Sacred Heart
Catholic Primary School

Admissions Policy
2027 - 2028

This policy was reviewed:	Autumn 2027
This policy will be reviewed again:	Autumn 2028
Governor Committee Responsibility:	Admissions Committee
Statutory policy:	Yes
Source:	Governing Body

This policy refers to admissions to the Reception Class at Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School and to in-year admissions.

1. 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.

2. 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. We warmly welcome pupils of other faiths and none.

3. 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 that begins in September 2027. Applications for Reception are welcome from families whose child reaches their 4th birthday between 1st September 2026 and 31st August 2027.

4. 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.

5. **Pupils with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) – (see note 1)**

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

6. **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:

Criteria	***Description***
a.	'Looked after' Catholic children (LAC), previously 'looked after' Catholic children (PLAC) and Internationally adopted previously looked after Catholic children (IAPLAC) (see notes 2-6)
b.	Other Baptised Catholic children (see note 7)
c.	Other 'looked after' children (LAC), previously 'looked after' children (PLAC) and Internationally adopted previously looked after children (IAPLAC) (see notes 2-6)
d.	Catechumens (children over the age of 7), members of an Eastern Christian

	Church (see notes 8 and 9)
e.	A candidate not falling within categories a. to c. with a sibling in the school at the time of application (see note 12).
f.	Any Christian children (see notes 10-11)
g.	Any other faith children.
h.	Any other children.

7. 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 sibling at the school at the time of application 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.

iii. The children of a member of staff who has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application to the school is made, will be given priority after children in (i) or (ii) above.

8. **Applications in Previous Years**

For the past five years, due to falling birth rates, the Governing Body has been able to offer places to applicants meeting **criteria h.**

9. **Tie Break**

Where the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the sub-categories listed above would still lead to over subscription, the places up to the published admission number will be offered to those living closest to the school, measured by the shortest route by road and/or maintained footpath, accompanied as necessary, from the property to the nearest pedestrian school gate used by the relevant year-group. This distance is measured by the LA, not the school. Accessibility of private or public transport will not be considered. All distances will be measured using a Geographical Information System (GIS). An intention to move to a local address before starting at the school cannot be treated as satisfying the residential criterion. In order to be termed as 'Resident' at an address and so fulfil the residential criteria – the child will be deemed to be resident at a particular address when he/she resides there for a portion of the school week.

10. **Application Procedure for 2027-28**

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round, you must complete an online application form from your home local authority (paper forms are also available on request.) If you are applying under **criteria a, b, d or e** you should also complete the School's Supplementary Information Form (SIF). You can apply under **criteria a, b, d or e** without completing a SIF, however, 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 15th January 2027, the Governing Body will have to consider your application using only the information on the documents supplied. If you don't supply a SIF your child may be placed in a lower category because of lack of information and you may not be offered a place.

11. You will be advised of the outcome of your application on or around the 16th April 2027 by the local authority on our behalf. This information will also be available online 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. Should you wish to appeal, please contact the school as soon as possible for an appeal form on which you must list your reasons for making an appeal. Appeals should be submitted to the school in writing by 22nd May 2027.

II12. **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.

13. **Reception Year Deferred or Part-time Entry (delay entry into school in the same School year**

A child is entitled to a full-time school place in the September following his/her 4th 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.

14. If you feel that your child is not ready to start school in the September following their fourth birthday, you can arrange for your child to attend part-time until they reach compulsory school age, or defer the date your child is admitted to school until later on in the Reception year. If your child's entry is deferred, the school will hold your child's place and not offer it to another child. The latest your child can start school is at the beginning of the summer term 2028.

15. 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 start of the summer term in 2028. 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.

16. If you wish to defer your child's entry, you should confirm this with the school. A Parent should also confirm this with their child's early learning provider, so that the child can continue to receive their free early learning entitlement.

17. **Part-Time Attendance**

Parents 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

18. **Summer Born Children**

The parents of a summer born child i.e. a child born between 1st April and 31st August, may request that the child be admitted out of his/her normal age group, starting Reception at 5 years of age. If a summer born child's start to Reception class is delayed to the autumn term after their 5th birthday (the child is admitted outside of their normal age group), they will be of compulsory school age and expected to attend full time. It is recommended that parents of summer born children considering submitting an application for their child to be admitted into a class outside of their normal age group, also read the DFE guidance which can be found at:

Summer born children starting school: advice for parents - GOV.UK

19. Parents of summer born children who wish for their child to be considered for admission to a class outside of their normal age group are strongly advised to still make an application for the normal age group in the first instance by the closing date of 15th January 2027. In addition, a formal request for a child to be admitted outside of their normal age group should then be made in writing to the Local Authority and to the Headteacher, who will raise it with the Governing Body Admissions Committee. Parents may also provide supporting documentation, should they wish to do so or where relevant; this should also be submitted at the time of making the request.

20. Please contact the school office via email to info@sacredheart.richmond.sch.uk or on 020 8977 6591 for more information on this process.

21. Parents will be informed of the outcome of their request before national offer day.

22. Please note there is no statutory right of appeal if a request is not agreed.

Other Circumstances

23. 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, has experienced problems such as ill-health or has previously been educated outside of their normal age group. Please contact the school office for more information on this process.

24. **Waiting Lists Following Offers for Reception Class**

Please note that inclusion on the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available, and an applicant's place on the waiting list can change over time. Additionally, once the Reception year has started in September, the waiting list will be administered as outlined in the In-Year Applications section below.

25. **In-Year Applications**

An application for admission can be made for any child at any time outside the normal admissions round. Enquiries can be made directly to the school by contacting the school office on 02089776591 or by contacting Achieving for Children (AFC) School Admissions directly.

26. If a place is available, there is no waiting list and the parents have not already been in contact with AFC School Admissions, the child's parents will be directed to AFC School Admissions to complete a common application form, and an offer of a place will be made by them on behalf of the Governing Body.

27. If there is a waiting list, then the new applicant would be added to this list by AFC School Admissions.

28. ***Waiting List***

The waiting list for unsuccessful applications will be held open until 31st July 2028 unless applicants request in writing to remain on the list after this time. The waiting list must be held in over-subscription priority order, and will be re-ranked every time a new application is received.

29. When a place becomes available, the applications will be ranked in accordance with the oversubscription criteria as set out above and an offer made by AFC School Admissions on behalf of the Governing Body.

30. Please note that inclusion on the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available, and an applicant's place on the waiting list can change over time as new applications are received.

31. A new in year transfer application will need to be made to AfC School Admissions from June 2027 to be added to the waiting list for the following academic year.

32. **Right of Appeal**

All applications made to the school are shared with AFC School Admissions, who ultimately offer a place at the school on behalf of the Governing Body. If a place cannot be offered at the time of application, then you may ask us for the reasons. You will also be informed of your right of appeal to an independent panel and your child will be placed on the waiting list.

33. **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.

34. **Nursery Children**

For children currently attending the school's Nursery, application to the Reception class of the school must be made in the normal way to the home local authority. Attendance at the Nursery does not guarantee a place in Reception.

35. **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 started at the school.

Reviewed annually by the Admissions Committee

	APPENDIX 1 NOTES – **(these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)**
1.	**An Education, Health and Care Plan** is a plan made by the local authority under S.37 of the Children and Families Act 2014, specifying the educational provision required for a child.
2.	**A 'Looked after child'** has the same meaning as in S.22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents at the time of making an 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 a Special Guardianship Order.
3.	A, **'Internationally adopted previously looked after child'** (IPLAC) means a child who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
4.	**'Adopted'**. An adopted child is any child who has been formally adopted, having previously been in care and whose parent/ guardian can give proof of this.
5.	**'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.
6.	**'Special Guardianship Order'.** A Special Guardianship Order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.14A appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s). A child 'looked after' immediately before the order is made qualifies in this category.
7.	**'Catholic'** means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. This will be evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism in a Catholic church or a Certificate of Reception into full communion with the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy this includes a looked after child in the process of adoption and living with a Catholic family, where a letter from a priest demonstrates that the child would have been Baptised were it not for his/her status as a looked after child. For a child to be treated as Catholic, evidence of Catholic baptism or Reception in the Catholic 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.
8.	**'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.
9.	**'Eastern Christian Church'** includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism from that Church.

10.	**"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. This is normally evidenced by a certificate of Christening or a letter from their minister or religious leader, confirming membership of that faith community.
11.	All members of Churches Together in England and CYTÛN 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.
12.	**Sibling includes:** All natural brothers and sisters, half-brother and sisters, adopted brothers and sisters, stepbrothers and sisters, foster brothers and sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address, and 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 address as the applicant.
13.	**A 'Parent'** means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for the child or any adult with legal responsibility for the child.