

## **SACRED HEART CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Broadmeads, Ware, Hertfordshire SG12 9HY**

### **DETERMINED ADMISSIONS POLICY 2024 - 2025**

Sacred Heart 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 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 the school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round. The governing body has set its Published Admissions Number (PAN) at 30 children for the school year which begins in September 2023. Applications for Reception are welcome from families whose child reaches his/her 4<sup>th</sup> birthday between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024.

The governing body will admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the last ranked within the school's PAN.

#### **Pupils with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHC) – (see note 1)**

The admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. (This used to be called a Statement of Special Educational Needs). Details of this separate procedure are set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. If your child has an EHC plan you must contact your local authority SEN officer. Children with this school named in their EHC Plan will be admitted. The admission of children with an EHC Plan will reduce the number of places available to other children (see note 1).

#### **Oversubscription Criteria:**

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

1. Catholic 'looked after' children and previously 'looked after' children (see notes 2-3);
2. Baptised Catholic children, who are resident in the Parish of Sacred Heart of Jesus and St Joseph's Catholic Church, Ware. (see note 3);

3. Other baptised Catholic children resident in the parishes of the Lea Valley Deanery (see note 3);
4. Other baptised Catholic children (see note 3);
5. Other 'looked after' children and previously 'looked after' children. (see notes 2-3);
6. Children of catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church (see notes 4-5);
7. Any other children.

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

- i. The Governing Body will give top priority, within a category, to an application where compelling evidence is provided at the time of application, from an appropriate professional such as a doctor, priest or social worker, of an exceptional social, medical, pastoral or other need ***of the child***, which can only be met at this school.
- ii. The attendance of a brother/sister at the school at the time of enrolment will increase the priority of an application within a 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.

### **Tiebreak**

Where the offer of places to the applicants in any of the categories listed above would exceed the number of places available, the places up to the admission number will be offered to those living nearest to the school. Distances are measured by the Local Authority (LA) using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

In the event where two different addresses are the same distance from the school, in the case of a block of flats for example, the lower door number will be deemed nearest as logically this will be closest to the ground and therefore closer. If there are two identical addresses of separate applicants, the tiebreak will be random allocation. Every child entered onto the HCC admissions database has an individual random number assigned between 1 and 1 million, against each preference school. When there is a need for a final tiebreak, the random number is used to allocate the place, with the lowest number given priority.

### **Application Procedure for 2024 – 2025**

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round, you **must** complete an online application form from your local authority (paper forms are also available on request.) If you are applying under criteria 2, 3, 4 or 6 you should also complete the **School's Supplementary Information Form (SIF)**. Whilst this is not compulsory, the information on the SIF enables the Governing Body to assess your application fully against the School's criteria in the event of oversubscription. Please return the SIF (in person or by post) to the school, together with all other relevant paperwork required for your application. If you do not complete both of the forms described above and return them by **15<sup>th</sup> January 2024**, the

Governing Body will be obliged to consider your application against the oversubscription criteria and your child will be ranked under the lowest criterion. It is very unlikely that your child will be offered a place if a SIF is not supplied.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application, on or about 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024. This information will also be available on line for those who have submitted an online application. Parents should accept or decline the place as soon as possible. If you are unsuccessful (unless your child was offered a place at a school you ranked higher) you will be informed of the reasons, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above and you will have right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

### **Late Applications**

Applications received after the closing date will be dealt with after the initial allocation process has been completed. If the school is oversubscribed it is very unlikely that late applicants will obtain a place.

### **Appeals**

Parents wishing to appeal who applied through Hertfordshire's online system should log in to their online application and click on the link "register an appeal". Out of county residents and paper applicants should call the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request their registration details and log into [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals) and click on the link "log into the appeals system".

### **Reception Year Deferred Entry**

A child is entitled to a full-time school place in the September following his/her 4<sup>th</sup> birthday. Applicants may defer entry to school up until compulsory school age i.e. the first day of term following the child's fifth birthday. Application is made in the usual way and then the deferral until January or April is requested. The place will then be held until the first day of the spring or summer term as applicable. Entry may not be deferred beyond compulsory school age or beyond the year for which the application has been made. Therefore, applicants whose children have birthdays in the summer term may only defer until the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. Upon receipt of the offer of a place a parent should notify the school as soon as possible if they wish to defer until the spring or summer term.

### **Part-time attendance**

Applicants may also request that their child attend part-time until compulsory school age is reached. Upon receipt of the offer of a place a parent should notify the school as soon as possible if they wish to 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 his/her normal age group e.g. 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 – 31<sup>st</sup> August, may request that the child be admitted out of his/her normal age group, starting reception at 5 years of age. Any such request should be made in writing to the Chair of Governors at the time of application. The governing body will make its decision based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child, taking into account school organisation issues and

the views of the parents and any professionals involved. **Parents must have received the agreement of the governing body before any admission application for delayed entry is made.** If permission is received then the parents will make their admission application in the normal way for the year in which they wish their child to start school. No age-related priority will be given. **Applications cannot be held over from one academic year to the next.** If permission is refused then parents must make their admission application at the normal time.

### Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This 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 and will be held open until 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024 unless applicants request in writing to remain on the list. **Inclusion in the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.**

### In-Year Applications

An application for admission can be made for any child at any time outside the normal admissions round. Applications should be made directly to the school by contacting *the school office on 01920 461678 / [admin@sacredheart312.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@sacredheart312.herts.sch.uk)* If a place is available and there is no waiting list the child will be admitted. If there is a waiting list, then you will be sent a Supplementary Information Form to complete. Applications will be ranked by the Governing Body in accordance with the oversubscription criteria as set out above. If a place cannot be offered at this time then you may ask us for the reasons, you will be informed of your right of appeal to an independent panel and your child will be placed on the waiting list.

### In Year Appeals

We will write to you with the outcome of your application and, if you have been unsuccessful, the county council will write to you with registration details to enable you to login and appeal online at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals).

### Fair Access

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 admissions round, the Governing Body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol that has been agreed by both the local authority and the Governing Body for the current school year. The Governing Body has this power even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number and giving priority over those on the Continued Interest List if necessary.

### Change of Details

If any of the details on either of your forms changes between the date of application and the receipt of the letter of offer or refusal, you **must** inform the School and the local authority immediately. If misleading information is given or allowed to remain on either of your forms, the Governing Body reserves the right to withdraw the place, even if the child has already started at the School.

**NOTES (these explanatory 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. 'catechumen' means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens.
5. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.
6. "children of other Christian denominations" means children who belong to other churches and ecclesial communities which, acknowledge God's revelation in Christ, confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures, and, in obedience to God's will and in the power of the Holy Spirit commit themselves: to seek a deepening of their communion with Christ and with one another in the Church, which is his body; and to fulfil their mission to proclaim the Gospel by common witness and service in the world to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. An ecclesial community which on principle has no credal statements in its tradition, is included if it manifests faith in Christ as witnessed to in the Scriptures and is committed to working in the spirit of the above.

All members of Churches Together in England and CYTŪN are deemed to be included in the above definition, as are all other churches and ecclesial communities that are in membership of any local Churches Together Group (by whatever title) on the above basis.

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

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

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

8. ‘brother or sister’ includes:

- (i) all natural brothers or sisters, half brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address; and
- (ii) the child of a parent’s partner where that child lives for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same home address as the child who is the subject of the application.

9. A ‘parent’ means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for a child, and any person who has care of a child.

10. To demonstrate an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the 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 2024-2025.

[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.