Guidance – Admissions policy 2028-29

October 2026

Diocese of Shrewsbury

Department of Education

Department for Education

School Admissions Code

Mandatory requirements and statutory guidance for admission authorities, governing bodies, local authorities, schools adjudicators and admission appeals panels

September 2021

Admission policies are determined by the DfE Schools Admissions Code which was revised in September 2021

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Admissions

The CES have recently provided updated guidance and model policies for all schools - these documents are available on our website

- A reminder that all schools need to consult on their Admissions Policy every 7 years, even if there have been no changes – Did you consult last year ?
- Updated guidance and model policies for *all* schools

Recent review of Schools' Policies

All schools received an individual letter regarding their 2027-28 policy. The comments within the letter should be used to inform your 2028/29 policy.

Issue	Description
Secretarial	• Not explicit about admissions being delegated to LGB in Academy polices • Schools using the incorrect policy – V.A / Academy version • Schools not using the latest model policy as a starting point and editing previous policies that are not up to date • Incorrect dates e.g. closing dates and waiting list dates • References to GB rather than Admissions authority • Maps not included • Reference to LA rather than Admissions Authority • Reference to Statement of Special Educational Needs (not EHCP) • Renumbering of notes not carried out if needed to match oversubscription criteria • Waiting list only until 31 st December (LA Admin)

Recent review of Schools' Policies

Non complaint Policies	• Catholic LAC children not given priority – oversubscription within the model policy not being followed • No provision for other children

SIF	• Majority of schools say they have one – very few have Attached as appendix • Schools that have removed reference to SIF

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A Guide to Diocesan Model Admissions Policies

October 2025

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Introduction

Primary Academy *Model Admissions Policy 2028-29*

Highlighted parts indicate that school specific information is needed –

Please REMOVE highlighting prior to publication or consultation

Blue highlighting is guidance notes – please remove before publication

[Insert Name] CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ADMISSION POLICY 2028-29

[Insert name] Catholic 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 **academy company** as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and **articles of association** 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 these admission arrangements.

The **academy company (name of Trust)** is the admission authority and has delegated full responsibility for admissions to the Local Governing Body. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round[1] . The admission authority has set the school's Published Admissions Number ("PAN") at **xx** pupils to be admitted to the reception year in the school year which begins in September 2028.

The admission authority 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.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (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. Where this takes place before the allocation of places under these arrangements this will reduce the number of places available to other children.

- This section of the policy needs personalising to the individual school or academy.
  The sections in yellow need checking and editing.
  Sections in blue are notes and need reading and then deleting.
- This section is slightly different for academies – as it names the academy company as the admissions authority - **and** state that the administration of admissions is delegated to the Local Governing Body (LGB)
- The most common issue is that in previous editions the Governing body was mentioned several times.
- After the mention in paragraph 3 **all other references to governing body should have been replace with *the admissions authority***
- *All foot notes and square brackets should be removed*
- Any historic reference to Statement of Special Educational Needs should have been removed and replaced by Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Over Subscription Criteria

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.

Review the categories below

1. Catholic looked after and previously looked after children. (see notes 2&3)
2. Catholic children who are resident in the parish(es) of **[name]**. (see notes 3&11)
3. Catholic children who are resident in the parish(es) of **[name(s)] [for whom [Insert name of school] is the nearest Catholic school]**. (see notes 3&11)
4. Other Catholic children. (see note 3)
5. Other looked after and previously looked after children. (see note 2)
6. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 4&5)

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

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7. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion. (see note 6)
8. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader. (see note 7)
9. Any other children.

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

(i) 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 8).

- Schools do not have to use all the over subscription criteria
- Catholic LAC should be given preference
- Within each of the criterion preference is given to siblings.
- Older versions of the policies allow for priority to be given to the children of staff.
- Schools have been asked to remove this unless they can demonstrate there has been a need to use it in the last three years.
- **If you remove any criterion, you will need to re-number the notes section.**

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Other Considerations

Tie Break

Priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. Distances are calculated **[on the basis of a straight-line measurement between the front door of the child's home address (including the community entrance to flats) and the main entrance of the school] [using the local authority's computerised measuring system on the following basis [Insert appropriate wording from the local authority definition][2].** 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 and supervised by a person independent of the school. All the names will be entered into a hat and the required number of names will be drawn out.

Application Procedures and Timetable

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round[3], you must complete a Common Application Form available from the local authority in which you live. You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form attached to this policy if you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria 1 to 4 or 6 to 8. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to **[person, address]** by **15.1.2028**

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 16th April 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 SIF and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child may not be placed in criteria 1 to 4 or 6 to 8, and this may 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 15th January 2028.

Late Applications[4]

Late applications will be administered in accordance with your home Local Authority Primary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. You are encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.

- The Tie Break definition will be guided by what the local authority(LA) process is.
- The LA administers the policy on behalf of the school/academy – **they are not the admissions authority**
- **Insert relevant information in square brackets and remove square brackets**
- **Remove footnotes**
- **Make sure that if you refer to Supplementary Information Form (SIF) it is included.**
- **There is a model Diocesan SIF on the website**
- **SIF should not ask for any information that has been included in the Common Application Form (CAF)**
- **SIF – should be used to determine if a child is a baptised catholic – or other faith criterion**

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Other Considerations

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, 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. In addition, the parents of a summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1st April and 31st August, may request that the child be admitted out of their normal age group, to reception rather than year 1.

Any such request should be made in writing to **[insert name of person and address to which the request should be made]** at the same time as the admission application is made. The admission authority 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 admission authority will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

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 throughout the school year. The waiting list will be held open until **[insert date being the last day of the summer term 2029]**.

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

In-Year Applications

An application can be made for a place for a child at any time outside the normal admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. Application should be made **[to the school]** by contacting **[insert name and address], [insert link to school website]**.[5]

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, the child will be added to the waiting list (see above).

You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

- Policies must **consider** admitting children below compulsory school age (primary) and pupils out of the normal age group and they cannot omit these sections.
- Waiting lists should be kept to the ends of the Summer term – and that date should be inserted.
- Most LAs will say they should only be kept until 31st December but the Admissions Code states this as a minimum period
- **However, if you have nominated the LA to administer in-year applications, then you may have to use 31st December.**
- **Schools must state clearly on their website how in year admissions are managed (school or LA).**

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Other Considerations

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 admission authority is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The admission authority has this power, even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the PAN (subject to the infant class size exceptions).

[5] This paragraph will need to be amended if a decision is made for in-year admissions to be co-ordinated by the local authority.

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[Nursery[6]

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.]

The admission authority 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.

- All LAs have a fair access policy and schools' admissions policies must refer to this
  - If the school has a nursery, then this statement should be included.

Notes Section

Notes need to be checked to ensure they are in line with your oversubscription criteria; delete any that do not relate to your oversubscription criteria and renumber accordingly

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 an 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. Included in this definition are those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and who ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
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 living with a family where at least one of the parents is Catholic.

   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. 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.
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.

[6] This section should be deleted where the school does not have a nursery.

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- Any historic reference to Statement of Special Educational Needs should have been removed and replaced by Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- The latest notes should be uses – in the latest model policy.
- If you have removed any of the over subscription criterion you must remove the associated note - **and re-number the notes accordingly**
- **Ensure you are using the updated definition of Catholic (within the latest notes section of the model policy)**

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Notes Section

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.

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.

8. 'brother or sister' 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 home address as the child who is the subject of the application.

9. 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.

10. For the purposes of this policy, parish boundaries are as shown on the attached map and will be applied to the admission arrangements for 2028-2029 [Map attached]

11. 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.

Appendix 1 – Supplementary Information Form

Appendix 2 – Parish boundary map

- Re- number as appropriate
- Include updated Diocesan definition of ' brother or sister'
- Appendix 1 and 2 should be included

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Maps

- The map **must be included**
- **Parish boundaries are being updated**
- **Ensure the map is the same as the LA are using if they allocated your children**
- **If you do not have a map then please request using admissions@dioceseofshrewsbury.org**

If you have any queries regarding admissions, then please email:

admissions@dioceseofshrewsbury.org

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Final check…

- Policies for 2026-27 and 2027-28 (both should be on your website)
- Do you need to consult? Every seven years at least or if changes to oversubscription criteria.
- Prepare policy from start to finish 2028-29
  - Don’t use a previous policy, use the new model policy as your starting point
  - Check all dates
  - Do you need all the oversubscription criterion? (Annual review – have you returned it?)
  - CES or LA with Diocesan criterion
  - Have the [square brackets] had the information inserted e.g. late applications
  - Have you removed the foot notes (these are for your guidance)
  - Do the notes correspond to the relevant over subscription criterion
  - Are you using the correct definition for distance – check with LA
  - Fair access protocol

Consultation on School Admissions Policies – 2028-29

Diocese of Shrewsbury

Department of Education

TIMETABLE

Timetable for admissions consultation for Admission policy 2028-29 for schools that are their own admission authorities:

Earliest Date a Consultation can commence	1 October 2026
Minimum Consultation duration	Six Full Weeks
Latest Date a six-week consultation could be held	20 December 2026
Final Date for Consultations to conclude	31 January 2027
Statutory deadline for determination of admission arrangements	28 February 2027
Statutory deadline for publication of admission arrangements	15 March 2027
Last date for referral of objection to School Adjudicator	15 May 2027

Scope of the Consultation

a) parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen;
- **Local Media**
- **Parents of children in school & Nursery**
- **Other Local Schools & Nursery**
- **Local parishes**
- **Social Media**
- **Some LAs will publicise consultation on your behalf**
- **Diocesan Website**

b) b) other persons in the relevant area who in the opinion of the admission authority have an interest in the proposed admissions;
- **Councillors/MP**

c) c) all other admission authorities within the relevant area (except that primary schools need not consult secondary schools);

- **Other local VA Schools and Academies**

d) d) whichever of the governing body and the local authority is not the admission authority;
- **Local Authority**

e) any adjoining neighbouring local authorities where the admission authority is the local authority; and
Neighbouring Local Authorities

f) in the case of schools designated with a religious character, the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination
- **a) Diocese**

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Scope of the Consultation

The Consultation Process **must** last for a minimum of **6 full weeks**.

It should commence at the same time as the public notice is published and all consultation notifications are issued outwards.

For the duration of the consultation period e.g. for the full six weeks, the admission authority must publish a copy of their full proposed admission arrangements (including the proposed Published Admission Number) on their website together with some explanatory details of the actual changes.

This should include the person within the admission authority to **whom comments may be sent** and how to submit them e.g. email address, and any areas on which comments are not sought (if applicable). It would also be useful to summarise the changes as part of the explanatory details/letter.

Admission authorities **must** also send on request a copy of the proposed admission arrangements to any of the persons or bodies listed above, inviting comment.

Failure to consult effectively may be grounds for subsequent parental complaints and appeals or referral to the school adjudicator.

Sample Notice For Website and Distribution

School logo

CONSULTATION ON SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2027/28

Xx school/Academy is carrying out a consultation on the proposed admission arrangements for admission in September 2027/28

Admission arrangements are the overall procedure, practices and oversubscription criteria used in deciding the allocation of school places. The consultation is being carried out by the school/governing body

There have been no changes to the admission policies from previous years

The Governing Body is fulfilling its statutory duty to consult at least every seven years

The proposed admission arrangements are published on Schools www website and can be viewed at https://wwwxxx or by contacting Name, at email address

Any comments on the proposed admission arrangements should be sent to Name and Address, or email address.

The consultation opens on xx date and closes on xx date

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Consultation on Diocesan Website

All correspondence to admissions@dioceseofshrewsbury.org

Ensure it is marked clearly For Consultation

Include:

- Date consultation begins
- Date Consultation ends
- Link to where all information can be found on your school website

- Following completion of the Consultation Process, Governors must ensure arrangements are determined by the deadline date 28 February, taking into account the responses received and ensuring compliance with the School Admissions Code.

- Once approved, final (Determined) Admission Arrangements must be sent to the Diocese (admissions@dioceseofshrewsbury.org) **in advance of the statutory deadline** for publication **15th March 2027** to enable arrangements to be checked

- Schools must also publish Admission Arrangements on the schools website again prior to the above deadline date.
- Schools must also send the published arrangements to the LA no later than **15th March 2027**

Any Questions ?

If you have any queries regarding admissions, then please email:

admissions@dioceseofshrewsbury.org

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