



## **ADMISSIONS POLICY 2016/2017**

St. Chad's Joint-church Catholic & Church of England High School and Language College is an 11-19 co-educational Catholic & Church of England Secondary School under the trusteeship of the Diocese of Shrewsbury and the Diocese of Chester. It is maintained by Halton Education Authority. As a Voluntary Aided School, the Governing Body is the Admissions Authority and is responsible for taking decisions on applications for admissions. The co-ordination of admissions is undertaken by the Education Authority. For the school year commencing September 2016, the Governing Body has set its admissions number at 190.

Admissions to the school will be made by the Governing Body. In recognition of the spirit of harmony and partnership that has characterised the growth of this Joint-church school, it has been agreed that there will be one Admissions Panel. Representatives from both denominations will form this panel. All preferences listed on the Local Authority Preference Form will be considered on an equal basis with the following set of ADMISSIONS CRITERIA forming a priority order where there are more applications for admissions than the school has places available.

The school admission number is 190 for Year 7. The Governing Body proposes to admit 190 pupils without regard to ability or aptitude. Places will be allocated according to the basic ratio established at the foundation of the school: 70% of pupils admitted will be from the Catholic tradition and 30% of pupils admitted will be from the Anglican tradition. On the current PAN, a maximum of 133 places will be allocated to pupils from the Catholic tradition and 57 places from the Church of England tradition. Any remaining places will be allocated on the criteria listed below.

The Governors recognise that members of other church communities and of no church community have been, and continue to be, part of the life of St Chad's and they are committed to maintaining this within the constraints of the actual numbers applying to the school.

Applications for one of the 190 places available are considered by the Governors in the order of priority below. First priority is given to applications received by the published closing date.

### **Admissions criteria**

As a joint-church school between the Catholic Diocese of Shrewsbury and the Church of England Diocese of Chester, our primary aim is to provide an education that supports parents/cares from our dioceses with their responsibility to share their faith with their children. Because of this children are prioritised in our admissions criteria. This priority is also taken into consideration in the case of over-subscription. Children in the care of the Local Authority will be given priority over all other applicants if they wish to come to St Chad's.

**A maximum of 133 places will be allocated on the basis of A1 Part 1 below:**

**A** Priority will be given to Looked After or former Looked After Children.

**A1 Part 1**

1. Baptised Catholic children from the following Catholic Partner Primary Schools
  - The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary
  - Our Lady's Catholic Primary
  - St. Clements's Catholic Primary
  - St. Edward's Catholic Primary
  - St. Martin's Catholic Primary
  - St. Augustine's Catholic Primary
2. Baptised Catholic children who have a sibling at the school at the time of admission including siblings in the 6<sup>th</sup> Form.
3. Baptised Catholic children from other Catholic Primary Schools.
4. Baptised Catholic children from non-Catholic Primary Schools.
5. Children attending Catholic primary schools.

**A maximum of 57 places will be allocated on the basis of A1 Part 2 below:**

### **A1 Part 2**

1. Children whose parents are faithful and regular worshippers in Runcorn Church of England communities:
  - St Michael and All Angels
  - Weston St John
  - Holy Trinity
  - All Saints
  - Norton St Berteline and St Christopher
  - St Mary's
  - Grange St Andrew's
  - St Mark's
2. Children from the following Church of England Partner Primary Schools - St Berteline's, All Saints and St Mary's.

**Any other remaining places will be allocated on the basis of the criteria below:**

### **A2**

1. Children who have a sibling in the school at the time of admission including siblings in the 6<sup>th</sup> Form.
2. Children whose parents wish them to have a joint-church education.

### **NOTES**

- a) All applicants will be considered at the same time and after the closing date set by Local Authority.
- b) In the event of the school being oversubscribed all Catholic applicants will be required to produce a baptismal certificate.
- c) Evidence of parents' commitment to and their involvement in their place of worship will be required in the form of confirmation from the parish priest on the supplementary application form. By 'involved in the work or worship' we mean attendance at least two services per month for at least six months prior to the closing date for applications
- d) If category (A1 Part 1) is oversubscribed, children who satisfy (A1 Part 1) and (A1 Part 1 .2) will have priority over children who satisfy only (A1 Part 1). Subsequently if in this or any category there are more applications than places available, priority will be given on the basis of distance of a straight-line distance from home to school, those living nearer to the school having priority.

- e) Siblings are defined as pupils with elder brothers or sisters including half brothers and sisters and unrelated children living together as part of the same household, already attending the school and expected to continue in the following year.
- f) For occasional applications received outside the normal admissions round and if places are available then children qualifying under the published criteria will be admitted. If there are places available but more applicants than places then the published oversubscription criteria will be applied. Occasional and late applications will be treated as per the admissions arrangements published by the Local Education Authority.
- g) If an application for admission has been turned down by the Governing Body, parents can appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel. Parents must be allowed at least twenty school days from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful to submit that appeal. Parents must give reasons for appealing in writing and the decision of the Appeals Panel is binding on the Governors.
- h) A waiting list for children who have not been offered a place will be kept and will be ranked according to the Admission Criteria. Parents will be informed of their child's position on the waiting list which will not be operated for longer than the end of the October half-term.
- i) The Governing Body reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a school place where false evidence is received in relation to baptism, sibling connections or place of residence.

## **SECONDARY SCHOOLS WITH SIXTH FORMS**

### **SIXTH FORM ADMISSIONS POLICY 2016/17**

In addition to places available for students already in the school, the Governing Body will make available a further 20 places for external students. For both, entry to the Sixth Form is subject to the following.

A. All students who apply for the Sixth Form must study courses for which they have achieved the minimum academic criteria

#### **Courses**

- AS/A2 Level 6 GCSE passes at A\*-C Specific grades at GCSE are required to study certain subjects at AS and A2 Levels. Details are given in the sixth form prospectus.
- Applied GCE A Levels 5 GCSE passes at C or above
- BTEC level 2 4 GCSE at grades C-E

B. In the case of over subscription the following criteria will be used to determine entry:

1. Children who are in the care of the Local Authority (looked after children)
2. Year 11 students attending St Chad's Joint Church School
3. Brothers and sisters of students attending St Chad's. This includes full, half or stepbrothers and sisters, adopted and foster brothers and sisters who are living at the same address and are part of the same family unit.
4. Other students

If more applications are received from external candidates than the number specified then the criteria applied at Year 7 will be used to determine admissions.

#### **NOTES**

1. If an application for admission has been turned down by the Governing Body, parents can appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel. Parents must be allowed at least twenty school days from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful to submit that appeal. Parents must give reasons for appealing in writing and the decision of the Appeals Panel is binding on the Governors.

2. The Governing Body expects that all students specifically selecting a Joint-Church Sixth Form education will wish to be both fully involved in the ethos and spiritual life of the school, and in achieving the aims set out in its Mission Statement.”

*(\* if deemed appropriate a figure can be inserted to indicate total numbers admitted to the Lower Sixth)*

## **GOVERNORS' PUPIL ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE (TERMS OF REFERENCE)**

### **Membership**

1. The membership of the Committee will consist of three Governors appointed by the Governing Body plus the Head Teacher. Associate Members are excluded from any committee votes on admissions, the value of their membership would be severely diminished.
2. The Governing Body will appoint the Chair of the Committee.

Note – The Headteacher of the school is entitled to vote whether or not s/he is a governor but is not entitled to Chair the Committee.

### **Quorum**

At least three members of the Committee have to be present and all must be governors.

### **Terms of Reference**

The main functions are:

1. to draft and review the schools Admission Policy :
2. to assume responsibility for the implementation of the policy; and
3. to report in broad terms all admissions to the Governing Body.

### **Delegated Powers**

- a) To consult as appropriate with other Admission Authorities on the schools admission policy.
- b) To draft the Admission Policy, including criteria, which must be approved annually by the Governing Body.
- c) When details of applications are received from the LA draw up an admissions list indicating the order in which all applications have been ranked, prioritising these by reference to the over subscription criteria. Admission Authorities of seriously oversubscribed schools need not give individual rankings to applicants in the lowest priority groups for admission, if there is no likelihood of being able to offer them a place even after elimination of multiple offers.
- d) Forward this list to the co-ordinating Local Authority.

### **Clerking**

The Governing Body must appoint a Clerk to the Committee. This may be the Clerk to Governors or another clerk. The Headteacher is not allowed to act as clerk.

## **ALLOCATING DUTIES TO THE CLERK TO THE PUPIL ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE**

The duties of the Clerk to the Admissions Committee can be summarised thus:

The Clerk should record the decisions of the Admissions Committee as follows:

- the order in which applicants are ranked as per the published oversubscription criteria.

The Clerk of the Admissions Committee should also:

- ensure that the LA (as per the co-ordinated admissions scheme) is advised as to the order in which applicants are ranked as per the published oversubscription criteria.
- retain any notes from the meeting not included in the minutes for twelve months.

And ensure that:

- Each member of the Committee is provided with a copy of each application, together with copies of the relevant admission policy and criteria and a map of the parish(es) served by the school

# **APPENDICES**

APPENDIX A

## **LA CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS**

*(Bear in mind that each LA may offer variations in guidance particularly in relation to listing candidates for application. So what is set out here is a common model rather than an exact description of any individual LAs system)*

### **PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

LAs operate co-ordinated admissions schemes for all Primary schools and the key elements are thus:

- In each LA there will be a common application form on which parents are invited to express preferences for a school or schools and the reasons for those preferences. This form is returned to the LA and it is that body which organises admissions.
- On those forms, applicants to Catholic Voluntary Aided schools will have to make a statement as to the religious affiliation of their child.
- The LA advises the Catholic school as to the names of applicants and the Governing Body then ranks applicants according to its published Admissions Number and Admissions Policy without reference to the order of parental preferences.
- The school informs the LA as to the order in which applicants have been ranked and the LA, not the school, informs parents as to the offer of a single school place.

## Headline Issues

- For parents the LA co-ordination of admissions to Joint-Church Voluntary Aided schools still represents a very real break with long established practice. In turn, this places a great onus on Primary Headteachers, working with the Diocesan Education Service, to ensure that the parents of all possible applicants to their schools have received, completed and returned the common application form.
- As part of that exercise, it will be more than helpful to arrange with the LA for your school to have sufficient copies of the common preference form for distribution to prospective applicants and placement in suitable locations other than the school e.g. associated parish church(es).
- LAs will check with the Governing Body, as Admissions Authority, as to their views on the nature of the application process and the application form. Both need to be studied with great care.
  - As part of the process seek to ensure that confirmation of faith statements is reserved to the Governing Body and does not involve the LA. Similarly any decisions as to the exact nature of parish boundaries are best left to the parish(es) under whose patrimony the school rests.
  - On the application form parents will be invited to express a number of preferences; this is not an obligation and should not read to that effect. Try to see that questions relating to religious affiliation are kept as simple as possible, for example, "Is your child a baptised Catholic" or, alternatively, "Is your child of the Catholic faith"?

## SECONDARY SCHOOLS

For Secondary admissions, all LAs have co-ordinated admissions schemes.

Again key issues include:

- Distribution to all local parents of a single common application form on which they are invited to express up to three preferences in ranked order together with any reasons they have for their preferences; note this is an invitation not an obligation;
- The exchange with other LAs of specified information relating to parental applications;
- The LA advises the Catholic school as to the names of applicants and the Governing Body then ranks applicants according to its published Admission Number and Admissions Policy without reference to the order of parental preferences
- The school informs the LA as to the order in which applicants have been ranked and the LA, not the school, informs the parents as to the offer of a single school place.
- LAs adhere to specified dates on which key events will take place including the offer of a single school place made in writing to each parent prior to the September entry to Secondary school;
- Within information provided by LAs they must also advise as to how the single offer of a single place will be determined where applicants could potentially receive multiple offers because they are high enough up the priority list at more than one preferred school; and:
- how occasional and late applications will be dealt with (the latter cannot be given priority over those who have applied on time).

## Headline Issues

In addition to cautions already instanced in relation to study of the application process and form, please note

- Important to check on wording in LA procedures relating to parents who do not fill in a preference form. Inevitably this will read “allocation to the nearest appropriate school”, it is worth arguing the point that if the child is presently in a Catholic Primary school then the “nearest appropriate school” is a Catholic Secondary school with places available unless the parent(s) object to such.
- Close liaison is needed with Primary colleagues who often provide parents with detailed advice on completing Secondary school application forms. This can include emphasis on parental rights to express only preferences for Catholic schools and to reinforce this in any explanation statement as to the reasons for the preferences; the importance of such a statement was highlighted in the 2002 Newham Judgement.

## APPENDIX B

### DEFINITIONS OF BAPTISED CATHOLIC

Within the main body of the Briefing Notes, I suggested that trying to include within Admissions Policies a definition of baptised Catholic might well prove unwieldy.

However, and without treading too deep into Canon Law, it may be useful for Admissions Authorities in Catholic schools to dwell a little more on who may be included within the definition and so afforded first criteria status.

In addition to candidates who can give evidence of baptism within the Roman Catholic Church, the definition of baptised Catholic can be extended to children enrolled in the catechumenate (process of preparation to be received into full communion with the Catholic Church) and those from Oriental Rite Churches in union with Rome viz:

- ALEXANDRIAN : Coptic, Ethiopian
- ANTIOCH: Malankrese (Sri Lanka), Maronite, Syrian
- ARMENIAN: Armenian
- CHALDEAN (Syro-Oriental): Chaldean, Malabar
- CONSTANTINOPLE (BYZANTINE): Albanian, Byelorussian, Bulgarian, Greek, Melchite, Italo-Albanian, Romanian, Russian, Ruthenian, Slovakian, Ukrainian, Hungarian

Though the above may explain a reluctance to include a definition of Baptised Catholic within the specimen admissions policies, hopefully the information will assist Admissions Authorities. Equally, if the latter needs further guidance in individual cases, then do not hesitate to contact the Curial Offices.

## APPENDIX C

### ADMISSIONS: IN-YEAR FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOLS

In-Year Fair Access Protocols (formerly referred to as ‘hard to place pupil protocols’) exist to ensure that access to education is secured quickly for children who have no school place, and to ensure that all schools in an area admit their fair share of children with challenging behaviour. Along with devolved funding and responsibility for alternative provision, an agreed protocol encourages schools to work together in partnership to improve behaviour and tackle persistent absence.

All Admission Authorities and Admission Forums must have Fair Access protocols in place. In addition, all schools must participate in the Local Authority area's protocol in order to ensure that unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. This includes admitting children above the Published Admission Number to schools that are already full. For that reason, admission appeal panels should not view the fact that a protocol has obliged a school to admit over its admission number as an indication that it can do so in the normal admissions round without causing prejudice to the efficient provision of education or efficient use of resources.

Clearly, there is a balance to be struck between finding a place quickly, when the place might be in an undersubscribed school or one facing challenging circumstances, and finding a school place that is appropriate for the child. In agreeing a protocol the Local Authority, Admission Forums and Admission Authorities should ensure that no school, including those with places available, is asked to take an excessive or unreasonable number of children who have been excluded from other schools.

Admission Authorities and Admission Forums must ensure that all children who arrive outside the normal admissions round who may have difficulty securing a place are covered in their protocol. Children with special educational needs but without statements should be treated in the same way as all other applicants, but protocols must include arrangements for ensuring that, where this is prior need for particular support or for reasonable adjustments to be made for children with special educational needs or disabilities, such children are placed quickly. Where a Local Authority, as the corporate parent, directs the Admission Authority in a Catholic school to admit a child in care, the Governing Body must admit the child to the school at any specified time during the year, even if the school is full, unless the Adjudicator upholds an appeal from the Admission Authority. (Keep in mind that only the Governing Body in a Catholic school can admit; not the Headteacher).

The Governing Body of a Voluntary Aided school may under section 97 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (as amended by section 49 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) refer a Local Authority's decision to direct the admission of a child in accordance with a locally agreed protocol under section 96 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to the Schools Adjudicator. The Adjudicator then determines which school is to be required to admit the child. The Governing Body of the school must then admit the child. If a Governing Body refuses to comply with a direction under section 96, the Local Authority may refer the matter to the Secretary of State for consideration under section 497 of the Education Act 1996.

Once In-Year Fair Access protocols have been agreed Admission Forums must monitor how well they are working, how quickly the children are found places, and the contribution every school in the area is making. Additional guidance, along with example protocols and case studies of good practice can be found at [www.dfes.gov.uk/sacode](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/sacode).