the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made after children in (i) above. (see note 8)

### **Tie Break<sup>54</sup>**

Priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. Distances are calculated **[on the basis of a straight-line measurement between the front door of the child's home address (including the community entrance to flats) and the main entrance of the school] [using the local authority's computerised measuring system on the following basis [Insert appropriate wording from the local authority definition]<sup>55</sup>**. 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 and supervised by a person independent of the school. All the names will be entered into a hat and the required number of names will be drawn out.

### **Application Procedures and Timetable**

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round<sup>56</sup>, you must complete a Common Application Form **[(excluding admission to year 12)]<sup>57</sup>** available from the local authority in which you live. You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form attached to this policy if you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria 1 to 3 or 5 or 6. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to **[person, address]** by **[closing date]**.

**[Please insert details of the admission procedure and timetable for admission to year 12 where this differs from that set out above, including where an application should be returned to.]**

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 1<sup>st</sup> March **[insert date for year 12 applications where different]** or the next working day, by the local authority on our behalf. If you are unsuccessful (unless your child gained a place at a school you ranked higher) you will be informed of the reasons, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

***If you do not provide the information required in the SIF and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child may not be placed in criteria 1 to 3 or 5 or 6, and this may affect your child's chance of being offered a place.***

**All applications which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is 31<sup>st</sup> October [20XX]**

<sup>54</sup> This paragraph may need to be amended depending on whether there are any local arrangements with the local authority.

<sup>55</sup> Please delete words in square brackets as appropriate.

<sup>56</sup> This is for applications to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

<sup>57</sup> Delete the words in square brackets where the local authority co-ordinates year 12 admissions.

### **[Late Applications<sup>58</sup>**

**Late applications will be administered in accordance with your home Local Authority Secondary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. You are encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.]**

### **Admission of Children Outside their Normal Age Group**

A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside their normal age group, for example if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

Any such request should be made in writing to **[insert name of person and address to which the request should be made]** at the same time as the admission application is made. The admission authority 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, including the head teacher's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the admission authority will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

### **Waiting Lists**

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful children will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out above and **not** in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Waiting lists for admission will operate throughout the school year. The waiting list will be held open until **[insert date being the last day of the summer term]**.

**Inclusion in the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.**

### **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 available places. Application should be made **[to the school]** by contacting **[insert name and address]** **[insert link to school website]<sup>59</sup>.**

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out above, will be applied.

If there are no places available, the child will be added to the waiting list (see above).

You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

### **Fair Access Protocol**

<sup>58</sup> This section will need to be tailored to follow the procedure within the school's home local authority to ensure that it is in accordance with the local authority's scheme for co-ordination of admissions.

<sup>59</sup> This paragraph will need to be amended if a decision is made for in-year admissions to be co-ordinated by the local authority.

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 admission authority is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The admission authority has this power even where admitting the child would mean exceeding the PAN.

**The admission authority reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place or, where the child is already attending the school the place itself, where it is satisfied that the offer or the place was obtained by deception.**

***Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)***

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.
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 an 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. Included in this definition are those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and who ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

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 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 laws of the Church.

4. 'catechumen' means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens.
5. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.
6. "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 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.

7. “children of other faiths” means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of ‘other Christian denominations’ at 7 above and which falls within the definition of a religion for the purposes of charity law. The Charities Act 2011 defines religion to include:

- A religion which involves belief in more than one God, and
- A religion which does not involve belief in a God.

Case law has identified certain characteristics which describe the meaning of religion for the purposes of charity law, which are characterised by a belief in a supreme being and an expression of belief in that supreme being through worship.

8. ‘brother or sister’ includes:

- (i) all natural brothers or sisters, half brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address; and
- (ii) the child of a parent’s partner where that child for whom the school place is sought 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.

9. A ‘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.

10. To demonstrate an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the admission authority will require compelling written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.

11. 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.

***Primary – Priority to Practising Catholics***

**[Insert name] CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**ADMISSION POLICY [Insert year]**

**[Insert name]** 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 always be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below. The school is conducted by its **[governing body]**<sup>60</sup> **[academy company]**<sup>61</sup> as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and **[instrument of government]**<sup>62</sup> **[articles of association]**<sup>63</sup>, and seeks at all times to be a witness to Our Lord 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 these admission arrangements.

The **[governing body]**<sup>64</sup> **[academy company]**<sup>65</sup> is the admission authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round<sup>66</sup>. The admission authority has set the school's Published Admissions Number ("PAN") at **[xx]** pupils to **[the reception year]** in the school year which begins in September, 20**[xx]**.

The admission authority will, where logistically possible, admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the last child ranked within the school's PAN.

### **Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (see note 1)**

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.

### **Oversubscription Criteria**

***Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority.***

1. Catholic looked after and previously looked after children. (see notes 2&3)
2. Catholic Children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice who are resident in the parish(es) of **[name(s)] [for whom [Insert name of school] is the nearest Catholic school]**. (see notes 3,4&10)

<sup>60</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>61</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

<sup>62</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>63</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

<sup>64</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>65</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

<sup>66</sup> This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

3. Other Catholic children who are resident in the parish(es) of **[name(s)] [for whom [Insert name of school] is the nearest Catholic school]**. (see notes 3&10)
4. Other Catholic children. (see note 3)
5. Other looked after and previously looked after children. (see note 2)
6. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 5&6)
7. Any other children.

***Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.***

(i) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can most appropriately be met at this school, the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made. (see note 9)

(ii) The attendance of a brother or sister at the school at the time of enrolment will increase the priority of an application within each category so that the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made after children in (i) above (see note 7).

#### **Tie Break<sup>67</sup>**

Priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. Distances are calculated **[on the basis of a straight-line measurement between the front door of the child's home address (including the community entrance to flats) and the main entrance of the school] [using the local authority's computerised measuring system on the following basis [Insert appropriate wording from the local authority definition]<sup>68</sup>**. 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 and supervised by a person independent of the school. All the names will be entered into a hat and the required number of names will be drawn out.

#### **Application Procedures and Timetable**

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round<sup>69</sup>, you must complete a Common Application Form available from the local authority in which you live. You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form attached to this policy if you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria 1 to 4 and 6. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to **[person, address]** by **[closing date]**.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 16<sup>th</sup> April or the next working day, by the local authority on our behalf. If you are unsuccessful (unless your child gained a place at a school you ranked higher) you will be informed of the

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<sup>67</sup> This paragraph may need to be amended depending on whether there are any local arrangements with the local authority.

<sup>68</sup> Please delete words in square brackets as appropriate.

<sup>69</sup> This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

reasons, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

***If you do not provide the information required in the SIF and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child may not be placed in criteria 1 to 4 or 6, and this may affect your child's chance of being offered a place.***

**All applications which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is 15<sup>th</sup> January [20XX]**

#### **[Late Applications<sup>70</sup>**

**Late applications will be administered in accordance with your home Local Authority Primary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. You are encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.]**

#### **Admission of Children Below Compulsory School Age and Deferred Entry**

A child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday. A child's parents may defer the date at which their child, below compulsory school age, is admitted to the school, until 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. Upon receipt of the offer of a place a parent should notify the school, as soon as possible, that they wish to either defer their child's entry to the school or take up a part-time place.

#### **Admission of Children Outside their Normal Age Group**

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. In addition, the parents of a summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 31<sup>st</sup> August, may request that the child be admitted out of their normal age group, to reception rather than year 1.

Any such request should be made in writing to **[insert name of person and address to which the request should be made]** at the same time as the admission application is made. The admission authority 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, including the head teacher's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the admission authority will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

#### **Waiting Lists**

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful children will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out above and **not** in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Waiting lists for admission will operate throughout the school year. The waiting list will be held open until **[insert date being the last day of the summer term]**.

<sup>70</sup> This section will need to be tailored to follow the procedure within the school's home local authority to ensure that it is in accordance with the local authority's scheme for the co-ordination of admissions.



**Inclusion in the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.**

### **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 available places. Application should be made **[to the school]** by contacting **[insert name and address]** **[insert link to school website]**.<sup>71</sup>

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out above, will be applied.

If there are no places available, the child will be added to the waiting list (see above).

You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

### **Fair Access Protocol**

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 admission authority is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The admission authority has this power, even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the PAN (subject to the infant class size exceptions).

### **[Nursery<sup>72</sup>**

**For children attending the school's nursery, application to the reception class of the school must be made in the normal way, to the home local authority. Attendance at the school's nursery does not automatically guarantee that a place will be offered at the school.]**

**The admission authority reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place or, where the child is already attending the school the place itself, where it is satisfied that the offer or the place was obtained by deception.**

### ***Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)***

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.
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 an 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. Included in this definition are those children

<sup>71</sup> This paragraph will need to be amended if a decision is made for in-year admissions to be co-ordinated by the local authority.

<sup>72</sup> This section should be deleted where the school does not have a nursery.

who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and who ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

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.

4. '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 a 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 [*insert link to guidance on the diocesan website*].
5. 'catechumen' means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens.
6. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.
7. 'brother or sister' includes:
  - (i) all natural brothers and sisters, half brothers and sisters, adopted brothers and sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address, and
  - (ii) 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.
8. A '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.
9. To demonstrate an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the admission authority will require compelling written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.

10. For the purposes of this policy, parish boundaries are as shown on the attached map and will be applied to the admission arrangements for **[insert date of policy]**.

**[Map attached]**

11. 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.

### ***Secondary – Priority to Practising Catholics***

#### **[Insert name] CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICY [insert year]**

**[Insert name]** Catholic High 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 always be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below. The school is conducted by its **[governing body]**<sup>73</sup> **[academy company]**<sup>74</sup> as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and **[instrument of government]**<sup>75</sup> **[articles of association]**<sup>76</sup>, and seeks at all times to be a witness to Our Lord 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 these admission arrangements.

The **[governing body]**<sup>77</sup> **[academy company]**<sup>78</sup> is the admission authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round<sup>79</sup> **[excluding admission to year 12]**<sup>80</sup>. The admission authority has set the school's Published Admissions Number ("PAN") at **[xx]** pupils to **[year 7]** **[and xx for**

<sup>73</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>74</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

<sup>75</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>76</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

<sup>77</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>78</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

<sup>79</sup> This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

<sup>80</sup> Delete the words in square brackets where the local authority co-ordinates year 12 admissions.

**external applicants to year 12]** in the school year which begins in September, 20[xx].

The admission authority will, where logistically possible, admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the last child ranked within the school's PAN.

### **[Admission to the Sixth-Form<sup>81</sup>**

The school operates a sixth form for a total of [xx] pupils. [yy] places overall will be available in year 12. While the admission number is [zz], if fewer than [yy-zz] of the school's existing pupils transfer into year 12, additional external pupils will be admitted until year 12 meets its capacity of [yy].

Both internal and external pupils wishing to enter the sixth form will be expected to have met the same minimum academic entry requirements for the sixth form. These are [that pupils will have achieved at least 5 9\*-5 GCSEs.]<sup>82</sup>

In addition to the sixth form's minimum academic entry requirements pupils will need to satisfy minimum entrance requirements to the courses for which they are applying. If either internal or external applicants fail to meet the minimum course requirements, they will be given the option of pursuing any alternative courses for which they do meet the minimum academic requirements. Course requirements are published annually in the school's prospectus and on its website.

When year 12 is undersubscribed all applicants meeting the minimum academic requirements will be admitted or permitted to progress.

When there are more external applicants that satisfy any academic entry requirements, priority will be given in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out below.

Where there is a space in year 13, i.e. where there are fewer than [xx] pupils in the year group, the school will admit additional pupils up to this number using the oversubscription criteria below.]

### **Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (see note 1)**

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.

### **Oversubscription Criteria**

*At any time where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority:*

1. Catholic looked after and previously looked after children. (see notes 2&3)
2. Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice who are resident in the parish(es)/deanery of **[name(s)] [for whom [insert name of school] is the nearest Catholic school]**. (see notes 3,4&10)

<sup>81</sup> This section should be deleted where the school or academy does not have a sixth form.

<sup>82</sup> Insert here the minimum academic entry requirements applicable to your school.

3. Other Catholic children who are resident in the parish(es)/deanery of **[name(s)] [for whom [insert name of school] is the nearest Catholic school]**. (see notes 3&10)
4. Other Catholic children. (see note 3)
5. Other looked after and previously looked after children. (see note 2)
6. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 5&6)
7. Any other children.

***Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.***

- (i) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can most appropriately be met at this school, the application will be placed at the top of the category within which the application is made. (see note 9)
- (ii) The attendance of a brother or sister at the school at the time of enrolment will increase the priority of an application within each category so that the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made after children in (i) above (see note 7).

### **Tie Break<sup>83</sup>**

Priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. Distances are calculated **[on the basis of a straight-line measurement between the front door of the child's home address (including the community entrance to flats) and the main entrance of the school] [using the local authority's computerised measuring system on the following basis [Insert appropriate wording from the local authority definition]<sup>84</sup>**. 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 and supervised by a person independent of the school. All the names will be entered into a hat and the required number of names will be drawn out.

### **Application Procedures and Timetable**

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round<sup>85</sup>, you must complete a Common Application Form **[excluding admission to year 12]<sup>86</sup>** available from the local authority in which you live. You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form attached to this policy if you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria 1 to 4 or 6. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to **[person, address]** by **[closing date]**.

**[Please insert details of the admission procedure and timetable for admission to year 12 where this differs from that set out above, including details of where an application should be returned to.]**

<sup>83</sup> This paragraph may need to be amended depending on whether there are any local arrangements with the local authority.

<sup>84</sup> Please delete words in square brackets as appropriate.

<sup>85</sup> This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

<sup>86</sup> Delete the words in square brackets where completion of a CAF is part of the application procedure for admission to year 12.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 1<sup>st</sup> March **[insert date for year 12 applications where different]** or the next working day, by the local authority on our behalf. If you are unsuccessful (unless your child gained a place at a school you ranked higher) you will be informed of the reasons, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

***If you do not provide the information required in the SIF and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child may not be placed in criteria 1 to 4 or 6, and this may affect your child's chance of being offered a place.***

**All applications which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is 31<sup>st</sup> October [20XX]**

#### **[Late Applications<sup>87</sup>**

**Late applications will be administered in accordance with your home Local Authority Secondary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. You are encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.]**

#### **Admission of Children Outside their Normal Age Group**

A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside their normal age group, for example if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

Any such request should be made in writing to **[insert name of person and address to which the request should be made]** at the same time as the admission application is made. The admission authority 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, including the head teacher's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the admission authority will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

#### **Waiting Lists**

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful children will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out above and **not** in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Waiting lists for admission will operate throughout the school year. The waiting list will be held open until **[insert date being the last day of the summer term]**.

**Inclusion in the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.**

#### **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 available places.

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<sup>87</sup> This section will need to be tailored to follow the procedure within the school's home local authority to ensure that it is in accordance with the local authority's scheme for co-ordination of admissions.

Application should be made **[to the school]** by contacting **[insert name and address] [insert link to school website]**<sup>88</sup>.

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out above, will be applied.

If there are no places available, the child will be added to the waiting list (see above).

You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

### **Fair Access Protocol**

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 admission authority is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The admission authority has this power even where admitting the child would mean exceeding the PAN.

**The admission authority reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place or, where a child is already attending the school the place itself, where it is satisfied that the offer or place was obtained by deception.**

### ***Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)***

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.
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 an 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. Included in this definition are those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and who ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

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 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 laws of the Church.

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<sup>88</sup> This paragraph will need to be amended if a decision is made for in-year admissions to be co-ordinated by the local authority.

4. '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 a 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 **[insert link to guidance on the diocesan website]**
5. 'catechumen' means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens.
6. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.
7. 'brother or sister' includes
  - (i) all natural brothers or sisters, half brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address; and
  - (ii) 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.
8. A '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.
9. To demonstrate an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the admission authority will require compelling written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.
10. For the purposes of this policy, parish and deanery boundaries are as shown on the attached map and will be applied to the admission arrangements for **[insert date of policy]**.

**[Map attached]**

11. 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.



**APPENDIX 2**  
**DIOCESAN MODEL SIF**



**MODEL SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM: THIS FORM WILL NEED TO BE REVIEWED AND AMENDED AS APPROPRIATE ONCE THE ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN SET, OPTIONS WILL NEED TO BE AMENDED TO MATCH THE RELEVANT OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA**

**DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD**

**[Insert Name] CATHOLIC [Insert Primary/Secondary etc.] SCHOOL/ACADEMY**

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM**

**20\_\_/20\_\_**

If you are expressing a preference for a place for your child at **[insert name of school/academy]** in **[insert local authority area]** and wish to apply under a **faith criterion**, you should complete this Supplementary Information Form.

- The completed Supplementary Information Form, together with all supporting documentation (see Notes below), should be **returned to [person, address] at the school/academy** by the closing date **[insert 15<sup>th</sup> January [20XX] for a primary school/academy or 31<sup>st</sup> October [20XX] for a secondary school/academy]**.
- If you are applying to more than one Catholic school or academy you will need to complete a separate Supplementary Information Form for each school/academy.
- **If you do not provide the information required in this form and return it to the school/academy, with all supporting documentation, by the closing date, your child may not be placed in the appropriate faith category and this may affect your child's chance of being offered a place.**
- Remember – you **must** also complete the Common Application Form.

**Name of child:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address of child:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Carer Name:**<sup>89</sup>

**Parent/Carer Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please read the relevant school/academy Admissions Policy, noting in particular any faith criteria, and your Local Authority booklet, before completing this form.

**NOTE: When completing the Common Application Form, it is important that you provide details of any siblings (brothers or sisters) who will be attending the Catholic school/academy at the proposed time of admission. If this information is not provided the admission authority of the Catholic school/academy may not be able to place the application within the correct criteria.**

**Religious Status of child (please indicate by placing a tick in the appropriate box – please note that a tick should be indicated in only a single box)<sup>90</sup>**

Criteria	Tick Box	Evidence: insert details in accordance with the Notes below
1. Catholic with a Certificate of Catholic Practice <sup>91</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. [Other] Catholic <sup>92</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Catechumen	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Member of an Eastern Christian Church	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Member of other Christian denomination	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Member of other faith	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Catholic [Parish] [Deanery] in which your child lives:

In compliance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, we wish to ensure that you are aware of the purpose for which we collect and process the data we have asked you to provide on this form.

<sup>89</sup> This does not require completion where an application is being made by a pupil on their own behalf for entry to year 12.

<sup>90</sup> Schools will need to delete options to tailor the form to match their oversubscription criteria thereby avoiding asking for information which is unnecessary to apply the criteria.

<sup>91</sup> See notes 1 and 2.

<sup>92</sup> See note 1.

1. We are

[FOR A VA SCHOOL INSERT NAME AND ADDRESS OF SCHOOL]

[FOR A SINGLE ACADEMY TRUST INSERT THE REGISTERED NAME OF THE ACADEMY TRUST COMPANY]

[FOR A SCHOOL WHICH IS PART OF A MULTI ACADEMY TRUST (“MAT”) STATE THE REGISTERED NAME OF THE ACADEMY TRUST COMPANY AND STATE THAT THE ACADEMY TRUST COMPANY IS THE DATA CONTROLLER AND EXPLAIN THAT THE SCHOOL IS PART OF THE ACADEMY TRUST COMPANY]

2. Being a Catholic education provider, we work closely with the School’s Diocesan Authority, the School’s Trustees, the Local Authority, the Catholic Education Service and the Department for Education, and may share the information you provide on this application form if we consider it is necessary in order to fulfil our functions.
3. The person responsible for data protection within our organisation is [INSERT NAME OF DATA PROTECTION OFFICER] and you can contact them with questions relating to our handling of the data. You can contact them by [INSERT METHOD OF CONTACT AND CONTACT DETAILS].
4. We require the information we have requested for reasons relating to our functions as the admission authority of the school/academy.
5. It is necessary for us to process personal data for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller (Article 6(1)(e) of the UK GDPR).
6. To the extent that you have shared any special categories of data this will not be shared with any third parties except as detailed in paragraph 2 above, unless a legal obligation should arise.
7. It is necessary for us to process special category data for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller (Article 6(1)(e) of the UK GDPR). Additionally, processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest on the basis of domestic law which is proportionate to the aim pursued and which contains appropriate safeguards (Article 9(2)(g) of the UK GDPR).
8. If the application is successful, the information you have provided on this form will be migrated to the school’s/academy’s enrolment system, and the data will be retained and processed on the basis of the school’s/academy’s fair processing notice and data protection policies which apply to that data.
9. If the application is unsuccessful, the application form and any documents submitted in support of the application will be destroyed after a period of 12 months. The school/academy may keep a simple record of all applications and their outcome as part of their permanent archives in accordance with the school’s/academy’s data retention policy.

10. To read about your individual rights you can refer to the school's/academy's fair processing notice and data protection policies.
11. If you wish to complain about how we have collected and processed the information you have provided on this form, you can make a complaint to our organisation by [INSERT DETAILS OF SCHOOL/ACADEMY COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE]. If you are unhappy with how your complaint has been handled, you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office via their website at: ico.org.uk.

**I confirm that I have read the Admissions Policy of the school/academy and that the information I have provided is correct. I understand that I must notify the school/academy immediately if there is any change to these details and that, should any information I have given prove to be inaccurate, the Admission Authority may withdraw any offer of a place even if the child has already started school.**

Signed.....

Date.....

## Notes

### 1. Evidence of Catholic Baptism

If an application is being made for a place at the school/academy for a Catholic child evidence of Catholic baptism or reception into the Church is required. A certificate of baptism or certificate of reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church should be provided at the same time as this form is returned to the school/academy.

[The admission authority may request additional supporting evidence if the written documents that are provided do not clarify the fact that the child was baptised or received into the Catholic Church, e.g. 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. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism or reception into the Church should contact their Parish Priest.]

### 2. Evidence of Catholic Practice

If an application is being made for a place at the school/academy for a Catholic child with a Certificate of Catholic Practice, this must be signed by a Catholic priest in the form laid down by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. The certificate should be obtained from the family's Parish Priest, or the Priest in charge of the Church where the family practises, and should be provided at the same time as this form is returned to the school/academy.

### 3. Evidence for Catechumens

If an application is being made for a place at the school/academy for a catechumen evidence of their being a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church will be

required. A certificate of reception into the order of catechumens should be provided at the same time as this form is returned to the school/academy.

#### **4. Evidence of Membership of an Eastern Christian Church**

If an application is being made for a place at the school/academy for a member of an Eastern Christian Church, including Orthodox Churches, evidence of membership will be required. A certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church should be provided at the same time as this form is returned to the school/academy.

#### **5. Evidence for Other Christian Denominations and Other Faiths**

If an application is being made for a place at the school/academy as a member of another Christian denomination or another faith evidence confirming membership of that Christian denomination or faith, and signed by the appropriate minister of religion or faith leader, will be required. The evidence should be provided at the same time as this form is returned to the school/academy.

#### **Checklist:**

Have you enclosed?

- Copy of baptism or certificate of reception into the Catholic Church (where applicable).
- Certificate of Catholic practice (where applicable).<sup>93</sup>
- Evidence confirming membership of a Christian denomination or other faith (where applicable).<sup>94</sup>

Have you completed and returned your local authority's Common Application Form?

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<sup>93</sup> Delete where schools are not using a criterion requiring practice.

<sup>94</sup> Delete where schools are not using criteria giving priority to members of another Christian denomination or other faith.