



St Thomas More Partnership of Schools

Admissions Policy

2018

1. Rationale

St Thomas More Partnership of Schools is a Partnership of Catholic Schools which were originally constituted to provide an education to the children of Catholic families.

In developing a policy for admissions there are various things to consider: the place of siblings, of other Christian denominations, the place where families live. These priorities are shown in the oversubscription criteria of the schools.

The Partnership recognises that each school needs its own admissions policy in order to take into account local circumstances, however all the policies should be based on the same principles.

The principles outlined, in order, below, are not the oversubscription criteria which are found in the individual policies of the schools in the Partnership. Therefore there is no mention of Looked After Children as the status of these children is outlined in the Admissions Code and are therefore included in the appropriate place in individual school policies.

2. The Principles

The individual admissions policies of the schools in the Partnership are based on the following principles, in order of application in the Policies:

1. The Partnership is a group of schools that has been founded for the education of the children of Catholic families and as such are afforded the highest importance in the criteria.
2. Supporting families is a priority of the Partnership and so siblings, Catholic and non-Catholic are next in the oversubscription criteria.
3. The contribution that is made by practising Christians of other denominations to the ethos of the schools in the partnership is valued very highly. The children of practising Catholic families of other denominations therefore follow.
4. The wider community of Catholic families within the catchment area is also supported by giving priority to pupils in the feeder primary schools.
5. The Partnership serves a catchment area based on West Gateshead and extending up the Tyne Valley into Northumberland. Each school in the Partnership has a catchment area which is defined in terms of one or more parishes.
6. For the secondary school there is no preferment given to where pupils live, except for whether or not it is in the catchment area. The tie breaker is therefore random allocation. For the primary schools who serve a more local community the tie breaker is distance.

ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

**Croftdale Road
Blaydon
Tyne and Wear
NE21 4BQ**



ADMISSION POLICY 2018

Admission Arrangements for St Thomas More School in September 2018

St Thomas More Catholic School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families and seeks at all times to be a witness to 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.

1. The Admission Authority

- 1.1. St Thomas More Catholic School is a member of the St Thomas More Partnership of Schools.
- 1.2. The Admissions Authority for St Thomas More is therefore St Thomas More Partnership of Schools who are responsible for determining the school's admissions arrangements.

2. Planned Admission Number

- 2.1. The School will admit **235** pupils in Year 7 in September 2018.

3. Catchment Area

- 3.1. The catchment area is defined by the boundaries of the following parishes served by the feeder schools: St Anne's, Winlaton; St Joseph's Blaydon; St Agnes', Crawcrook; SS Mary and Thomas Aquinas, Stella; St Philip Neri, Dunston; Immaculate Heart of Mary, Lobley Hill; St Mary's, Wickham; St Joseph's, Highfield; Our Lady of Lourdes, Chopwell; Corpus Christi, Gateshead; Holy Rosary, Gateshead; Sacred Heart, Byermoor; Our Lady and St Cuthbert Prudhoe; St Mary, Hexham.
- 3.2. The catchment area contains the following feeder schools: St Joseph's, Blaydon; St Agnes', Crawcrook; SS Mary and Thomas Aquinas, Stella; St Philip Neri, Dunston; St Mary's, Wickham; St Joseph's, Highfield; Corpus Christi, Gateshead; Sacred Heart, Byermoor; St Matthew's, Prudhoe.

4. Applications for entry into Year 7

- 4.1. Applications procedures and timetables will follow the locally agreed co-ordinated scheme with Gateshead LA.
- 4.2. If there are more places than applicants then all applicants will be accepted.
- 4.3. If there are more applications than places available then the Governors will apply the oversubscription criteria as outlined in section 11 of this policy.
- 4.4. If there are more applicants than available places the School will treat all applications equally, regardless of the order of preference given by the parents. All the applications are placed in order using the oversubscription criteria. Allocation of places is then coordinated by the Local Authority.
- 4.5. Late applications can be made and will be handled as in the Co-ordinated Scheme.
- 4.6. The Governors reserve the right to declare an application null and void or to withdraw an offer of a place if any of the information submitted is false.
- 4.7. Applicants refused admission to Year 7 are entitled to appeal to an independent appeals panel. Further details of the appeals process are available by writing to the Chair of Governors at the school address.

5. Admission of Children outside their Normal Age Group

- 5.1. 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.
- 5.2. Any such request should be made in writing to the Head Teacher 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 Head Teacher 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.

6. Fair Access Protocol

- 6.1. 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 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.

7. Waiting List

- 7.1. If the school has reached its admission number a Waiting List will be maintained from 1st April 2018.
- 7.2. Any parent can request that their child be placed on the waiting list.
- 7.3. Children will be placed on the waiting list according to the oversubscription criteria.
- 7.4. The date of application to be placed on the list will not be used in any selection process.
- 7.5. The school will continue to maintain the waiting list during the corresponding school year and outside the normal year of entry.
- 7.6. Pupils who are allocated a place at the school under the Local Authority's Fair Access protocol must take precedence over all those on the waiting list

8. Repeat Applications

- 8.1. Repeat applications for entry into a particular year group in the same academic year will not be considered unless there is a material change in the circumstances of the child or parent. An application may be made for a subsequent academic year.
- 8.2. A material change in circumstance may be a change of address or a change in the baptismal status of the child.

9. In year applications

- 9.1. 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 the Admissions Officer

at the school. Parents will be advised of the outcome of their application in writing.

10. Right of Appeal

- 10.1. 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.

11. Oversubscription Criteria

11.1. 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.

Order of Priority	Oversubscription Criteria	How verified
1	Looked after and previously looked after children.	LA records
2	Roman Catholic children from the feeder primary schools.	Information from the feeder primary schools
3	Roman Catholic children who have an older brother or sister in the school at the time of admission.	Information held by the School.
4	Other children who have an older brother or sister in the school at the time of admission.	Information held by the School.
5	Other practising Roman Catholic children who live within the catchment area of the school.	The School will seek verification from the priest.
6	Children who are practising members of another Christian denomination and live within the catchment area of the school.	The School will seek verification from the Vicar/Minister.
7	Other children in the feeder schools.	Information from the feeder primary schools
8	Other practising Roman Catholic children who do not live within the catchment area of the	The School will seek

	school.	verification from the priest.
9	Children who are practising members of another Christian denomination and who do not live within the catchment area of the school.	The School will seek verification from the Vicar/Minister.
10	Roman Catholic children who can furnish proof of baptism, but who do not practise and who live within the catchment area of the school.	From the Application Form
11	All other children	

12. Notes

- 12.1. 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.
- 12.2. 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. 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.
- 12.3. The parish boundaries are available for viewing in school, on the school's website (www.stthomasmore.org.uk).
- 12.4. Special Circumstances: Individual applications involving medical or social needs can be considered by the admissions authority. This kind of application must be supported in writing from a registered professional i.e. a doctor or a social worker. The supporting evidence should set out the particular reasons why our school is the most suitable school and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. To assess this objectively we will require the professional from whom you have submitted independent evidence to confirm that no other school is able to provide the support required for your child and we will also seek an independent opinion of the evidence provided from the

Gateshead LA Admission officer. The criteria ranking for children who have independently proven exceptional medical or social grounds are placed after priority 7 but before those children in priority 8, unless of course they qualify in a higher priority which they would normally have been placed, had no such exceptional circumstances applied.

- 12.5. Definition of Catholic: 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. The school will require to see the baptismal certificate of all children claiming to be Roman Catholic, please include a copy of the Baptismal Certificate with your application.
- 12.6. For your child to receive priority because of a brother or sister in the sixth form of the school, the brother or sister must have been at the school at the start of Year 11.
- 12.7. For a Roman Catholic child to be considered “practising” they will: Have been baptised and be currently fulfilling the obligation to attend Sunday mass, which will be verified by the named priest.
- 12.8. Definition of other Christian denominations: 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.
- 12.9. For a child to be considered “practising members of another Christian denomination” they will: have been initiated into that church; the school will need to see documentary evidence of baptism/initiation; be verified by the named minister of religion as being a currently practicing member of the church.
- 12.10. Definition of Sibling: Sibling 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.
- 12.11. Home Address is the parental address which will be used in applying the admission criteria. This means that, when stating your choice of school, you should give the parental/guardian address at the time of application. For

categories where the child must live within the catchment area, verification of address will be required.

12.12. For categories 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10, parents will be requested to give the following information on the supplementary form:

- Names of any older brothers/sisters in the School
- Baptismal status
- Whether your child, and at least one parent, are practising Catholics or practising members of another Christian denomination.
- The Name, Address and telephone number of the priest/vicar/minister who will be able to confirm attendance at church
- Copies of Baptismal certificates or other evidence of initiation should be included with your supplementary form.

13. Tie Breaker

13.1. In the event of the School reaching capacity within categories 1-11, the School will use random allocation to determine the order of applications within a category. This will be carried out in a public place and supervised by a person independent of the school.

14. Admission into the Sixth Form

14.1. Planned Admission Number - Year 12

The school will admit 20 pupils into Year 12, September 2018.

The projected number of pupils for admission into Year 12 in September 2018 is 175. This is made up of an estimated number of 155 pupils moving into Year 12 from St Thomas More School and 20 external applications from pupils in other schools.

14.2. The minimum entry requirement for admission into Year 12 is dependent on the course of study that a student wishes follow. In general, the minimum requirement for a GCE AS/A2 course is 6+ grades A*-B at GCSE or equivalent. For a student to study at GCE AS/A2 a subject that they studied at GCSE they must have achieved at least a grade B in that subject at GCSE where the subject requires previous study.

14.3. For a 12 unit vocational course the minimum entry requirement is 6+ grades A*-C GCSE or equivalent with a merit in a suitable Subject.

- 14.4. Details of the specific entry requirements and courses available may be obtained from the School.
- 14.5. Applicants refused admission to the Sixth Form are entitled to appeal to an independent appeals panel.
- 14.6. For a student to continue a course of study in Year 13 they must pass the course in Year 12 at a suitable level. Details of this can be obtained from the school.
- 14.7. Oversubscription Criteria

Order of Priority	Oversubscription Criteria	How verified
1	Looked after and previously looked after students.	LA records
2	Roman Catholic students	Baptismal Certificate
3	Students from other Christian denominations	Baptismal Certificate or other evidence of initiation.
4	All other students	

15. Notes

15.1. Tie Breaker

In the event of the School reaching capacity within categories 1-4, the School will use random allocation to determine the order of applications within a category. This will be supervised by a person independent of the school.

15.2. Definition of Catholic: 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. The school will require to see the baptismal certificate of all children claiming to be Roman Catholic, please include a copy of the Baptismal Certificate with your application.

- 15.3. Definition of other Christian denominations: 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.