



ADMISSION POLICY 2018-19

St Thomas More Roman Catholic Academy was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. The school is conducted by its governing body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and Articles of Association and seeks at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below.

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 (see note 11) 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 admissions arrangements.

Our Aims Are:

- ◆ to be a prayerful community based on Christian values notably Love, Justice, Peace, Truth and Tolerance, and to encourage individuals in their commitment to these ideals.
- ◆ to provide a secure, welcoming and ordered environment in which individuals learn to value and respect both themselves and others.
- ◆ to give individuals the opportunities to develop their full potential as human beings, and to encourage and challenge them to do so.
- ◆ to encourage everyone to strive to do their best and to strive for the highest standards in all areas of activity.
- ◆ to help students grow into confident, open, resourceful young people with a sense of responsibility and of service.

The governing body is the admissions authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the coordination of admission arrangements.

The admission policy criteria will be dealt with on an equal preference basis.

Feeder primary schools:

St Aidan's R C Primary School – Wallsend
St Bernadette's R C Primary School – Wallsend
St Columba's R C Primary School – Wallsend
St Cuthbert's R C Primary School – North Shields
St Joseph's R C Primary School – North Shields

Published Admission Number

The governing body has set its admission number at 270 pupils to Year 7 in the school year which begins in September 2018. The admission number for Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 is the number on roll at the start of the academic year in question. There are separate arrangements for admission to Years 12 and 13.

Children with an Education, Health and Care plan or a statement of Special Educational Need

Children who have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan or a statement of Special Educational Need where the school is named as the most appropriate educational setting for the child will be admitted.

Application Procedures and Timetable

To apply for a place at this school, the parent must complete a common application form (CAF) available from the local authority in which the child lives. The parent will be advised of the outcome of the application on 1 March 2018, or the next working day, initially by a letter or email from the local authority on behalf of the governing body.

If the parent is required to provide supplemental evidence to support the application (e.g. a baptismal certificate), this evidence should be provided at the time of application directly to the school c/o Head of Governance. If not provided, evidence may be sought by the governing body following the closing date for applications. This information must have been correct at the date of closing for applications.

All applications will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is Friday, 27 October 2017.

Late Applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with the local authority coordinated admissions scheme. Parents are encouraged to ensure that their application is received on time.

Admission of Children outside their Normal Age Group

A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

Any such request should be made in writing to the headteacher of the school. The governing body will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the headteacher who has statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the governing body will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals.

Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, applicants will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out below and not in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. The waiting list will be held open until the last day of the autumn term. Inclusion on the waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

In-Year Applications

An application can be made for a place for a child at any time outside the admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. Applications should be made to the school by contacting Mrs L McArdle, Head of Governance on 0191 2588360 or info@stmacademy.org.uk

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria will be applied.

Right of Appeal

Where a parent has been notified that a place is not available for a child, every effort will be made by the local authority to help the parent to find a place in a suitable alternative school. Parents who are refused a place have a statutory right of appeal. Further details of the appeals process are available by writing to the chair of governors at the school address.

Fair Access Protocol

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 admission 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.

False Evidence

The governing body reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place where false evidence is received.

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.

- *First priority in each category will be given to children who will have an older sibling attending the school in September 2018.*
 - *Second priority in each category will be given where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the children which can be most appropriately met at this school. (See note 13).*
1. Looked after and previously looked after children (see notes 2 & 3)
 2. Catholic children who attend a feeder primary school (see note 4)
 3. Other Catholic children (see note 4)
 4. Children attending feeder primary schools who are Catechumens or are members of an Eastern Christian Church, children of other Christian denominations or other faiths (see notes 5, 6, 7 & 8)
 5. Other children who attend a feeder primary school
 6. Children of a member of school staff who has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which application for admission to the school is made (note 12)
 7. Other children who are Catechumens or are members of an Eastern Christian Church, children of other Christian denominations or other faiths (see notes 5, 6, 7 & 8)
 8. Any other children

Tie Breaker

Where there are places available for some, but not all applicants within a particular criterion priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. Distance is measured in a straight line, from a single fixed central point of the parental home address (including flats) to the central point of the school using the Local Land and Property Gazetteer and North Tyneside Council's Geographical Information System (GIS), with those living closer to the school receiving higher priority. In the case of flats if there is more than one home address with the same measurement the flat with the lowest number will be offered the place.

In the event of distances being the same for two or more children where this would determine the last place to be allocated, random allocation will be carried out in a public place and supervised by a person independent of the school.

NOTES AND DEFINITIONS

1. 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. 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.
2. 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 (see the definition in section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989):

An **adoption order** is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

A **child arrangements order** is an order outlining the arrangements as to the person with whom the child will live under the provisions of section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

A **special guardianship order** is an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians.

3. A **previously looked after child** is a child who immediately moved on from that status after becoming subject to an adoption, child arrangement order or special guardianship order.
4. **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 the full communion of the Catholic Church. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism or reception should contact their parish priest who, after consulting with the Diocese, will decide how the question of baptism or reception is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church.
5. **Catechumen** means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church and is a person who is receiving instruction in preparation for baptism. This must be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens.
6. **Eastern Christian Church** includes Orthodox Churches, and must be evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism or reception should contact the Diocese who will decide how the question of baptism or reception is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church.
7. **Children of other Christian denominations** means children who are members of a Church or religious community that practises Trinitarian baptism recognised by the Catholic Church. Applicants must provide a baptismal certificate or where child baptism is not practised, a letter confirming their church membership from their minister or faith leader.
8. **Children of other faiths** means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definitions above. Applicants must provide a letter of support to confirm their faith membership from their minister or faith leader.
9. **Home address** is the primary parental address which will be used in applying the admission criteria. This means that, when stating the choice of school, the parental address at the time of application

should be given. The address of childminders or other family members who may share in the care of the child must not be used as the home address. Documentary evidence may be requested.

10. **Brother or sister** means a child who lives as a brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, or the child of a parent's partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling. It also includes natural brothers or sisters where the child for whom the school place is sought is not living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling.
11. **Parent** means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for the child, or who has care of the child (having care of a child means that the child lives with and is looked after by that person).
12. **A member of staff** includes all school staff who are under the direct employment of the governing body of the school.
13. 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.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the local authority's admission guidance for parents.