

ST COLUMBA'S CATHOLIC BOYS' SCHOOL

GOVERNORS' POLICY STATEMENT



Admissions Policy 2023/24

Head Teacher: Mr N Fisher
Chair of Governors: Mrs J Johnson

Originator Date	December 2021
Review Date (Annually)	Autumn 2022

Admissions into the School commencing September 2023

St. Columba's Catholic School for Boys' is a Catholic comprehensive school in the Diocese of Southwark. The governors are fully committed to maintaining the status of the school and wish to encourage applications from boys of all abilities.

Admissions to the school are made by the Governing Body. Admission will be made without reference to ability.

- Governors plan to admit 180 boys into Year 7 without reference to ability to the school in September 2023
- Boys with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) which names the school will be admitted under a separate procedure and without reference to the criteria below.
- Application for admission must be made by completing the Common Application Form (CAF) provided by the Local Authority in which the applicant lives. The closing date set nationally for the return of the forms to the home Local Authority is 31 October 2021. Applications for places in other year-groups can be made at any time.
- Governors request parents to complete a supplementary form and return this to the school by 31 October 2022. The Supplementary Form will be to establish Catholic practice and commitment. It will seek information not available on the Common Application Form relating to the evidence set out in Section 1 below. It will require a reference from a parish priest or other minister of religion. If a supplementary form is not received, the Governors will not be able to apply their admission criteria and the application may be considered under the 'other boys' category. Parents of boys applying under the 'other boys' category do not need to complete the Supplementary Information Form.

Criteria for Admission

Governors will give priority to Catholic boys with Catholic practice. Baptised Catholic boys whose practice is not within Catholic tradition will be considered after Catholic boys with Catholic practice. The evidence which governors will take into account will be:

1. Evidence

- 1.1. A self-assessment of Catholic or Christian practice and observance, to be counter-signed by the parish priest, chaplaincy minister or minister of religion;
- 1.2. The originals of the baptismal certificate of the applicants for places.

2. Oversubscription criteria

Where more applications are received than there are places available, applicants will be admitted in the following order:

- 2.1. Baptised Catholic 'Looked-after children' or 'Looked-after children' in the care of Catholic or non-Catholic families, or those who have previously been 'Looked-after' according to the Local Government and Children's Act 1989.
- 2.2. Baptised Catholic children and members of Oriental Rite Churches in Union with Rome
- 2.3. Other 'Looked-after children' including those who have previously been adopted or 'Looked-after'
- 2.4. Boys who are baptised members of Eastern rite churches that are not in communion with the See of Rome.

- 2.5. Boys who are Christians (either baptised or preparing for adult baptism) who are in membership of Churches Together in England or the Evangelical Alliance, provided that they have a statement of Church membership from the appointed minister or leader.
- 2.6. Boys of other faiths, provided that they have a statement of membership from a faith leader etc
- 2.7. Other boys.

3. Tie-breakers

Where applicants are of equal standing within each of 2.1 – 2.6 above, the following sub-criteria will apply:

- 3.1 Social, pastoral and medical needs which make the school particularly suitable for the child in question. Strong and relevant evidence must be provided by an appropriate professional authority (eg qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker or priest).
- 3.2 Within each of groups 2.1 to 2.6 above, preference will be given to applicants who have a named sibling attending St. Columba's Catholic School for Boys', St. Catherine's Catholic School or Christ the King Sixth Form College at the time of the applicant's application; [Note: A "brother or sister" means children who live as brother or sister, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers or sisters. It would not include other relatives eg cousins.]
- 3.3 Where it is necessary to choose between applicants either within the category of 2.2 or that of 2.4, priority will be given to those boys whose applications show the greatest degree of religious practice. Applications will be ranked in the order shown on the supplementary form: highest ranking to those who attend Mass regularly on three out four Sundays over the past three years. Evidence scrutinised will include: the priest's endorsement form showing degree of practice and evidence of baptism.
- 3.4 Within each of groups 2.1 to 2.6 above, preference will be given to applicants who are the sons or in the care of a member of staff who has been employed at the school for at least two years (except where the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage).
- 3.5. On the basis of proximity to the school between the applicants' home address to the School's main visitor pedestrian entrance where priority is given to those determined to be closer to the school as measured by the Local Authority's system. Home address will be taken as the boy's home address at the time of application. That is the address at which he lives with the parent or registered guardian who is the main carer; that is the parent eligible to receive Child Benefit and/or Child Tax Credit. Where the last remaining place is to be allocated and two or more children are deemed to live at the same distance from the school the place will be decided by the drawing of lots.

4. Notes for guidance

- 4.1 In the context of school admissions Catholic children are defined as Children who are baptized or received into the Catholic Church, children baptized or received into the Eastern Churches in union with Rome and children of members of the Ordinariate. (All children covered by this definition will be treated equally.)
- 4.2 Applications made after the closing date will be processed once the allocation procedure for on-time applications has been finalised. Priority among applications will be given to those who have recently moved into the area, in accordance with the Admissions criteria.
- 4.3 If an applicant and his parents have lived in a parish for fewer than two months at the time of application, they may seek support from the parish priest of their previous parish.

- 4.4 In the event that a parish priest has been in post for fewer than two months before the time of signing or who is away from the parish long-term, the governors will accept a signature from the previous parish priest, or from a parish worker (such as a deacon or parish sister) who knows the applicant. In this case, the parish priest should countersign.
- 4.5 If a Christian, non-Catholic boy applies to the school, whose father or mother is the local minister/pastor, the 'priest's endorsement' should be counter-signed by another accredited pastor/minister.
- 4.6 The school participates in the local authority's Fair Access Protocol to allocate places to vulnerable and other children in accordance with the School Admission Code 2014. Admitting pupils under the protocol may require the school to admit above the planned admission number for the relevant year group.

5. **In-year (casual) Admissions**

Applications for a place at the school in-year must be made using the Common Application Form of the local authority (LA) where the child resides. This form must be returned to the LA. The school's supplementary form should also be completed to enable the governors to rank the application in the event of there being more than one application for a place. The governors will use the same criteria to rank the application as that listed above. The offer of a place at the school will be made by the LA on behalf of the governors. In the event of the governors deciding that a place cannot be offered, parents will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on the waiting list. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

6. **Waiting Lists**

Parents of children who have not been offered a place at the school may ask for their child's name to be placed on the waiting list. The waiting list will be operated for the rest of the academic year using the same admissions criteria listed above. Placing a child's name on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place. It is possible that when a child is directed under the local authority's fair access protocol, they will take precedence over those children already on the list.

7. **Appeals**

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with section 85(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Appeals must be made in writing and must set out the reasons on which the appeal is made.

Appeals should be made to the Admissions Appeal Clerk at the school address. Parent/Carers have the right to make oral representations to the Appeal Panel.