

Archdiocese of Westminster



ST CROSS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

'Together we grow in God's Love'

SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICY

1ST SEPTEMBER 2025 TO 31ST AUGUST 2026



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

St Cross Catholic Primary School aims to ensure that all personal data collected about staff, pupils, parents, governors, visitors and other individuals is collected, stored and processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the expected provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) as set out in the Data Protection Bill.

Approved by Chair of Governors:

Next Review Date:

Review Committee:

Local Governing Body

St. Cross Catholic Primary School

School Admission Policy for the school year

1st September 2025 to 31st August 2026

(This Policy consists of eight pages)

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 Jesus Christ.

The governing body has sole responsibility for admissions to this school and, in accordance with its Published Admission Number intends to admit 30 pupils to the reception class in the school year commencing 1st September 2025.

Applications are welcome from families whose child reaches the age of 4 years between 1st September 2024 and 31st August 2025 (inclusive).

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. All applicants are therefore expected to give their full unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school.

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic applicants in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed later in this document.

In this policy '*Applicant*' refers to the person making an application on behalf of a child.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND TIMETABLE

(i) ANNUAL RECEPTION CLASS ADMISSIONS.

The procedure for consideration for applications will be as follows:

To apply for a place at this school, applicants should complete and return two separate forms by the closing date of 15th January 2025.

(i) You must complete an Online Application Form from your Local Authority (LA). Please refer to; www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions. (Do not return the LA form to the school).

(ii) 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 recorded post) together with all other relevant paperwork required for your application. Do not send the SIF to school by email.

Please note that if you do not complete a SIF and return it to the school the Governing Body will apply the school's admission arrangements using only the information supplied on the LA application form which may result in the application being given lower priority.

If more applications are received than there are places available, then applications will be ranked by the governing body in accordance with the following oversubscription criteria.

1. Catholic 'looked after' children and Catholic children who have been adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders immediately after having been looked after *including those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (See Notes 1-5 & 9 below).*
2. Baptised Catholic children with compelling evidence, at the time of application, from an appropriate professional such as a doctor, priest or social worker, of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can only be met at this school.
3. Baptised Catholic children (See Note 9 below).
4. Other children looked after and children who have been adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders immediately after having been looked after, *including those children not of the Catholic faith who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (See Note 1-5 below).*
5. Other children with compelling evidence, at the time of application, from an appropriate professional such as a doctor, priest or social worker, of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can only be met at this school.
6. Children of catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (See Notes 10 & 11 below).
7. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by either a Certificate of Baptism or by a letter confirming membership from a minister of religion (See Note 12 below).
8. Any other applicant.

When considering applications, the Governors will give preference, within each criterion, to any child who has a sibling at the school at the date of admission so that the application will be placed at the top of the criterion under which the application is made. (See note 7)

Tie Break - Where the offer of a place to all applicants in the criteria above would still lead to oversubscription, the places up to the published admission number will be offered to the applicants living nearest to the school. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the Address Base Premium address point of the child's house to the address point of the school.

In the event that there is still a tie the allocation will be dealt with by random selection using an independently witnessed random draw.

Applications in previous years – During the past few years (as at January 2020) the governing body has been able to offer places to applicants in oversubscription criterion 8, however there is no guarantee that we will be able to do this for future applications.

PLEASE NOTE: Whilst the school welcomes applications from all categories, priority is given to all Catholic candidates and, if oversubscribed, we would be unable to offer places to some non-Catholic applicants which may include siblings of children already at the school.

Applicants will be advised of the outcome of your application by the LA on our behalf on 19th April 2025. The information will also be available online for those who submitted an electronic application. If any application is unsuccessful the applicant may ask us for the reasons, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above, and have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

Children Educated outside their Chronological Age Group (except applications for Reception Summer Born Children) - Parents may apply for their child to be educated outside his/her chronological age group i.e. a year behind or a year ahead. Application should be made to the Chair of Governors at the time of application and any supporting evidence should be submitted at the same time. Governors will consider each case on its own merits and permission will only be given in exceptional circumstances.

Reception Year Deferred Entry - Applicants may defer entry to school up until statutory 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 deferment is requested. The place will then be held until the first day of the spring or summer term. Applicants may also choose for their child to attend part-time until statutory school age is reached. Entry may not be deferred beyond statutory 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 1st April 2025. Please note that applications must be made in the normal way even if you wish your child's entry to be deferred.

Admission of 'Summer Born' Children.

If a parent wishes his/her child to be educated outside his/her normal age group, i.e. a child born between 1st April – 31st August being admitted to Reception at 5 years of age, they should make the school aware of this by writing a letter to the Chair of Governors at the time of application. Parents must then submit an application in the normal way for the year in which they wish the child to start school. This application will be treated in the same way as all other applications and there is no guarantee that an offer will be made.

Continuing Interest (Waiting lists)

After places have been offered, Hertfordshire County Council will maintain a continuing interest (waiting) list for all community and voluntary controlled schools. A child's position on a CI list will be determined by the admission criteria outlined above and a child's place on the list can change as other children join or leave it. The county council will contact parents/carers if a vacancy becomes available

and it can be offered to a child. Continuing interest lists will be maintained for every year group until the summer term (date to be specified and confirmed to parents at the time of allocation). To remain on the CI (waiting) list after this time, parents must confirm they are still interested in a place by completing an In Year application form

(ii) OTHER 'IN YEAR' ADMISSIONS.

From time to time places become vacant within the school.

'In Year' Admissions should be made directly to the school. You should complete the St Cross 'Supplementary Information Form' and return it to the school office

The procedure for consideration for applications will be as follows:

If at any time during the school year a place is, or becomes available in any year group then the Governors will consider applications from parents or carers who wish their child to attend St. Cross School.

If more applications are received than there are places available, then applications will be ranked by the governing body in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed on Page 2.

When considering applications, the Governing Body will give preference in order, within each criterion, to;

- (1) any child who has a sibling at the school at the date of admission. (see general notes below) and then;
- (2) any child without the offer of any other school place.

Tie Break - Where the offer of a place to all applicants in each of the criterion above would still lead to oversubscription, the places up to the published admission number will be offered to the applicants living nearest to the school. (See the tie break item on page 3 for details of how this is done)

In the event that there is still a tie the allocation will be dealt with by random selection using an independently witnessed random draw.

If a place is offered to any applicant and that applicant subsequently does not accept the offer the next applicant at the closing date will be offered the place all in accordance with the aforementioned criteria.

If no applications are received, then the vacant place will be offered to the first application received thereafter.

General Notes applicable to all applications

1. 'Children Looked After' has the same meaning as in section 22 of the Children Act 1989, and means any child in the care of a local authority and provided with accommodation by them at the time of application. (eg children with foster parents).
2. 'Adopted. - An adopted child is any child who has been formally adopted and whose parent can give proof of adoption. This includes children who were previously in local authority care adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002. Children who were not 'looked after' immediately before being adopted, or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order will not be prioritised under Rules 1 & 4.
3. 'Child Arrangements Order'. A Child Arrangements order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.8 settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the

child is to live. Children 'looked after' immediately before the order is made qualify in this category.

4. 'Special Guardianship Order'. A special order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.14A appointing one or more individuals to be a special guardian. Children 'looked after' immediately before the order is made qualify in this category.
5. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.
6. 'Parent' is defined as the person or persons who have legal responsibility for the child.
7. 'Sibling' means a child who is a brother or sister. A sibling can also be a step brother, step sister, half-brother or half-sister, adopted or foster brothers and sisters whether or not they reside at the same home address. The child of a parent's partner where that child resides for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same address as the applicant.

8. **Home address definition**

The address provided must be the child's current permanent address at the time of application.

- At the time of application" means the closing date for applications
- "Permanent" means that the child has lived at that address for at least a year

Where a family has not lived at an address for a year, they must be able to demonstrate that they own the property or have a tenancy agreement for a minimum of 12 months* and the child must be resident in the property at the time of application.

The application can only be processed using one address. If a child lives at more than one address (for example due to a separation) the address used will be the one where the child lives for the majority of the time. If a child lives at two addresses equally, parents/carers should make a single joint application naming one address.

If a child's permanent residence is disputed, parents/carers should provide court documentation to evidence the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes. If two applications are received, with different addresses and/or different preferences, neither will be processed until the address issue is reconciled.

It is for a child's home LA to determine address. If two applications, with different addresses are received from the same LA, it will be for that LA to determine permanent address. If two applications are received from two different LAs, the above process will be used

If two different applications are received for the same child from the same address, e.g., containing different preferences, parents/carers will be invited to submit a joint application or provide court documentation to evidence the preferences that should be used for the admission process. Until the preference issue is reconciled neither application will be processed.

For the transfer application rounds, if the initial differing applications (one or both) were received "on-time", an amended joint application will also be considered "on-time" if received before the "late deadline". If the amended joint application is received after the late date, it will be treated as "late". The late deadline for the 2025/26 transfer application process is 2nd December 2025 for secondary and upper applications and 1st February 2026 for primary, junior and middle applications. If these dates change, amendments will be published on the HCC admissions web pages at the start of the 2025/26 application process in September 2025.

9. '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 who is part of a Catholic family where a letter from a priest demonstrates that the child would have been baptised or received if

it were not for their status as a looked after child (e.g. a looked after child in the process of adoption by a Catholic family).

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.

10. '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 for a child aged 7 or over. For a child under 7 years of age it will be the certificate of the parent.
11. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches and is normally evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism or Reception from the authorities of that church.
12. "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 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.
13. Twins, Triplets and other multiple births – Where the final place available is offered to a child that has siblings (eg. twins) applying for a place in the same year, these siblings will also be admitted even if it means that the proposed PAN is exceeded.
14. Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) - 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.

Continuing Interest List.

In addition to their right of appeal unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a 'continuing interest list'. Any child registered on the list will be considered for any vacant place along with any new applications all in accordance with the procedures and criteria set out above. Any parent wishing their child to be added to the Continuing Interest List should complete a St Cross 'Supplementary Information Form' and return it to the school office.

It will be the responsibility of any applicant to complete a fresh application if any circumstances that may affect their application change at any time.

The list will be held open until 31st August 2025. After that time anyone wishing a child to be included on a new list will be required to submit a new application.

Fair Access Protocols

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 Diocese 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. Priority will be given to children admitted under the Fair Access Protocol over those on the continuing interest list.

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

If your application is unsuccessful you may ask us for the reasons for the refusal of a place. These reasons will be related to the oversubscription criteria listed in the policy and you will have the right of appeal to an independent panel.

Annual Reception Admissions - Hertfordshire parents wishing to appeal, who applied online, should log into their 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 and click on the link 'log into the appeals system'.

In Year Appeals – You will be notified of the outcome of your application and if you have been unsuccessful it will include registration details to enable you to login and appeal online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals. Information on appeals is also available from the school.

Supporting Documents

So that any application can be properly considered it is of vital importance that ALL the necessary supporting documentation (e.g. baptism certificates) are provided with your applications.

The Supplementary Information Form (SIF) is obtainable from both the school and LA (online from HCC only) and from the school website. You can collect the forms from the school or contact the school and ask for them to be sent to you.

Please note that the Governors may ask applicants for proof of their permanent place of residence.

All the published information including the Application Form is available at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions.

End of Policy