

ADMISSION POLICY FOR SEPTEMBER 2026

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Policy history:

Approved by:	Full Governing Board		Date: Pentecost Term 2025
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Linked policies and procedures:

Policy Name
Transition Policy

1. Context

St. Paul's Catholic School was founded by the Diocese of Northampton to provide education for children of Catholic families. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below. The school is conducted by its governing board 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 governing board is the admission authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round¹ (excluding admission to year 12). The governing board has set its admission number at 270 pupils to year 7 in the school year which begins in September 2026.

2. Admission to the Sixth Form

The school operates a sixth form for a total of 500 pupils. 280 places overall will be available in year 12. While the admission number is 280, if fewer than 280 of the school's existing pupils transfer into year 12, additional external pupils will be admitted until year 12 meets its capacity of 280.

Both internal and external pupils wishing to enter the sixth form will be expected to have met the same minimum academic entry requirements for the sixth form. These are determined by the academic or vocational pathway applied for and are outlined in our sixth form prospectus.

In addition to the sixth form's minimum academic entry requirements, pupils will need to satisfy minimum entrance requirements to the courses for which they are applying. If either internal or external applicants fail to meet the minimum course requirements, they will be given the option of pursuing any alternative courses for which they do meet the minimum academic requirements. Course requirements are published annually in the school's prospectus and on its website.

When year 12 is undersubscribed all applicants meeting the minimum academic entry requirements will be admitted or permitted to progress.

¹ This is for year 7 admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

When there are more external applicants that satisfy any academic entry requirements, priority will be given in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out below.

Where there is a space in year 13, i.e. where there are fewer than 220 pupils in the year group, the school will admit additional pupils up to this number using the oversubscription criteria set out below.

3. 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 is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school must be admitted if the school is able to meet the child's identified needs. Where this takes place before the allocation of places under these arrangements this will reduce the number of places available to other children. If St Paul's Catholic school is named on a child's Education, Health and Care Plan, or an application is made on behalf of the child, this will show that parents are happy for their child to join St Paul's and that they are in sympathy with the Catholic ethos of the school.

4. Oversubscription Criteria

At any time where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority:

- A. Catholic looked after and previously looked after children, including those previously looked after outside of England. (see notes 2 & 4)
- B. Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice who attend a feeder Catholic primary school, namely, Bishop Parker Catholic Primary School, St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School, St Mary Magdalene Catholic Primary School, St Monica's Catholic Primary School and St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School (see notes 4, 5 & 6)
- C. Other Catholic children with a certificate of Catholic practice. (see notes 4 & 5)
- D. Catholic children who attend a feeder Catholic primary school, namely, Bishop Parker Catholic Primary School, St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School, St Mary Magdalene Catholic Primary School, St Monica's Catholic Primary School and St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School (see notes 4 & 6)
- E. Other Catholic children. (see note 4)
- F. Other looked after and previously looked after children, including children previously looked after outside of England (see note 2)
- G. Other children who attend a feeder Catholic primary school, namely, Bishop Parker Catholic Primary School, St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School, St Mary Magdalene Catholic Primary School, St Monica's Catholic Primary School and St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School.
- H. Children of members of staff who have had a contract of employment with the Governors' of St Paul's for at least two years when the application is made or a member of staff who has been recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

- I. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 7 & 8)
- J. Children of other Christian denominations and children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion or other religious leader. (see notes 9 & 10)
- K. Any other children.

Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.

- (i) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made. (see note 13)
- (ii) The attendance of a brother or sister at the school at the time of enrolment will increase the priority of an application within each category so that the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made after children in (i) above. (see note 11)
- (iii) Multiple births: In cases where there is one remaining place available and the next child is one of a twin, triplet or other multiple birth group, the following will apply: Both twins would be admitted (or all siblings in the case of multiple births) even if this goes above the admission number for the school.
- (iv) Children on roll at one of the Catholic Partner Primary Schools of St Paul's in Milton Keynes when the application is made. These are Bishop Parker Catholic Primary School, St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School, St Mary Magdalene Catholic Primary School, St Monica's Catholic Primary School and St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School

5. Tie Break

In any situation where the application of the above criteria results in more children with an equal right to admission to the school than the number of available places, the tiebreak will be made by a lottery. The names of all those with an equal right to admission will be allocated a number within a randomly generated number computerised programme. The order in which they are allocated will give the order of priority for the allocation of the places available. The places will be allocated, in order, up to the number of places available. This process will be carried out under the supervision of an independent observer from the Pupil Services Section of Milton Keynes Council.

6. Application Procedures and Timetable

To apply for a place in Year 12 you **must** complete a school application form. This can be collected from the school reception or downloaded from the school website. The application form should be returned to Post 16 applications at St. Paul's Catholic School, Phoenix Drive, Leadenhall, Milton Keynes. MK6 5EN by 23rd January 2026.

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round², you **must** complete a Common Application Form (excluding admission to year 12) available from the local authority in which you live. The Supplementary Information Form attached to this policy is sent out once Milton Keynes Council has notified the school who has selected St. Paul's as a preference. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to Admissions at St. Paul's Catholic School, Phoenix Drive, Leadenhall, Milton Keynes. MK6 5EN by Monday 1st December 2025.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 1st March or the next working day, by the local authority on our behalf. If you are unsuccessful (unless your child gained a place at a school you ranked higher) you will be informed of the reasons, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

If you do not provide the information required in the Supplementary Information Form and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child will not be placed in criteria A-J and this is likely to affect your child's chance of being offered a place.

All applications which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is 31st October 2025

7. Late Applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with your home Local Authority Secondary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. You are encouraged to ensure that your 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 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 at the same time as the admission application is made. The governing board 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, including the head teacher's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the governing board will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

8. Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful children 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 above and **not** in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Waiting lists for admission will operate until December 2026.

Inclusion in the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

² This is for applications to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

9. 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 Admissions at St. Paul's Catholic School, Phoenix Drive, Leadenhall, Milton Keynes. MK6 5EN.

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out in Appendix 1, will be applied.

Applications for Children of UK Service Personnel with a confirmed posting, or Crown Servants returning from overseas, will be accepted prior to providing an intended address or moving into the area.

You will be advised of the outcome of your in-year application in writing within 15 working days, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

10. 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 Board is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The Governing Board has this power even where admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

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

11. Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

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.
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. This includes Catholic children previously looked after outside of England.
3. 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, including children previously looked after outside of England.
4. '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 living with a family where at least one of the parents is Catholic. For a child to be treated as Catholic, evidence of 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 laws of the Church.
5. 'Certificate of Catholic Practice' means a certificate issued by the family's parish priest (or the priest in charge of the church where the family attends Mass) in the form laid down by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. It will be issued if the priest is satisfied that at least one Catholic parent or carer (along with the child, if he or she is over seven years old) have (except when it was impossible to do so) attended Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation for at least five years (or, in the case of a child, since the age of seven, if shorter). It will also be issued when the practice has been continuous since being received into the Church if that occurred less than five years ago. It is expected that most Certificates will be issued on the basis of attendance. A Certificate may also be issued by the priest when attendance is interrupted by exceptional circumstances which excuse from the obligation to attend on that occasion or occasions.
6. For the purposes of this admission policy, attendance at a feeder primary school includes those who were prevented from attending a feeder school due to oversubscription of Catholics and whose application to attend was unsuccessful, normally evidenced by a letter of rejection from the feeder primary school.

7. '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.
8. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.
9. "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.

10. "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 7 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. A religion which involves belief in more than one God, and
- b. 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.

11. 'Brother or sister' includes:

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 the child of a parent's partner where that child for whom the school place is sought lives for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same home address as the child who is the subject of the application.

12. 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.
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.

14. A child's "home address" refers to the address where the child usually lives with a parent or carer and will be the address provided in the Common Application Form ("CAF"). Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives for part of the week with each parent, the home address will be the address given in the CAF, provided that the child resides at that address for any part of the school week.

12. Appendix 1: Oversubscription categories for In Year Applications

- A. Catholic looked after and previously looked after children, including Catholic children previously looked after outside of England. (copy of baptismal certificate and name of relevant Care Authority required)
- B. Catholic children who belong to families vouched for by their Parish Priest as practising their religion (Certificate of Catholic Practise required)
- C. Other Catholic children not known to their Parish Priest (copy of baptismal certificate required)
- D. Other looked after and previously looked after children, including children previously looked after outside of England (details of relevant Care Authority required)
- E. Children of members of staff who have been employed at St. Paul's for at least two years when the application is made or a member of staff who has been recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
- F. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church
- G. Members of other Christian Churches whose parents seek a specifically Christian element in their secondary education and children of other faiths whose application is supported by a letter from the vicar or minister of the church they attend (letter of support from vicar or minister of the church required).
- H. Any other children



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13. Supplementary Information Form for Admission to Year 7

Application to St. Paul's Catholic School – September 2026

Child's details	Please fill in your child's details below and overleaf		
Surname			
Forename			
Date of birth		Male/Female	
Parent/Carer names			
Home address			
Postcode		Home Telephone	
Mobile Telephone			
Email address			
Current school			

Name of any sibling who will be on roll at St. Paul's in September 2026:

..... Year Group

Parent signature:Date

Please indicate with a tick in the box which category you are applying under

CAT	CRITERIA	PLEASE TICK
A	Catholic looked after and previously looked after children, including Catholic children previously looked after outside of England (see notes 2 & 4). *If you tick this category please state which parish you attend and attach a copy of the child's baptismal certificate	

B	Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice who attend a feeder Catholic primary school, namely, Bishop Parker Catholic Primary School, St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School, St Mary Magdalene Catholic Primary School, St Monica's Catholic Primary School and St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School (see notes 4, 5 & 6). *If you tick this category please state which parish you attend and attach a copy of the Certificate of Catholic Practice and the child's baptismal certificate	
C	Other Catholic children with a certificate of Catholic practice. (see notes 4 & 5) *If you tick this category please state which parish you attend and attach a copy of the Certificate of Catholic Practice and the child's baptismal certificate	
D	Catholic children who attend a feeder Catholic primary school, namely, Bishop Parker Catholic Primary School, St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School, St Mary Magdalene Catholic Primary School, St Monica's Catholic Primary School and St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School (see notes 4 & 6). *If you tick this category please state which parish you attend and attach a copy of the child's baptismal certificate	
E	Other Catholic children. (see note 4) *If you tick this category please attach a copy of the child's baptismal certificate	
F	Other looked after and previously looked after children, including children previously looked after outside of England. (see note 2)	
G	Other children who attend a feeder Catholic primary school, namely, Bishop Parker Catholic Primary School, St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School, St Mary Magdalene Catholic Primary School, St Monica's Catholic Primary School and St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School.	
H	Children of members of staff who have had a contract of employment with the Governors of St Paul's for at least two years when the application is made or a member of staff who has been recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.	
I	Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church (see notes 7 & 8)	
J	Children of other Christian denominations and children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion or other religious leader. (see notes 9 & 10) * letter of support from your church minister is required	
K	Any other children.	

Please return this form, with supporting documents, to Admissions September 2026, St Paul's Catholic School, Phoenix Drive, Leadenhall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EN

***Supporting documentation must accompany this application form as without this the child will be classed as Category K.**