ST AIDAN'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL (ASHINGTON)
ADMISSION POLICY 2019-20

St Aidan's RC 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 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 admission policy criteria will be dealt with on an equal preference basis.

The governing body is the admissions authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the coordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round for reception year admission in September.

Parishes served by the school

The school serves the parish of St Aidan's, Ashington.

Published Admission Number

The governing body has set its published admission number (PAN) at 30 pupils to be admitted to [the reception year] in the school year which begins in September 2019.

Application Procedures and Timetable

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round (not in-year applications), a Common Application Form (CAF) must be completed. This is available from the local authority in which the child lives.

The parent will be advised of the outcome of the application on 16 April or the next working day, by the local authority. If the application is unsuccessful (unless the child gained a place at a school the parent ranked higher) the parent will be informed of the decision, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above, and has the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

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. 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 which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is 15 January 2019.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (see note 1)

The admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan or a Statement of Educational Needs is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan or a Statement of Special Educational Needs that names the school must be admitted. Where this takes place before the allocation of places under these arrangements this will reduce the number of places available to other children.

Late Applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with the home local authority Primary Coordinated Admissions Scheme. Parents are advised to ensure that the application is submitted before the closing date.

Admission of Children below Compulsory School Age and Deferred Entry

A child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday. A child's parents may defer the date at which their child, below compulsory school age, is admitted to the school, until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age, or beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which an offer was made. A child may take up a part-time place until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age. Upon receipt of the offer of a place a parent should notify the school in writing, as soon as possible, that they wish to either defer their child's entry to the school or 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 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.

Summer Born Children

The parents of a summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1 April and 31 August, may request that the child be admitted out of their normal age group, to the reception class in the September following their fifth birthday and that that the child will remain in this cohort as they progress through school.

Parents who want to make this request should make an application for their child's normal age group at the usual time. The application to the local authority should include this request and in addition it should be made in writing to the headteacher of the school. The local authority will liaise with the governing body that 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.

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

If the request is agreed by the governing body, the application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. If the request is refused, the parent must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or to refuse it and make an in year application for admission to year one for the September following the child's fifth birthday.

Where a parent's request is agreed, they must make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year.

One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parents, therefore, should consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all their preference schools, rather than just their first preference schools.

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. Waiting lists for admission will operate throughout the school year. The waiting list will be held open until the last day of the summer term. Inclusion on the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

Infant Class Size Regulations

Infant classes may not, by law, contain more than 30 pupils with a single qualified teacher (subject to the provisions in the School Admissions Code for 'excepted children'). Parents do have a right of appeal in accordance with the infant class size regulations if the school is oversubscribed and their child is refused a place.

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

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 For information on making an in-year application, parents should contact the local authority admissions team at School Admissions, Northumberland County Council, County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF on 01670 624889 or by email at schooladmissions@northumberland.gov.uk. Parents will be advised of the outcome of their application in writing.

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out above, will be applied. If there are no places available, a request can be made that the child is added to the waiting list (see above).

The parent has the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel if refused a place.

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 (subject to the infant class size exceptions).

Nursery

For children 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 school's nursery does not automatically guarantee that a place will be offered at the school.

False evidence

The governing body reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place or, where a child is already attending the school, the place itself, where it is satisfied that the offer or place was obtained by deception.

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 2019.

1. Catholic looked after and previously looked after children. (see notes 2&3)
2. Catholic children who are resident in the parish of St Aidan's, Ashington. (see note 3)
3. Other Catholic children. (see note 3)
4. Other looked after and previously looked after children. (see note 2)
5. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 4&5)
6. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister or faith leader. (see note 6)
7. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a minister or faith leader. (see note 7)
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 will be measured in a straight line (as the crow flies) from the front door of the child's address

(including flats) to the main entrance of the school, (using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system) with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.

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. 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.

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 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.

4. Catechumen means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. For the purposes of admissions this refers to the child on whose behalf the application is being made. 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. 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.

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 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.

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.

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.

   Applicants must provide a letter of support to confirm their faith membership from their minister or faith leader.

8. 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.

9. Sibling 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 address as the applicant.

10. 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 (having care of a child means that the child lives with and is looked after by that person).

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