

# SACRED HEART CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Love of God  
Love of one another  
Love of our world  
Love of learning



## PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR 2023/2024

Sacred Heart 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 below. The school is conducted by its Governing Body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and articles of association, and seeks at all times to be a witness to 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 the admission arrangements.

The Governing Body is the admissions authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round. The Governing Body has set its admission number at 60 pupils to be admitted to the Reception Class in the school year which begins in September 2023.

The Governing Body 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 Published Admissions Number ('PAN').

### **Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (see note 1 below)**

The admission of pupils with a Statement or Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with a Statement of Educational Needs or 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 children and previously looked after children. **(see notes 2 & 3 below)**
2. Catholic children who are resident in the parish of Sacred Heart and John Fisher (only within the boundary of the former parish of Sacred Heart). **(see notes 3 & 10 below)**
3. Catholic children who are resident in the parishes of St. Helen's, Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Teresa's, for whom Sacred Heart School is the nearest Catholic school. **(see notes 3 & 10 below)**
4. Other Catholic children. **(see note 3 below)**
5. Other looked after and previously looked after children. **(see note 2 below)**
6. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. **(see notes 4 & 5 below)**

7. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion. **(see note 6 below)**
8. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader. **(see note 7 below)**
9. Any other children.

*Within each of the categories listed above, the following provision will be applied.*

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 **(see note 8 below)**.

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

1. A Statement of Special Educational Needs is a statement made by the local authority under section 324 of the Education Act 1996, specifying the special educational provision for a child. 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. **Pupils in public care and children that were previously in public care (including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted).**

A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders). Child arrangements orders are defined in Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.

Refer to section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a 'special Guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

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 who is part of a Catholic family where a letter from a priest demonstrates that the child would have been baptised or received if it were not for their status as a looked after child (e.g. a looked after child in the process of adoption by a Catholic family).

**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. 'catechumen' means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order 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 not 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 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 address as the applicant

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. For the purposes of this policy, the parish catchment area for the school extends from Eastern Avenue and along the north boundary to Thorpe Hall Avenue. The southern boundary follows along the B1016 including Thorpe Esplanade, Eastern Esplanade and onto Marine Parade and Pier Hill. It continues along the west boundary along High Street and Victoria Avenue to East Street on the B1015.

### **Tie Break**

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 main external entrance to a block of flats) and the main entrance of the school. Distances will be measured using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system.

If the same distance is shared by more than one pupil, and only one place is available, the place will be awarded on the basis of a computerised random allocation process (supervised by someone independent of the Governing Body).

### **Distance where parents have separated**

Only one application for a child can be received. If more than one application is received from parents, applications will be placed on hold until such time that:

- "an application is made that both parents agree to" or
- "written agreement is provided from both parents" or
- "a court order is obtained confirming which parent takes precedent"

Details on address checks and which address is relevant are also provided in the Southend Borough Council Admissions booklet. In all cases, the child's normal place of residence is applicable for the purposes of the application.

### **Application Procedures and Timetable**

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round (admissions to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year), you must complete a Common Application Form available from the local authority in which you live - Southend Borough Council.

You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form (SIF) 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 the school office by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2023. Where applicable, evidence of Baptism (or equivalent) needs to support application to the school. The SIF form is not an application form but provides the Governing Body with information in order to place applications in priority order according to the school's oversubscription criteria as set out above.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2023 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 to 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 will not be placed in criteria 1 to 4 or 6 to 8, and this is likely to 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 2023.**

### **Late Applications**

You are encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.

Please refer to Southend Borough Council's scheme for their process for late applications.

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

Most children start school on a full time basis; however, parents can request that their child attends part time until reaching compulsory school age (the term after their 5th birthday). Once parents receive an offer and accept a place for their child during the normal admission round, they can ask to defer the admission until later in the same academic year. Parents wishing their child to attend part time must discuss this with the Headteacher once the place is allocated. The approved deferment means that the place is held open and is not offered to another child and the parents must take up the place full time by the start of the Summer Term in April.

### **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 the Headteacher **at the same time as the admission application is made**. The Governing Body will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the Headteacher, including the Headteacher's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the Governing Body will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education and professionals, as appropriate.

When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the Governing Body must set out clearly the reasons for their decision. (2.17a School Admissions Code)

### **Unsuccessful applications/ Appeals**

Parents unsuccessful in securing a place for their child have the right to appeal to an Independent Admissions Appeal Panel. Details of how to do this can be found on the school's website.

- **Main round (September admission) appeals (Reception and year 3):** Parents can appeal against the refusal for schools for which they did not receive an offer. Appeals must be lodged within 20 school days of the date of the letter. Appeals must be heard within 40 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals. Details of how to do this can be found on the schools's website. All appeals are considered by an Independent Appeals Panel.
- **In-year application appeals (in-year R-6):** Parents can appeal against the refusal. Appeals must be lodged within 20 school days of the date of the outcome letter. For applications for in-year admissions, appeals must be heard within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged. Details of how to do this can be found on the school's website. All appeals are considered by an Independent Appeals Panel.

### **In-Year Admissions / Waiting lists**

- As permitted by law parents can make an application at any time to any school outside the normal admissions. Where places are available applicants will be offered. Where there are no places applicants will be refused and can join the waiting list for the school. Waiting lists are ranked according to the admission criteria for the school. In some cases where a child is already on a school roll locally the place may be offered for the start of the next term.
- To apply for reception after the normal admission cycle or for admission into Years 1-6, parents will need to complete an In-Year application form which is available from the school office and the school website.
- Parents can apply for the next school year anytime in the summer term, i.e. after Easter of any given year and not before.
- Applications in the current school year are processed within a maximum of 10 school days, applications for the next school year are processed in the late summer months and outcomes are communicated in the early Autumn term at the latest.
- Pupils that are refused a place and added to the waiting list and remain on the waiting list. Waiting lists are rolled over from year to year.
- As required by the School Admissions Code parents will be notified within 10 school days of the outcome of their application and will be sent a written outcome, with a reminder of the right of appeal, within 15 School Days. All in-year applications and the outcome are reported to the Local Authority within 2 days.

### **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 Governing Body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The Governing Body has this power, even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number (subject to the infant class size expectations).

### **Nursery**

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 Governing Body 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.**

**This Policy is subject to annual review**  
**Last reviewed February 2022**