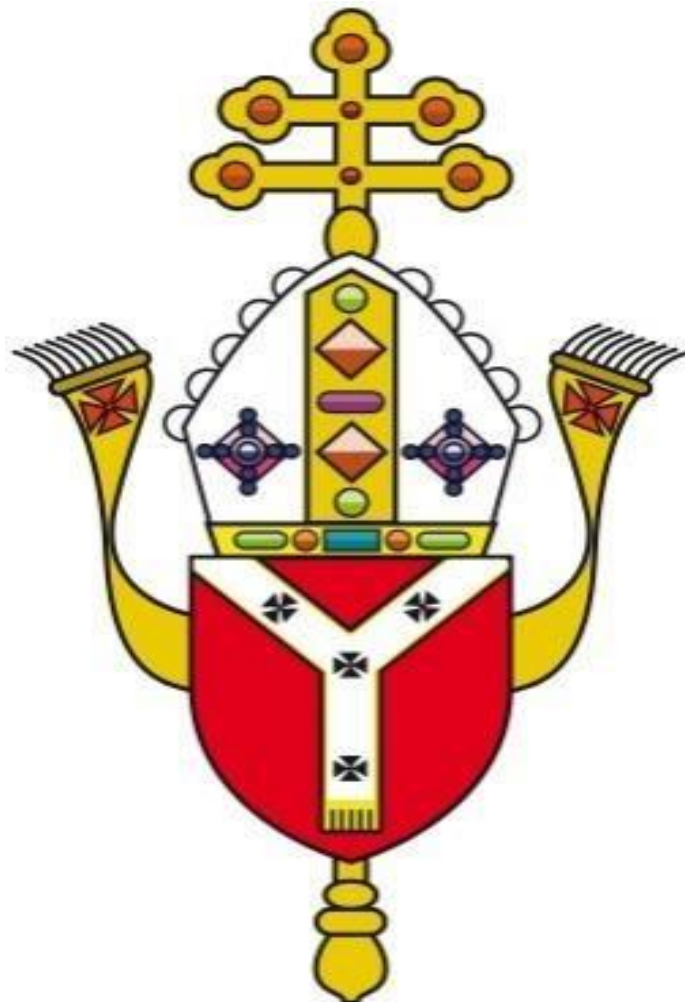


# Diocesan Guidance on Admissions to Schools

Diocese of Westminster

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

It is the responsibility of admission authorities to ensure that admission arrangements i.e. the overall procedure, practices, criteria and supplementary information to be used in deciding on the allocation of school places and any device or means used to determine whether a school place is to be offered, are compliant with admissions legislation, and the 2021 School Admissions Code (“the Code”) issued under section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (“SSFA 1998”).

In Catholic Voluntary Aided schools, the admission authority is the governing body. In Catholic Academies the admission authority is the academy trust. In multi academy trusts admission decisions are usually delegated to the local governing body. The term “school” is used throughout this guidance to refer to Catholic schools and academies. The term “governing body” is used throughout to refer to the admission authority under the appropriate constitutional arrangements.

The Code provides, in 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, so long as that guidance complies with the mandatory provisions and guidelines of the Code. It also requires the admission authority to consult the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination 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 schools designated as Catholic the “appropriate religious authority” is the diocesan bishop. This includes all Catholic schools and academies, including those which are within the trusteeship of a religious order.

This guidance is provided by the diocese to support governing bodies in discharging their responsibilities as admission authorities. It provides guidance about the construction of admission arrangements and diocesan requirements in relation to membership and practice of the Catholic faith **to which all Catholic school within the diocese must have regard. This document, which is effective from June 2020, replaces all previous guidance issued by the diocesan bishop as the appropriate religious authority for all Catholic schools situated in his diocese.** This includes all Catholic maintained schools and Catholic academies, including those within the trusteeship of a religious order.

The bishop expects schools to comply with this guidance unless there are clear and proper local reasons for not doing so. He expects such a position to be the exception, and only to be reached following discussions with diocesan officers.

This guidance complements, but does not reproduce the Code. Rather, it focuses on those areas that are of most concern to the governing bodies of Catholic schools. Governors and panel members most directly concerned with admissions and appeals against admission decisions will need to be thoroughly familiar with the Code as well as this guidance.

This guidance describes the primary legislation, regulations and case law most relevant to maintained school governing bodies and academy trust companies. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the guidance, it must be noted that it does not provide a definitive interpretation of the law. That is entirely a matter for the courts.

Responsibility for determining arrangements and publishing policies and procedures which comply with the law, rests with the governing body, not with the diocese.

## General Principles

Admission policies in Catholic schools are a key element in preserving and developing the distinctive religious character of Catholic schools. This guidance also reflects that there are some underlying principles which should inform admission arrangements in all Catholic schools. Some of these are set out here.

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>1</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>2</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.

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 Catholic schools, in co-operation with each other and 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 policies which ensure that places are provided equitably for all local Catholic communities (including Eastern Catholic Churches and ethnic chaplaincies); and

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<sup>1</sup> Code of Canon Law (*Codex Juris Canonici*: CJC) cann.795, 217; *Gravissimum Educationis*. <sup>2</sup> The Common Good in Education, p.17.

- co-ordinate their admission arrangements to maximise parental satisfaction with their choice of Catholic school.

## CHAPTER 2: ADMISSION PROCEDURES

### A. The Role of the Governing Body

Admission criteria are set by the governing body and published in its admissions policy. In deciding on the admission arrangements for the school the governing body must comply with the law, including to have regard to this diocesan guidance. In all Catholic voluntary academies, the admission authority is the academy trust company. This is the case for Multi Academy Trust Companies (“MAT” or “CAT”). This means that the MAT is responsible for determining the admission policies for all its schools and taking decisions on applications. The MAT may, however, delegate responsibility for determining the admission policies for an individual school within the MAT, and/or taking decisions on applications, to the local governing body or local committee of the individual schools.

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

Catholic school governing bodies 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 governing bodies. Catholic schools must not operate any policies if the consequence is to offer a place to a non-Catholic and deny that place to a Catholic.

### Determination of Admission Arrangements

Governing bodies must determine the school’s admission arrangements annually. The governing body must do so formally each year, even when the admission arrangements remain the same. It is important that governing bodies ensure that their decision to determine the admission arrangements each year is documented and that they keep records to evidence that they have done so.

### Consultation

Where changes are proposed to the admission arrangements the governing body must consult on the arrangements before they are adopted by them, except where the change is to increase a school’s published admissions number (“PAN”) **The governing body must not, however, increase its PAN without the agreement of the diocese.** 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 the strategic place planning and, 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 no changes are made to admission arrangements over a number of years, the admission authority must, nevertheless, 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 that consultation must take place (see para 1.43 of the Code).

The Code also sets out those with whom the governing body is required to consult. 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 for the governing body to give careful consideration to identify those 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 the persons or bodies to be consulted and the governing body should contact the diocese at the earliest opportunity to seek its guidance.

Once admission arrangements are determined, the governing body must notify all those persons or bodies specified by the Code. This includes sending a copy of the full determined admission arrangements to the diocese. The governing body must also send a copy of its full, determined arrangements to the local authority. It is important to note that the determined admission arrangements must be published on the school's website for the whole of the school year in which offers for places are made.

Where an admission authority has determined a PAN that is higher than in previous years, the local authority must be notified and specific reference must be made to the change on the school website as soon as determined (see para. 1.48 of the Code). The governing body should always consult with the diocese in good time to obtain its consent to the increase in its PAN, allowing sufficient time for it to be factored into the next normal admission round if approved.

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

### **Allocating Places**

The governing body of a Catholic school is the admission authority, and is responsible for decisions on admissions to the school.

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 governing body must allocate places on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only.**

A decision to offer, or refuse admission must not be made by one individual in an admission authority. The whole governing body, or an admissions committee established by the governing body, must make these decisions.<sup>2</sup> The decisions of the governing body, or the admissions committee, must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the governing body and the minutes must be retained in accordance with the school's record retention policy.

It is important that applications for in-year admissions be processed as quickly as possible to avoid any delay in a child starting school. Usually the governing body will establish an Admissions Committee to which the governing body will delegate responsibility to make the decisions about admission to the school. The relevant regulations 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>3</sup>

It is often difficult to arrange meetings of the committee on short notice to deal with ad hoc in-year applications. The regulations do, however, provide that the governing body may approve alternative arrangements for committee members to participate or vote at meetings of a committee including, but not limited to by telephone or video conference.<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that the requirement is for a meeting of the committee, albeit not necessarily in person. An exchange of emails would not amount to participation in a meeting and therefore would not be compliant with the regulations.

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<sup>2</sup> Para. 2.7 School Admissions Code December 2014

<sup>3</sup> Reg. 22(2) School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013

<sup>4</sup> Reg. 26(10) School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013

It is therefore advised that the governing body, when establishing the Admissions Committee, should 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 governing body may delegate this responsibility to a committee and, if it does so, the head teacher should be a member. **However, head teachers have no individual role in school admissions and may therefore not be delegated the power to accept or refuse admissions on their own.**

It is important that the school's Parish Priest should not be a member of any admissions panel. The Parish Priest is likely to be the Parish Priest for many of the families which are making application to the school for their child. He will, in that capacity, have a pastoral role to play which should not influence any decision to admit an individual child. The Parish Priest is also likely, in his capacity as the Parish Priest of a family, to be requested to provide any Certificate of Catholic Practice which is required by virtue of the school's oversubscription criteria. His membership of an admissions panel may therefore place the Parish Priest in a position where there is a conflict of interest. In the circumstances, it is not appropriate for the Parish Priest to participate in any admissions panel.

The governing body must maintain a waiting list until at least 31<sup>st</sup> December of each school year for each relevant age group, which is the age group at which pupils are, or will normally be admitted to the school e.g. reception, year 7 and year 12. **The diocese recommends that a waiting list be maintained by the governing body for the whole of the school year.** The admission arrangements must set this out, and state that each child added to the list will be ranked in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria. Priority must not be given based on the date a child's application is received or their name was added to the list. Looked after children, previously looked after children, and those allocated a place through a local Fair Access Protocol or an Education, Health & Care Plan, must take precedence over those on the school's waiting list, in accordance with the school's admissions criteria (see para 2.14 of the Code).

## **B. 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 for all publicly funded schools within their area (see para. 2.20 of the Code). They are required to publish the scheme on their website. All admission authorities in that area, including all Catholic schools, are required to participate in co-ordination and provide the local authority with the information it needs to co-ordinate admissions by the dates agreed within the scheme.

Local authorities must provide an application form 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 to enable an admission authority to allocate places, the admission authority may provide supplementary information forms (SIF). **If so, 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).** The SIF should not duplicate questions already asked by the local authority on its form.

There is no requirement for local authorities to co-ordinate in-year applications, but they must provide information in the composite prospectus, published by the local authority, on how in-year applications can be made and will be dealt with. A parent can apply for a place for their child at any time to any school outside the normal admission round. They can do so directly to the school, except where local arrangements are in place whereby it has been agreed that the local authority will co-ordinate in-year applications (see para 2.21). **It is, however, important to note that, where the local authority**



**coordinates in-year applications, it does not make the decision about whether to offer a place at the school. Since the governing body is the admission authority, it is for the governing body to make all decisions about admission to the school including in-year applications.**

It is legally possible for the governing body 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>5</sup> However, the right of the governing body of a Catholic school as the admission authority and, therefore, the body which is entitled to make decisions in relation to admissions, has always been central to the protection of the Catholic character of the school. Governing bodies should not, therefore, 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 governing body in the event that changes are made to the Scheme which make it substantially different from the Scheme adopted for the preceding academic year, or every six years.<sup>6</sup> It is likely that existing Schemes may already include provision allowing for a local authority to make certain decisions on admissions. Where that is the case governing bodies must, at the next opportunity, make clear to the local authority that it will henceforth make all future decisions in relation to admissions to the school and has rescinded any previous delegation of its authority to the local authority, further that the Scheme must not include any provision which does not reflect this.

**The governing body must, on receipt of an in-year application, notify the local authority of both the application and its outcome.** This allows for the local authority to keep up to date figures on the availability of places in the area. It also allows for the local authority 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.

It should be noted that local authorities **must** refer an objection to the Schools Adjudicator if they are of the view, or suspect, that the admission arrangements of a school are unlawful.<sup>7</sup> In addition any person or body (including any diocese) who considers that the admission arrangements of a school are unlawful, or not in compliance with the Code or relevant law relating to admissions, can make an objection to the Schools Adjudicator.<sup>8</sup>

### **Fair Access Protocol**

Each local authority must have a Fair Access Protocol agreed with the majority of schools in its area (see para 3.9 of the Code) and all admission authorities must participate in it (see para. 3.11 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 Fair Access Protocol. The list of children to be included in the Fair Access Protocol 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. 3.15, sets out a list of the children to be included in the Fair Access Protocol as a minimum.

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<sup>5</sup> The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

<sup>6</sup> Reg. 27 The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

<sup>7</sup> Para. 3.2 School Admissions Code December 2014

<sup>8</sup> Section 88H of the SSFA 1998



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

### **C. 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. 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. A Catholic school is one which is recognised as such by the diocesan bishop.

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.

The religious authority for all Catholic schools is the diocesan bishop. In accordance with the Code the admission authority must consult with the religious authority (the diocesan bishop) when deciding how membership or practice of the faith is to be demonstrated. As the local ordinary, it is for the diocesan bishop to decide how membership and practice is to be demonstrated. Therefore, in determining faith-based admission arrangements the governing body may only use the methods and definitions laid out in this guidance by their diocesan bishop. The governing body must have regard to this guidance in accordance with para. 1.38 of the Code, unless it does not comply with the mandatory provisions and guidelines of 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. It will be particularly difficult for the governing body 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.

**Published admission arrangements must make clear how membership or practice is to be demonstrated in line with this guidance.**

The governing body is also required to consult with the diocese before making any changes to the school's admission arrangements. The governing body must propose any changes to its admission arrangements to the diocese for approval in advance of going out to wider consultation. The governing body is also required to provide the diocese with a copy of its determined admissions arrangements.

The diocese recognises that dealing with admissions can be one of the most difficult tasks facing governing bodies. It is hoped that this guidance will be of some assistance. Where governing bodies have any uncertainty or concern about any aspects of the admissions process the diocese is happy to assist and governing bodies should contact the diocese.

## CHAPTER 3: DRAFTING (STRUCTURE) OF ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

### A. Drafting Oversubscription Criteria

#### General

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

Catholic school governing bodies 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 governing bodies. Catholic schools must not operate any policies if the consequence is to offer a place to a non-Catholic and deny that place to a Catholic.

#### Objectivity and Construction of Oversubscription Criteria

Oversubscription criteria must be reasonable, clear, objective, and 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 are constructed should be clear to those reading them. It is advisable to set out the criteria in a numbered list, with those who fall 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, therefore, be included in explanatory notes which form part of the admission policy.

Governing bodies should avoid proliferation of criteria which are not required. For example, a school which is routinely heavily oversubscribed with Catholic children is unlikely to require criteria which distinguish between different types of non-Catholic children. You should, however, always remember to include as the final criterion "any other children" to avoid inadvertently appearing to exclude any applicants.

Schools are advised to use the diocesan model admission policies, attached to this guidance.

#### Religious Criteria: Diocesan Bishop's Guidance

The religious authority for all Catholic schools is the Diocesan Bishop.

The Code provides, in 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 the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination when deciding how membership or practice of the faith is to be demonstrated.

Therefore, in accordance with the Code the admission authority must consult with the religious authority (the diocesan bishop) when deciding how membership or practice of the faith is to be demonstrated. As the local ordinary, it is for the Diocesan Bishop to decide how membership or practice is to be demonstrated. Therefore, in determining faith-based oversubscription criteria, governing bodies of Catholic schools should only use the methods and definitions agreed by their Diocesan Bishop. The admission authorities of Catholic schools must follow diocesan 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 guidance from 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.**

**Therefore, the highest priority must be given to Catholic looked after children.**

Governing bodies 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 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 in any way, 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.

Governing bodies 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 governing bodies 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 governors.

The governing body 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 category, and this should be followed by other (e.g. geographical etc.) criteria, worked out with 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 places available on an equitable basis. In order for the governing body to decide whether it needs to use the test of ‘practising Catholic’, it will need to seek the agreement of the diocese, since the diocese will have the 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 in order for the priest to provide the Certificate of Catholic Practice. The role of the governing body is to devise and publish a policy and, subsequently, to apply the policy to 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.

Governing bodies **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**

Governing bodies 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.

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.

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

Acceptance into the catechumenate is normally demonstrated by a certified copy of the entry in the Church's Register of Catechumens.

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.

The governing body may request additional supporting evidence if the written documents that are provided do not clarify the fact that the child was 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.

### **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.

Schools should be 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 the school's admission arrangements.

### **Other Oversubscription Criteria**

In the event that the governing body 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 their 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.

## **B. Diocesan Model Admission Policies**

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

Use of the diocesan model documents will also afford a level of consistency across Catholic schools in the diocese. With the proliferation of new admission authorities in the education sector, consistency across the Catholic sector will provide a level of strength in upholding the Catholic requirements and will also mean that parents will see less variation between policies and, therefore, 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**

Governing bodies **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 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. They will, therefore, be in a position to make an informed choice about whether it is a suitable school for their child. Governing bodies may make a factual statement about the school's aims and ethos in the preamble to the policy. The diocese expects the inclusion of such a statement, and this is included in the diocesan model admissions policies.

### **Published Admission Numbers**

The governing body is 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.

Likewise, for secondary schools, there are likely to be entry points at year 7 and to the sixth form at year 12. These entry points are included in the draft 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 governing bodies 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 6.

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 application form. The SIF should always be accompanied by a copy of the Admissions Privacy Notice and a note regarding this should be included at the bottom of the SIF (see model docs).

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 will still be ranked within the appropriate criteria if the relevant information is provided. As long as the governing body has the relevant information and supporting documentation, then the child should be ranked in the relevant criteria regardless of the lack of a SIF.

### 'Looked After' and 'Previously Looked After Children'

Highest priority must be given to Catholic 'looked after children' and 'previously looked after children'. Governing Bodies should refer to para. 1.7 of the Code and the relevant footnotes, which sets out the definition of these terms.

The Code sets out the provisions of the relevant admission regulations at para.1.7. 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

The governing body 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 oversubscription 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 governing body must consult the diocese, which will be able to advise the school about how the selection of the parishes or deaneries fits with the admission arrangements of other Catholic schools in the area.

Where geographical area such as parishes or deaneries are used, a map showing the boundaries of any such parishes or deaneries must 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.

One option 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.

Another 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 governing body contemplating using either option must work closely, through the Diocesan Education Service, with 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 the governing body must consult the diocese, which will be able to advise the school about how the selection of the feeder schools fits with the admission arrangements of other Catholic schools in the area. In this way, the governing body should be able to demonstrate that the selection is reasonable and avoid inadvertent disadvantage of Catholic children not attending the feeder schools.

### **Social, Medical or Pastoral Need**

Some governing bodies 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, as such a criterion can easily be seen as lacking in objectivity. Where governing bodies 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, or claims under this criterion must be made at the time of application. Governing bodies 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 not a general need.

The diocesan model policy allows for priority to be given to a child, where evidence that the child has an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need which can most appropriately be met at the school, has been provided at the time of application. 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 thereby denying 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 criteria under which the application has been made if that particular criterion is oversubscribed.

#### **Appendix 1:**

**‘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 the 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.

#### **Appendix 2:**

##### **Definition of children of other faiths**

“Children of other faiths” means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of ‘other Christian denominations’ 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.

#### **Appendix 3:**

##### **Definition of children of other Christian denominations.**

“Children of other Christian denominations” means: children who belong to other churches and ecclesial communities which, acknowledging 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 of 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.



**BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF ENGLAND AND WALES**

**CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE**

**Details of child (for identification only)**

Full name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

I am [the child's parish priest] [the priest in charge of the Church where the family practises] **[delete as applicable]**. I hereby certify that this child and his/her family are known to me and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the child is from a practising Catholic family.

Priest's name \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_

Parish (or ethnic chaplaincy) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Priest's signature \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parish stamp or seal*

## Certificate of Catholic Practice – Guidance for Clergy

### Definition of Practising Catholic for the Purpose of the Certificate of Catholic Practice

#### General Principles

The Certificate of Catholic Practice is based on the following principles.

- There is to be a single, objective, test for Catholic Practice: whether the child comes from a practising Catholic family.
- It is for a priest to make the judgment whether a child comes from a practising Catholic family.
- The priest should have enough information to allow him to build up a complete picture of the family and its circumstances in order to exercise that judgment.
- The definition of 'practising Catholic' set out in this guidance is for the purposes of Certificate of Catholic Practice only and for no other purpose.
- The test for Catholic practice:
  - (a) does not impose a higher requirement than the Church itself imposes;
  - (b) is capable of being applied consistently by many different priests; and
  - (c) is susceptible to proof by reasonable evidence based on observation.
- A Catholic child from a practising Catholic family is entitled to a Certificate of Catholic Practice.

The test is based upon Mass attendance, as this is capable of being observed objectively, with a reasonable degree of accuracy. Therefore, for the purposes of the Certificate of Catholic Practice, a person is a practising Catholic if they observe the Church's precept of attending Mass on Sundays and holidays of obligation (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, paragraphs 2041 - 2042).

The precise nature of this obligation is set out in the Church's canon law. For members of the Latin Church, the relevant canons are canons 1246 – 1248 of the 1983 *Code of Canon Law*. For members of Eastern Catholic churches the equivalent canon is canon 881 of the 1990 *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*. In applying these canons, it is important for priests to remember the following:

- children under seven are not bound by these canons<sup>1</sup>;
- for numerous reasons, occasional non-attendance may not constitute a breach of the obligation: canon law provides for a range of particular circumstances which excuse or mitigate the obligation<sup>2</sup>.

Priests cannot be expected to be able to recall whether or not each parishioner has attended Mass on every single Sunday or holiday of obligation, nor can they always be expected to know whether or not, on a particular occasion, a person is lawfully excused from doing so. On the other hand, it is also clear that fortnightly or monthly attendance does not constitute the practice required by the canons.

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<sup>1</sup> CJC, c.11; CCEO, c.1490. It is therefore not permissible to attempt to measure the practice of a child below the age of seven, rather than that of the parents.

<sup>2</sup> The law itself mitigates its effects on those under 16 (18 in the Eastern Catholic churches): CJC, c.1323; CCEO, c.1413. Necessity or grave inconvenience can mitigate the effects of the canon: CJC, c.1323; CCEO, c.1414. These canons admit of substantial observance, that is to say that occasional non-observance does not constitute a violation: CJC, c.17-19; CCEO, c.1499-1501. See also Coriden, J.A., *An Introduction to Canon Law*, p.33, and Canon Law Digest VI, 684-5. In the Latin church, parish priests and equivalent, as well as ordinaries, have the power to dispense from the obligations of canons 1246-1248. As well as their own subjects, parish priests or equivalent may also dispense visitors and those with no fixed abode: CJC cc.1245, 91, 87.



## Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

For those reasons, priests are advised that, if, by their own observation or other evidence, they can ascertain that a person has an established pattern of attending Mass most Sundays, and the practice claimed by that person is not less than is required by the Church, that person should be regarded as a practising Catholic for the purposes of the Certificate of Catholic Practice.

### *Length of Practice*

Priests cannot judge whether a person's pattern of attendance at Mass corresponds to that required by the Church unless it has continued for a substantial period of time. This should always be presumed if the required pattern of attendance has continued for five years or more (or the whole time required by the Church, where this is shorter). On the other hand, priests should enquire very carefully into the circumstances where the pattern of practice has not continued over several years.

### **Practising Catholic Family**

For the purposes of the Certificate of Catholic Practice, a family is normally to be regarded as a practising Catholic family where at least one parent is a practising Catholic and is doing his or her best to hand on the faith to his or her children. This fits with the mission of Catholic schools to assist parents in that task. It is therefore reasonable for that parent to expect the Church to assist him or her in doing so. Sometimes, unusually, a different pattern of practice may be judged by the priest to be equivalent. Examples might be where a grandparent or other relative supplements for the lack of practice of the parents, or where an older child practises despite the lack of practice of the parents. These children, too, deserve the support of the Church in their efforts.

### **WHICH PRIEST SHOULD COMPLETE THE FORM?**

The Certificate of Catholic Practice should be given by the appropriate priest, who is either:

- The child's own Parish Priest (i.e. the Parish Priest of the Parish in which the child's family lives); or
- the Parish Priest of the Parish where the child's family fulfils its obligation (if different).

If the family fulfils its obligation at a church which does not have a Parish Priest, then the priest who is the equivalent of a Parish Priest is the appropriate priest (e.g. Administrator, Ethnic Chaplain etc.). If the family fulfils its obligation at more than one church, the appropriate priest is one of the above, who must take into account evidence from the other priest(s) concerned.

### *Particular Issues*

**New Parish Priests.** New parish priests may need to liaise with their predecessor, where this is possible. Any assistant priests should be consulted, and in some cases it may be necessary to involve other senior members of the parish community.

**Claimed Practice not Substantiated.** Some priests find it particularly difficult when families insist that they practice, but this is not substantiated by the priest's own observation. In such cases it must be made clear that the onus is on the family to satisfy the priest's own mind that this is the case. The family may call upon evidence from other sources (e.g. priest of another parish which they visit regularly), but you should not issue the Certificate of Catholic Practice unless you are satisfied about the evidence presented to you.

Diocese of Westminster

Catholic Primary Schools

Supplementary Information Form 20XX – 20XX



[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 is likely to 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 Details<sup>9</sup>

Parent/Carer Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

<sup>9</sup> This does not require completion where an application is being made by a pupil on their own behalf for entry to year 12.

**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>10</sup>**

Criteria	Tick Box	Evidence [insert details in accordance with the Notes below]
1. Catholic with a Certificate of Catholic Practice <sup>11</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. [Other] Catholic <sup>12</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 General Data Protection Regulation (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.

1. We are

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

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

<sup>10</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>11</sup> See notes 1 and 2.

<sup>12</sup> See note 1.

[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.
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 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 GDPR). Additionally, processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest on the basis of Union or Member State law which is proportionate to the aim pursued and which contains appropriate safeguards (Article 9(2)(g) of the GDPR).
8. If the application is successful, the information you have provided on this form will be migrated to the School’s enrolment system, and the data will be retained and processed on the basis of the School’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 may keep a simple record of all applications and their outcome as part of their permanent archives in accordance with the School’s data retention policy.
10. To read about your individual rights you can refer to the School’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](http://ico.org.uk).

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

Signed.....

Date.....

## **Notes**

### **1. Evidence of Catholic Baptism**

If application is being made for a place at the school 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.

[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 application is being made for a place at the school 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.

### **3. Evidence for Catechumens**

If application is being made for a place at the school 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.

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

If application is being made for a place at the school 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.

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

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

### [Checklist:

Have you enclosed?

- Copy of baptism or certificate of reception into the Catholic Church (where applicable).
- Certificate of Catholic practice (where applicable).<sup>13</sup>
- Letter confirming membership of a Christian denomination or other faith (where applicable).<sup>14</sup>

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

## ADMISSIONS PRIVACY NOTICE FOR [NAME OF SCHOOL]

(to be attached to SIF)

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[Name of school] is a data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018 and is committed to dealing with your information safely and securely. We need to collect and share information in order to fulfil our obligations as an admission authority. We take our responsibility to protect your data seriously and we will use it in accordance with the legal requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.

We will comply with the School Admissions Code, which has the force of law. In respect of in-year admissions, the [Local Authority/School] is the admissions authority for this school. The information you provide to us on your Supplementary Information Form (SIF), any supporting papers or appeal documentation you provide will be used to:

- Process your application
- Consider Admission Appeals.

### We may also use this data for the following purposes:

- Forward planning as part of school budget, forecasting and reorganisation proposals
- To assist in the development of policy proposals
- For the prevention and/or detection of crime or fraud
- For research and statistical purposes when we will ensure that statistics are developed in such a way that individual children cannot be identified

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<sup>13</sup> Delete where schools are not using a criterion requiring practice.

<sup>14</sup> Delete where schools are not using criteria giving priority to members of another Christian denomination or other faith.

**In order to administer admissions to this school the following information may be collected by us:**

- Name and date of birth
- Address where the child ordinarily lives at the time of application, which will be used for distance calculation purposes
- Supplementary information i.e. information on religious affiliation and status
- Parent name and contact details
- Details of baptism and/or Catholic practice
- Information on parish of residence.

**Agencies we will share the information with:**

- The Department for Education, to comply with statutory data collections
- The LA, to verify the information provided so that the admission scheme\process can be accurately administered
- Admission Appeal panels
- The Schools Adjudicator, in response to any objections raised
- In Year Fair Access Panel, where applicable, to enable them to appropriately place complex admissions
- The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, when investigating maladministration of school admissions and admission appeals.

**School Retention Policy:**

The information listed above will be retained securely by the school for **[8]** years, after which it will be destroyed.

**For further information, please refer to the Privacy Policy on the School website or contact: **[insert name and contact details of relevant person at school]****

## Appendix 7 – Admissions Timetable

Admission Year	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028
	Effective Month	Effective Month	Effective Month	Effective Month	Effective Month
Governing Body Reviews and Amends Policy	July-2021	July-2022	July-2023	July-2024	July-2025
GB Consult with DOW on Proposed Changes and Revise as necessary following DOWES Advice	September-2021	September-2022	September-2023	September-2024	September-2025
Changes Approved	October-2021	October-2022	October-2023	October-2024	October-2025
Consultation - Start	October-2021	October-2022	October-2023	October-2024	October-2025
Consultation - End	January-2022	February-2023	February-2024	February-2025	February-2026
Determination	February-2022	February-2023	February-2024	February-2025	February-2026
Publication - School Website	March-2022	March-2023	March-2024	March-2025	March-2026
Publication - LA Website	April-2022	April-2023	April-2024	April-2025	April-2026
Publication - LA Admissions Book	May-2022	May-2023	May-2024	May-2025	May-2026
Admission Round Opens - Primary	September-2022	September-2023	September-2024	September-2025	September-2026
Admission Round Opens - Secondary	September-2022	September-2023	September-2024	September-2025	September-2026
Application Round Closes - Secondary	November-2022	November-2023	November-2024	November-2025	November-2026
Application Round Closes - Primary	January-2023	January-2024	January-2025	January-2026	January-2027
Publication of Appeals process	February-2023	February-2024	February-2025	February-2026	February-2027
Offers Announced - Secondary	March-2023	March-2024	March-2025	March-2026	March-2027
Offers Announced - Primary	April-2023	April-2024	April-2025	April-2026	April-2027
Pupils Admitted to School	September-2023	September-2024	September-2025	September-2026	September-2027

For further information, please contact [education@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:education@rcdow.org.uk)

**In-Year refusal of place letter**

[School headed paper]

[Date]

Dear [Parent]

**Your Application to [school name]**

Thank you for your recent application for a place at [school name].

Unfortunately, governors have been unable to offer you a place for [child's name] on this occasion as [there are currently no spaces in Year x]

OR

[there were insufficient places in Year [x] for all applicants and the oversubscription criteria were invoked at criterion [x].

The Local Authority has been informed that your application was unsuccessful and you should now contact the Authority for assistance in finding a school place.

If you would like your child's name to be placed on the waiting list for this school, please complete the form below and return it to the Admin Officer at the school. Your child's name will not be placed on the waiting list unless this form is returned. All names will be removed from the list at the end of the school year (XXXXXXXXX).

You have the right to appeal this decision to an independent appeals panel. If you wish to do this, you should contact [name] at the school [contact details] and you will be provided with an appeals form on which you can set out your grounds for appeal. The completed form should be returned to the school within one month of the date of this letter.

The governors would like to wish you all the best in finding a school place for your child.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Governors

.....

Please place my child's name .....on the waiting list for a place in Year.....

Signed

Dated

Contact phone number

## Appendix 9 – Appeals Application Form

### APPEALS APPLICATION FORM *[Name of School]* Catholic Primary School For entry September 20XX– July 20XX

Please complete this form and return it to the School by [XXXXXX]

Surname of child

First name(s)

Date of Birth

Parent's Surname

Parent's first name(s)

Relationship to child

Home Address

Telephone No(s).

Present School:

Do you need an interpreter? Yes [ ] No [ ]

Please let us know if there are any special arrangements that we need to make

#### APPEAL AGAINST REFUSAL OF ADMISSION (to be completed by the Parent/Carer)

##### Parent/Carer's Statement

It will help you and the appeals panel if you can state clearly the basis for your appeal. Most appeals fall into one or more of the following categories:

- The Governing Body did not properly apply its policy [ ]
- My child has been discriminated against [ ]
- The school is not full [ ]
- There are special reasons concerning my child [ ]

(Tick whichever apply)

I wish to appeal against the decision not to offer my child a place at [Name of School] because: -

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dotted lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

Signature of parent/carer\_\_\_\_\_

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### Examples of Admission 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 diocesan guidance. All variations in the policy must first be agreed 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 trust company. The term “governing body” is used throughout to refer to the admission authority under the appropriate constitutional arrangements. 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 as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and [instrument of government]<sup>15</sup> [articles of association]<sup>16</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 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<sup>17</sup>. The governing body has set its admission number at [xx] pupils to be admitted to [the reception year] in the school year which begins in September, 20[xx].

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)**

The admission of pupils with a Statement of Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school must

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

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 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>18</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>19</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>20</sup>, you must complete a Common Application Form available from the local authority in which you live. You are also

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<sup>18</sup> This paragraph may need to be amended depending on whether there are any local arrangements with the local authority.

<sup>19</sup> Please delete words in square brackets as appropriate.

<sup>20</sup> This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

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 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 [20XX]**

#### **[Late Applications<sup>21</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 governing body will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the head teacher, including the head teacher'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 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

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<sup>21</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.

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 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>22</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 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 exceptions).

### **[Nursery]<sup>23</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 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.**

### ***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. A 'looked after child' has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any child who is (a) in the care of a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents) at the time of making application to the school.

A 'previously looked after child' is a child who was looked after, but ceased to be so because he or she was adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order. Included in this definition are those children who appear (to the governing body) to have been in state care outside of England and who ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

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<sup>22</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>23</sup> This section should be deleted where the school does not have a nursery.

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. '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 governing body 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 as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and [instrument of government]<sup>24</sup> [articles of association]<sup>25</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 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<sup>26</sup> [(excluding admission to year 12)]<sup>27</sup>. The governing body has set its admission number at [xx] pupils to [year 7] [and xx for external applicants to year 12] in the school year which begins in September, 20[xx].

#### **[Admission to the Sixth-Form]<sup>28</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

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<sup>24</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>25</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

<sup>26</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>27</sup> Delete the words in square brackets where the local authority co-ordinates year 12 admissions.

<sup>28</sup> This section should be deleted where the school does not have a sixth form.

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>29</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 or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (see note 1)**

The admission of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with a Statement of Special 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 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)
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

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<sup>29</sup> Insert here the minimum academic entry requirements applicable to your school.



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>30</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>31</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>32</sup>, you **must** complete a Common Application Form [(excluding admission to year 12)]<sup>33</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 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 will not be placed in criteria 1 to 3 or 5 to 7, 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 31<sup>st</sup> October [20XX]**

### **[Late Applications<sup>34</sup>**

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<sup>30</sup> This paragraph may need to be amended depending on whether there are any local arrangements with the local authority.

<sup>31</sup> Please delete words in square brackets as appropriate.

<sup>32</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>33</sup> Delete the words in square brackets where completion of a CAF is part of the application procedure for admission to year 12.

<sup>34</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.

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 governing body will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the head teacher, including the head teacher'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 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 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>35</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 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 where admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

**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.**

### ***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

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<sup>35</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 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 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 governing body) 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 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 governing body 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 as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and [instrument of government]<sup>36</sup> [articles of association]<sup>37</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 the admission arrangements.

The governing body is the admission authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the

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<sup>36</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>37</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

normal admission round<sup>38</sup> [(excluding admission to year 12)]<sup>39</sup>. The governing body has set its admission number at [xx] pupils to year 7] [and xx for external applicants to year 12] in the school year which begins in September, 20[xx].

### **[Admission to the Sixth-Form<sup>40</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>41</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 or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (see note 1)**

The admission of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with a Statement of Special 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**

***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 notes 3&4)
3. Other Catholic children. (see note 3)
4. Other looked after and previously looked after children. (see note 2)

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<sup>38</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>39</sup> Delete the words in square brackets where the local authority co-ordinates year 12 admissions.

<sup>40</sup> This section should be deleted where the school does not have a sixth form.

<sup>41</sup> Insert here the minimum academic entry requirements applicable to your school.

5. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 5&6)
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 7&8)
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 this school, the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made. (see note 11)
- (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 9)

### **Tie Break<sup>42</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>43</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>44</sup>, you must complete a Common Application Form [(excluding admission to year 12)]<sup>45</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.

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<sup>42</sup> This paragraph may need to be amended depending on whether there are any local arrangements with the local authority.

<sup>43</sup> Please delete words in square brackets as appropriate.

<sup>44</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>45</sup> Delete the words in square brackets where the local authority co-ordinates year 12 admissions.

***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 3 or 5 or 6, 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 31<sup>st</sup> October [20XX]**

#### **[Late Applications]<sup>46</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 governing body will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the head teacher, including the head teacher'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 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 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>47</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 governing body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is

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<sup>46</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>47</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.



requested under any locally agreed protocol. The governing body has this power even where admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

**The governing body 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. A Statement of Special Education 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. A 'looked after child' has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any child who is (a) in the care of a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents) at the time of making application to the school.

A 'previously looked after child' is a child who was looked after, but ceased to be so because he or she was adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order. Included in this definition are those children who appear (to the governing body) 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. For the purposes of this admission policy, attendance at a feeder primary school includes those who were prevented from attending a feeder school due to oversubscription of Catholics and whose application to attend was unsuccessful, normally evidenced by a letter of rejection from the feeder primary school.
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. "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.

8. “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.

9. ‘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.

10. 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.

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

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.

### ***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 as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and [instrument of government]<sup>48</sup> [articles of association]<sup>49</sup>, and seeks at all times to be a witness to Our Lord Jesus Christ.

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<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.

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 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>. The governing body has set its admission number at [xx] pupils to [the reception year] in the school year which begins in September, 20[xx].

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)**

The admission of pupils with a Statement of Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with a Statement of Special 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 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)
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

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<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.

the top of the category in which the application is made after children in (i) above (see note 7).

### **Tie Break<sup>51</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>52</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>53</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 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 will not be placed in criteria 1 to 4 or 6, 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 [20XX]**

### **[Late Applications<sup>54</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

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<sup>51</sup> This paragraph may need to be amended depending on whether there are any local arrangements with the local authority.

<sup>52</sup> Please delete words in square brackets as appropriate.

<sup>53</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>54</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.

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 governing body will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the head teacher, including the head teacher'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 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 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>55</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 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 exceptions).

### **[Nursery]<sup>56</sup>**

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<sup>55</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>56</sup> This section should be deleted where the school does not have a 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 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. 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. A 'looked after child' has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any child who is (a) in the care of a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents) at the time of making application to the school.

A 'previously looked after child' is a child who was looked after, but ceased to be so because he or she was adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order. Included in this definition are those children who appear (to the governing body) 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 governing body 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 as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and [instrument of government]<sup>57</sup> [articles of association]<sup>58</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 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<sup>59</sup> [excluding admission to year 12]<sup>60</sup>. The governing body has set its admission number at [xx] pupils to [year 7] [and xx for external applicants to year 12] in the school year which begins in September, 20[xx].

### **[Admission to the Sixth-Form]<sup>61</sup>**

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<sup>57</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary aided school and delete for a Catholic voluntary academy.

<sup>58</sup> Include for a Catholic voluntary academy and delete for a Catholic voluntary aided school.

<sup>59</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>60</sup> Delete the words in square brackets where the local authority co-ordinates year 12 admissions.

<sup>61</sup> This section should be deleted where the school or academy does not have a sixth form.



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>62</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 or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (see note 1)**

The admission of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with a Statement of Special 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**

*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)
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.***

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<sup>62</sup> Insert here the minimum academic entry requirements applicable to your school.

- (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>63</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>64</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>65</sup>, you must complete a Common Application Form [excluding admission to year 12)]<sup>66</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.]

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 will not be placed in criteria 1 to 4 or 6, 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 31<sup>st</sup> October [20XX]**

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<sup>63</sup> This paragraph may need to be amended depending on whether there are any local arrangements with the local authority.

<sup>64</sup> Please delete words in square brackets as appropriate.

<sup>65</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>66</sup> Delete the words in square brackets where completion of a CAF is part of the application procedure for admission to year 12.

### **[Late Applications<sup>67</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 governing body will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the head teacher, including the head teacher'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 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 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>68</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 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 where admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

**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.**

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

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<sup>67</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>68</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.

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. A 'looked after child' has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any child who is (a) in the care of a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents) at the time of making application to the school.

A 'previously looked after child' is a child who was looked after, but ceased to be so because he or she was adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order. Included in this definition are those children who appear (to the governing body) 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. '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 governing body 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.