

Saint John Houghton Catholic Voluntary Academy (part of Saint Robert Lawrence Catholic Academy Trust)

Admissions Policy and Oversubscription Criteria

This policy will apply to all admissions into year 7 for the academic year 2018-2019.

The Catholic Voluntary Academies listed above are under the Trusteeship of the Diocese of Nottingham and belong to the Nottingham Diocesan family of schools. They are founded by and are part of the Catholic Church and seek at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ. Religious education and worship are in accordance with the teachings and doctrines of the Catholic Church. This does not affect the right of parents or carers who are not of the faith of these schools to apply for and to be considered for places. We ask all parents or carers applying for a place to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community.

Our schools are principally provided to serve the Catholic communities within the Diocese of Nottingham. The Governors also welcome applications from all parents and carers, regardless of faith or background, who would like their children to be educated in a Christian environment.

The respective Catholic Academy Trust is the admission authority for the academies as set out above and is responsible for determining the admissions policies for the Academies in the Trust. The admissions process is coordinated by Derbyshire Local Authority on behalf of the Trust.

All decisions relating to admission applications will be taken by the Governing Body of the Academy applied for.

Each academy gives priority within the oversubscription criteria to Catholic children attending their partner primary schools (as listed above).

ARRANGEMENTS FOR ADMISSION

Parents/carers should consult the Local Authority www.derbyshire.gov.uk/admissions which gives full details of the admissions process, including information on the admissions cycle.

Application Procedure and Timetable

Applications must be made on the Common Application Form provided by your **home** Local Authority. Applications must be made to your **home** Local Authority by the national closing date of 31st October.

In addition, **all applicants wishing to apply for a place under a faith criterion (oversubscription criteria 1-6)** should complete the Supplementary Information Form. This form can be downloaded from the Local Authority website within which the school is located and is also available from the schools. The completed form, together with any required evidence, (see notes 3-8), should be returned to each Catholic school for which a preference has been made also by the national closing date of 31st October.

If you do not provide the additional required evidence and return it by the closing date your child will be ranked in a lower admissions category and this may affect your child's chances of being offered a place.

ALL APPLICATIONS – HOW PLACES ARE ALLOCATED

The Local Authority forward details of all applicants to the relevant Governing Body. Using the information on both the Common Application Form and the Supplementary Form, each Governing Body draws up a ranked list using the oversubscription criteria listed below. The Local Authority then allocates places on behalf of the relevant Governing Body up to the admissions number. When a place can be offered at more than one of the schools listed on your application, the Local Authority will offer a place at the highest preferred school where a place is available.

ADMISSION OF PUPILS OUTSIDE NORMAL AGE GROUP

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of the normal age group for example if the child is exceptionally gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. The school anticipates that children will be educated out of their normal age group in only a small number of very exceptional circumstances.

Should you wish to seek a place for your child outside of their normal age group you should still make an application for a school place for your child's normal age group **and** you should also submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time, following the procedure set out by your home local authority.

A decision will then be made on which age group the child should be admitted taking into account the circumstances of each case and the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the head teacher, including the head teacher's 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.

Once that decision has been made the oversubscription criteria will be applied to determine if a place can be offered at the school.

Your statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which you have applied is unaffected. However, the right to appeal does not apply if you are offered a place at the school but it is not in your preferred age group.

The school is not required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group.

LATE APPLICATIONS

Late applications will be administered in accordance with the Local Authority Secondary Coordinated Admissions Scheme. You are encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.

IN YEAR APPLICATIONS

Details of the application process are available from the school and from the Local Authority. Once an application has been made, it will be passed to the Admissions Committee of the Governing Body for consideration. A Supplementary Form should also be completed.

If the published admission number for the year group hasn't been reached the child will be offered a place unless circumstances have changed since that year group was the normal year of admission.

If the respective year group total is full, the child will be only offered a place if there are very exceptional circumstances and if the committee decides that the education of pupils in that year group will not be detrimentally affected by the admission of an extra pupil. If there is oversubscription schools will maintain Waiting Lists for in year applications until the end of the academic year. Inclusion in a school's Waiting List does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

If your application is refused, parents have a statutory right to appeal (see 'Appeals' below). The appeal should be lodged within 20 school days after the date of your refusal letter.

WAITING LISTS

Parents whose children have not been offered their preferred school in the normal admissions round will be added to their preferred school's Waiting List which will be maintained until the end of the first term by the Local Authority.

At the end of the autumn term Waiting Lists will be maintained by the academies until the end of the academic year.

Parents must make a further application for a school place in respect of a later academic year and if a place is not available the child's name can be added to the Waiting List for that academic year.

Waiting Lists are ranked in the same order as the oversubscription criteria listed below. Your child's position on the Waiting List may change. This means that a child's Waiting List position during the year could go up or down. Any late applications will be added to the Waiting List in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Inclusion on a school's Waiting List does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

APPEALS

If a child is not offered a place, parents/carers have a statutory right to appeal. This should be done by writing to the school setting out your grounds for appeal no later than twenty school days after the decision letter has been received. The appeal will be arranged on behalf of the governors by the Catholic Schools Appeals Service and will be heard by an independent panel. The decision of the panel will be binding on the school.

FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOLS

Local Authorities are required to have Fair Access Protocols in order to make sure that unplaced children especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. This includes admitting children above the published admissions number to schools that are already full. The academies listed in this policy participate in the Derbyshire County Council Fair Access Protocol.

APPLICATIONS FOR TWINS AND MULTIPLE BIRTH PUPILS

In cases where there is one remaining place available and the next child on the Waiting List is one of a twin or of other multiple birth groups, then both twins (or all the siblings in case of multiple births) will be admitted even if this means that the Published Admission Number will be exceeded as long as the Governing Body decides that the education of pupils in that year group will not be detrimentally affected.

FRAUDULENT INFORMATION

If the allocation of a place has been made on the basis of fraudulent or intentionally misleading information, the governors reserve the right to withdraw the place.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where schools have more applications than places available, Governors will draw up a ranked list based on the criteria listed below and will allocate places accordingly.

Pupils with an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) (see Note 1) which names the school will be admitted. This will reduce the number of places available.

1. Catholic children who are 'looked after' or who were 'previously looked after' (see Notes 2 and 3).
2. Catholic children (see Note 3).
3. Other children who are 'looked after' or who were 'previously looked after' (see Note 2)
4. Catechumens, Candidates and members of Eastern Christian Churches (see Notes 4, 5 and 6)
5. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion (see Note 7).
6. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader (see Note 8).
7. Any other children

First priority within the criteria will be given to applications from children who attend one of the partner primary schools.

Second priority within the criteria will be given to applications from children who will have siblings (see Note 9) attending the school at the proposed time of admission.

In the event of oversubscription within any criterion allocation of places will be decided on distance measurements supplied by the Local Authority. (See below)

Distance Measurement

Within each criterion applications will be ranked on distance with priority given to children who live nearest to the school. Measurements will be taken in a straight line from the entrance to the child's home to the principal entrance to the main administrative building of the school. This will be calculated by Derbyshire County Council's computerised distance measuring software. In the event of needing to discriminate between pupils living in the same block of flats, where the same distance measurement is produced, the lowest numbered flat(s) will be treated as closest to the academy.

Tie Breaker

In a very few cases, it may not be possible to decide between the applications of those pupils who are the final qualifiers (e.g. children who live at the same address or have the same distance measurement). In this exceptional situation then the Academy will admit the additional children above the planned admission number.

Notes (these form part of the oversubscription criteria)

1. An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), 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" 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 s.22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

A “previously looked after child” is a child who:

- a. ceased to be looked after because they were adopted (this includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 [see s.12 adoption orders] and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children’s Act 2002 [see s.46 adoption orders], or
- b. became subject to a child arrangements order (under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.8, as amended by s.12 of the Children and Families Act 2014 - an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live), or
- c. became subject to a special guardianship order (see S.14A of the Children Act 1989 - an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian [or special guardians]).

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 full communion with the Catholic Church signed by a Catholic Priest and stamped with the parish stamp. 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 (i.e. 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.

4. ‘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 or a letter of verification signed by the parish priest and stamped with the parish stamp.

5. ‘Candidate’ means a candidate for reception into the Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a letter of verification signed by the parish priest and stamped with the parish stamp.

6. ‘Eastern Christian Church’ includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that 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, and is normally evidenced by a Baptism Certificate, a Certificate of Dedication or a letter of verification signed by the minister of religion for that church.

8. ‘Children of other faiths’ means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definitions 3-7 above. This is normally evidenced by a Baptism Certificate, a Certificate of Dedication or a letter of verification signed by the religious leader of the community.

9. ‘Siblings’ means a child who lives as a brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters with either one or both parents in common, 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 as the same address as that sibling.

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.

11. Home Address: The governors of each school use the same definition as used by the Local Authority within which the school is located.