

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Admissions policy 2017-18

INTRODUCTION

St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School is a Catholic school in the Diocese of Hallam.

The school provides distinctive Christ-centred, Catholic education for children aged 3+ to 11+ years, with priority being given to Catholic children who live within the parishes of Our Lady of Beauchief and St Thomas of Canterbury, and The Holy Spirit, Dronfield.

The school is a Catholic Voluntary Academy in which the Governing Body is responsible for admissions. It is guided in that responsibility by the requirements of law, the requirements of the school's Articles of Association, by advice from the Diocesan Trustees and by its duty to the Catholic community and the Common Good.

Please note that admission to St Thomas of Canterbury Nursery School does not guarantee that a place will be subsequently offered in the Primary School; an application to Reception must be made in accordance with this policy.

Please note also that admission to St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School does not guarantee admission to a Catholic High School, which has its own admission policy.

PROCEDURES

A child is entitled to a full time school place in the September following their fourth birthday. A request may be made for the admission of a child below compulsory school age to be deferred to a later date 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. A child may take up the offer of a part time place until reaching compulsory school age. On receipt of the offer of a place a parent/carer should notify the school as soon as possible that they wish to defer their child's entry to school or, where possible, take up a part time place.

Co-ordinated Scheme for Admission Arrangements

The co-ordinated scheme for admissions is a mechanism ensuring that all parents/carers of children resident within the Sheffield Local Authority who have submitted an application before the closing date will receive a single offer of a school place on the same day.

Applications are made by completing the Common Application Form, to be found in the Local Authority Admission Booklet and on the Sheffield Council website, or on line via the Sheffield Council website. In addition, for admission to Catholic schools it is necessary to complete an Additional Information Form (AIF) produced by the Diocese of Hallam, available on the above website.

Parental Preference

The Local Authority Common Application Form provides the opportunity for parents/carers to express up to three choices of schools in rank order of preference. Applications will be considered on an Equal Preference basis; ranking by preference will only be used in the final allocation for a place where there is more than one potential offer.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan

The admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) is dealt with by a separate procedure. Children with an EHC which 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 (see footnote 3).

Admission of children outside their Normal Age Group.

A request may be made for children to be admitted outside their normal age group. Any such request should be made in writing to the Headteacher of the school. The Governing Body will make its decision based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. They will take into account the views of the Headteacher, including the Headteacher's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the parents, and appropriate medical and education professionals.

The date of admission to the School for 2017/2018 is September 2017

The Planned Admission Number (PAN) for 2017/18 is 30

Criteria for Admission

Where there are more applications for admission to the school than the Planned Admission Number stated (see above) the Governing Body will apply the following criteria in strict order of priority:

Category One

Catholic children (see footnote 2) who:-

- a) are Looked After Children or previously Looked After Children (footnote 4)
- b) are siblings (footnote 5) of Catholic children attending the school at the time of admission
- c) live within the feeder parishes for the school (footnote 1)
- d) live within other parishes

Category Two

Looked After Children or previously Looked After Children who are not baptised Catholics.

Category Three

Children who are not baptised in the Catholic faith but have siblings attending the school at the time of admission.

Category Four

Children who are members of:

- a) Orthodox Churches as recognised by the Catholic Church (footnote 6) who have sought the written support of their minister and live within the feeder parishes for the school
- b) Other Christian Churches, who are full members of Churches Together in England (footnote 7) at the time of application, whose parents/carers have sought the written support of their minister and live within the feeder parishes for the school
- c) Orthodox Churches as recognised by the Catholic Church who have sought the written support of their minister and live outside the feeder parishes for the school
- d) Other Christian Churches, who are full members of Churches Together in England at the time of application, whose parents have sought the written support of their minister and live outside the feeder parishes for the school

Category Five

Children who are members of other World Faiths whose parents/carers wish their children to be educated in a Christ centred environment and have the written support of their Religious Leader.

Category Six

Children with a specific educational, medical or emotional need, who do not fall into any of the above categories, provided that appropriate written evidence from a suitably qualified professional, e.g. Doctor or Social Worker, is submitted with the application indicating why that school is the most appropriate setting.

Category Seven

Children whose parents/carers are seeking a Christian environment for their children's education.

Category Eight

Other children

The Governing Body will, where possible, admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the 30th child admitted.

In the event of the school reaching capacity mid category, the Governing Body as Admissions Authority will allocate places for all the children in that category using a random allocation process which will be independently monitored.

FOOTNOTES AND DEFINITIONS

Footnote 1.

The feeder parishes of St Thomas of Canterbury school are The Holy Spirit (Dronfield) and Our Lady of Beauchief and St. Thomas of Canterbury.

Footnote 2

Catholic children are children who have been baptised into the Roman Catholic Church, those formally received into the Roman Catholic Church, Catechumens, Candidates for Reception (those formally preparing to be received into the Roman Catholic Church) or those members of Churches who are in Full Communion with the Roman Catholic Church.

Definition of a Catechumen

Catechumens are those children who have expressed an explicit desire to be baptised into the Roman Catholic Church and who are currently preparing to receive the same by regular participation in Sunday worship and a recognised programme of preparation.

Definition of a Candidate for Reception

Candidates for Reception into Full Communion with the Roman Catholic Church are already baptised in another Christian Tradition, who have expressed an explicit desire to be incorporated into the Roman Catholic Church and who are currently preparing to be received into the Church by regular participation in Sunday worship and a recognised programme of preparation.

It is advisable that records of any such reception or incorporation are maintained by the parish.

Footnote 3

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.

Footnote 4

A Looked After Child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (Sect 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). A previously Looked After Child is a child who immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order.

Footnote 5.

Siblings are defined as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters.

Footnote 6

Orthodox Churches

Please contact the Diocesan Schools' Department for further information

Footnote 7

Churches Together in England

For the most up to date list please visit www.churches-together.org.uk or contact the school. Confirmation of full membership of Churches Together in England should be obtained via the Minister/Religious Leader's Reference and the Additional Information Form.

Place of residence

A child will be deemed to live at the residential property at which the parents or persons with parental responsibility for the child reside at the closing date for receipt of applications for admission to the school.

Where parental responsibility is held by more than one person and those persons reside in separate properties, the child's ordinary place of residence will be deemed to be that property at which the child resides for the greater part of the week.

Late Applications

Late applications will be dealt with in accordance with the LA coordinated admissions procedure.

Waiting List

1. If children are refused admission to the school their names will be placed on a waiting list which will be established on the offer day. The waiting list is determined according to the Governing Body's priority of admission over-subscription criteria.
2. Following the offer day, should an application be received for that school for a child with a higher priority, as determined by the admissions criteria for a place at the school, they will be placed on the list above those with a lower priority.
3. A vacancy only arises in the Reception year when the number of offers of admission to the school falls below the admission number.

False Information

1. Where the Governing Body has made an offer of a place at the school on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent/carer, which has effectively denied a place to a child with a stronger claim to a place the offer of a place may be withdrawn.
2. If a child starts attending the school on the basis of fraudulent and intentionally misleading information the place may be withdrawn by the Governing Body, depending on the length of time that the child has been at the school.
3. Where a place or an offer has been withdrawn, the application will be reconsidered by the Governing Body and a right of independent appeal offered if a place is refused.

Applications outside the normal admissions round

Applications outside the normal admissions round will be dealt with in accordance with LA procedures.

Appeals against the Governing Body's decision to refuse admission

1. If a place is not available at the school, parents/carers have the right of appeal. Such appeals against non-admission will be heard by an Independent Appeals Panel formed in accordance with the DfE Admissions Appeal Code. Details of the appeals process will be made available to all unsuccessful applicants
2. Parents/carers who intend to make an appeal against the Governing Body's decision to refuse admission must submit a notice of appeal, by the date specified in the refusal letter, to:
Democratic Services
Sheffield City Council
Town Hall

Sheffield S1 2HH

Appeal hearings will be held in accordance with the timescales specified in the DfE Admission Appeals Code.

Timetable

Details of key dates within the Admissions process are published on the Sheffield City Council Website.

Documentation Required

The school requires additional information not contained on the Common Application Form. The documentation is obtainable in the LA admission booklet and on the Sheffield Council's website. This additional information is required in order to place applications in the correct priority of admission category.

1. *The Additional Information Form*

This should be completed, securely attached to the Common Application form and returned to the LA by the closing date with a copy of the child's baptism certificate if the applicant is Roman Catholic

2. *A Minister's/Religious Leader's Reference*

This is required if the child is a member of another Christian Church or other World Faith.

The Additional Information Form is not an application for admission to the school and its return does not guarantee a place at the school, however failure to complete and return the Additional Information Form may affect the admission category in which the application is placed.