



Admissions Policy: 2024

St. Begh's Catholic Junior School



Walking hand in hand in the footsteps of Christ.

We are His hands; we are His feet.

**Adopted by the Governing Body of St. Begh's Catholic Junior School on
7th February 2023.**

Signed: *Lois Anderson* (Chair of Governors)

Reviewed: March 2023

Anticipated Review Date: January 2024



St. Begh's Catholic Junior School is a Roman Catholic Primary School under the trusteeship of the Diocese of Lancaster. It is maintained by Cumbria Local Authority. As a Voluntary Aided School, the Governing Body is the Admissions Authority and is responsible for taking decisions on applications for admissions. The co-ordination of admissions arrangements is undertaken by the Local Authority. For the school's year commencing September 2022, the Governing Body has set its admissions number at **75**.

ADMISSIONS TO THE SCHOOL will be made by the Governing Body. All preferences listed on the Local Authority Preference Form will be considered on an equal basis with the following set of ADMISSIONS CRITERIA forming a priority order where there are more applications for admissions than the school has places available.

1. Baptised Catholic children in public care, previously looked after children who have been adopted or have become subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship order.
2. Baptised Catholic children who live in the parishes of St. Begh's Whitehaven and St. Benedict's Whitehaven with a sibling in the school at the time of expected admission.
3. Other Baptised Catholic children who live in the parishes of St. Begh's Whitehaven and St. Benedict's Whitehaven.
4. Other Baptised Catholic children with a sibling in the school at the time of expected admission.
5. Other Baptised Catholic children.
6. Other children who are in public care, previously looked after children who have been adopted or have become subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship order.
7. Baptised Christian children with a sibling in school at the time of expected admission.
8. Baptised Christian children.
9. Other children.

If a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education, Healthcare Plan name our school, they must be admitted.

NOTES

- a) All applicants will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is 15th January.
- b) 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 (under section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989. A previously Looked After Child is one who immediately moved on from that status after becoming subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order.
- c) For a child to be considered as a Roman Catholic evidence of such Baptism will be required.
- d) Clarification of Christian denominations recognised by the Catholic Church will be sought if necessary.



- e) If in any category there are more applications than places available, priority will be given on the basis of distance from home to school. Distance will be measured in a straight line from the front door of the child's home address (including the community entrance to flats) to the main entrance of the school using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system with those living nearer to the school having priority. If the distance is the same for two or more applicants where this would be last place/s to be allocated, a random lottery will be carried out in a public place.
- f) Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week, the child's "permanent place of residence" will be determined as the address of the parent who normally has responsibility for the majority of school days in a week.
- g) Sibling is defined as a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer'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.
- h) A waiting list for children who have not been offered a place will be kept and will be ranked according to the Admission Criteria. Parents will be informed of their child's position on the waiting list which will not be operated for longer than the end of the Autumn Term.
- i) For 'In Year' applications received outside the normal admissions round and if places are available then children qualifying under the published criteria will be admitted. Direct application to the school can now be made under this heading. If there are places available but more applicants than places then the published oversubscription criteria will be applied.
- j) If an application for admission has been turned down by the Governing Body, parents can appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel. Parents must be allowed at least twenty school days from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful to submit that appeal. Parents must give reasons for appealing in writing and the decision of the Appeals Panel is binding on all parties.
- k) The Governing Body reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a school place where false evidence is received in relation to baptism, sibling connections or place of residence.



A Summary of the Changes to the Regulations for Admission in 2016 and Beyond.

The School Admissions Regulations 2014 come into force on 19 December 2014, the same time as the new School Admissions Code. The Regulations and the Code update the versions published in 2012. The changes to the Regulations mostly concern timing.

The significant changes are

1. The frequency with which the admissions authority must consult on their published arrangements where no changes are proposed is now at least once in every seven years;
2. The dates by which the admissions authority must consult on and determine the arrangements are changed for admissions in 2016 and change again for 2017 and thereafter;
3. The date by which a local authority (LA) must publish school admission arrangements for its area has changed
4. The date by which objections must be received by the Schools Adjudicator has changed;
5. The frequency with which a local authority is required to consult on a qualifying scheme is now at least once every even years;
6. The date by which a local authority must inform the Secretary of State whether they have secured the adoption of a qualifying scheme is now 28 February in the qualifying year. If this is not done, the Secretary of State may make and impose a scheme.

Other Significant Changes

1. All state funded schools **may** now able to give priority in their admission arrangements to children eligible for pupil premium or service premium funding, which was previously enjoyed only by academies and free schools.
2. Primary schools **may** now give priority to children eligible for the early years pupil premium, pupil premium or service pupil premium who attend a nursery which is part of the school.
3. **All** children whose statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan names the school **must** be admitted.



4. All schools must determine and publish criteria to be applied where there are more applications than places. The highest priority **must** be given, unless otherwise provided in the Code to looked after children and all previously looked after children.

Priority to Catholic Applicants.

In circumstances where there are fewer applications than places (i.e. the Published Admission Number has not been reached), the governing bodies of Catholic schools are required by law to offer places to all applicants, whether Catholic or not.

Where there are more applicants than places, the Code allows the governing body of a Catholic school to use faith-based oversubscription criteria and allocate places by reference to faith.

Catholic schools are founded by the Catholic Church for the advancement of the Catholic religion. In Canon Law, parents are under a duty wherever possible to send their children to schools which will provide them with a Catholic education and the diocesan bishop is under a duty to establish such schools, with state assistance wherever possible.

It follows therefore that the governing bodies of Catholic schools must, wherever possible confer priority to Catholic applicants. Applicants who are not Catholic should be given priority only in the most exceptional circumstances.

The governing bodies of Catholic maintained and publically funded independent schools must also bear in mind that in England and Wales, they form a vital and valued part of the overall pattern of state provision and that children from the wider community in urgent need of a place in a local Catholic school, even when they are not themselves Catholic, should not be neglected.

Exceptional Circumstances.

The following are considered 'exceptional':

- Where the child has a statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan which names the school must be admitted whether Catholic or not.
- In the spirit of the Code, Looked after and formerly Looked after Children whether Catholic or not should be conferred first priority.

The following are not considered 'exceptional':

- The admission of 'non Catholic' siblings where Catholic children are unable to secure places;
- The admission of all the children from a named Catholic feeder primary school, whether the children are Catholic or not. A place in a Catholic primary school for a child who is not Catholic should not be treated as a passport to a Catholic secondary school at the expense of Catholic applicants.



'Catholic' means:

- Holding a certificate of baptism signed by a priest of the Catholic Church;
- Holding a certificate of reception of baptised Christians into the Catholic Church.

Any applicant experiencing difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism or reception in to the Catholic Church with good reason may still be considered as baptised Catholics following consultation with the appropriate diocesan authority, normally the Episcopal Vicar for Education.

The religion or observance of religion by the child's parents is not a relevant factor in determining whether the child is Catholic.

Governing bodies may, if they wish, confer priority to applicants from other Christian traditions and other faiths. There is no expectation that they do so but where this is considered necessary or desirable, great care must be taken to define what evidence must be produced by the parents and how the evidence will be used when giving higher priority to some 'non Catholic' children ahead of others.

Consultation on proposed changes must be for a minimum of **6 weeks** and must be take place between **1 October and 31 January**.

The governing body must determine the policy no later than **28 February**

The policy must be published (as a minimum on the school website) and copied to the local authority no later than **15 March**.

Any objections to the policy must be submitted to the Schools Adjudicator by **15 May**.

The governing body must supply all the information needed by the local authority by **8 August**.

The composite prospectus compiled by the local authority must be published on line and in hard copy by **12 September**.