Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School Bushey

DETERMINED ADMISSION POLICY 2025-2026

Learning and loving with Christ as our teacher

There is no automatic transfer from Nursery to the Reception class.
Formal application to the child's Local Authority must be made for entry to Reception.

MISSION STATEMENT
Learning and loving with Christ as our teacher

Let it be known to all who enter here that Christ is the reason for this school, the unseen but ever present teacher in all its classes, the model for its children, the inspiration for its staff.

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School was founded by the Church to provide education for Catholic children. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic applicants in accordance with criteria listed below.

The aim of the school is to provide a Catholic education for all its pupils. Therefore, Catholic doctrine and practice permeate every aspect of the school's activity. It is essential that the Catholic character of the school's education is supported fully by all families in the school. All applicants are, therefore, expected to give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school.

The Governing Body has sole responsibility for admission to this school and intends to admit 45 pupils (to the Reception class) in the school year, which begins in September 2025. The Published Admission Number (PAN) for the school is 45.

Applications are invited for September 2025 from families whose child attains 4 years of age between 1 September 2024 and 31 August 2025. Parents/carers of children born between 1 April to 31 August 2020 who, in the 2024-25 admission round decided to defer entry until this admission round, may apply.

Over recent years, the school has been oversubscribed with Catholic children, however, applications will be welcomed for children who are not Catholic. If there are fewer applications than places available, all applicants will be offered a place.

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School Bushey

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

Where the number of children put forward by applicants exceeds the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority.

1 **Baptised** Catholic 'looked after' children and baptised Catholic children who were 'looked after' children including those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and who ceased to be 'looked after' because they were adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders **with a Certificate of Baptism.**[1]

2 **Baptised** Catholic children with a **Certificate of Catholic Practice and a Certificate of Baptism** with siblings within the school at the time of admission.

3 **Baptised** Catholic children with **a Certificate of Catholic Practice** and a **Certificate of Baptism** whose parent is a member of staff (this includes teaching & non-teaching staff and full time & part time staff) employed by Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School and where either or both of the following conditions are met: (i) that member of staff has been employed for two or more years at the time the application is made; (ii) the Governors can demonstrate that the member of staff has been recruited to fill a vacant position for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage. In addition to (i) and/or (ii) the child must live at the same permanent address as the member of staff.

4 Other **baptised** Catholic children with a **Certificate of Catholic Practice and a Certificate of Baptism** resident in the Parish of Sacred Heart & St. John the Evangelist, Bushey. A map outlining the Parish boundary is available on the school website, is displayed within school and copies are also available from the School Office.

5 Other **baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice**.

6 Other **baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Baptism**.

7 Other 'looked after' children and children including those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England who ceased to be 'looked after' because they were adopted or made subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders.

8 Children of catechumens **with evidence of participation in Catechumen Programme or members of an Eastern Christian Church with a Certificate of Baptism.**

9 Christian children of other denominations whose application is supported by a **letter from their minister** confirming membership of the faith community.

10 Children of other faith communities and whose application is supported by **a letter from their minister** confirming membership of the faith community.

11 Any other applicants.

[1] A "child looked after" 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 (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989)

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School Bushey

Where the offer of places to all the applicants **in any of the categories** listed above would lead to oversubscription, priority will be given in the following order:

- the Governing Body will give priority to an application where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical, pastoral or other need of the child which can only be met at this school. Compelling, written, professional evidence from a doctor, social worker or priest must be supplied. A panel of Governors will determine whether the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet the requirements for this rule; the evidence must relate specifically to Sacred Heart and will clearly demonstrate why it is the only school which can meet the child's needs;
- for categories 2-11 the attendance of a sibling at the school at the time of intended enrolment will increase priority of application within the category;
- next, for categories 3-11**,** children of staff at the school (as defined in the conditions stipulated in **category 3**) will be given priority within the category.

Multiple Births
The admission authority will admit over the school's PAN when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated a place at the school.

Tie Break
Where the offer of places to all the applicants in any of the sub-categories listed would still lead to oversubscription, the places up to the admissions number will be offered to those living nearest to the school. **Home to school distance measurement for purposes of admissions.**

A 'straight line' distance measurement is used in all home to school distance measurements for schools in Hertfordshire. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

In the event where two different addresses are the same distance from a school, in the case of a block of flats, for example, the lower door number will be deemed nearest as, logically, this will be the closest to the ground and, therefore, closer. If there are two identical addresses of separate applicants, the tiebreak will be random allocation. Every child entered onto the Hertfordshire County Council Admissions database has an individual, random number assigned between 1 and 1 million against each preference school. When there is a need for a final tiebreak, the random number is used to allocate the place, with the lowest number given priority.

Fair Access Protocol
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School is committed to taking its fair share of vulnerable children who are hard to place, in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council's Fair Access Protocol. Accordingly, outside the normal round of admissions, the Governing Body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol, which carries the agreement of both the Governing Body and the Diocese for the current admissions year. The Governing Body has this power even when admitting such

a child would exceed the published admissions number. A Fair Access Protocol child will be admitted above those on the school's continuing interest list.

Admissions Procedure
All parents/carers should complete the On-Line or eAdmissions Form from your Local Authority. Full information and the application form are available at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions closing date 15 January 2025. Parents wanting their application to be considered under any of the **oversubscription criteria except criterion 11** or because of exceptional social, medical, pastoral or other needs **should also complete** the Supplementary Information Form (**SIF**).

Parents/carers wanting their application to be considered under any of the **oversubscription criteria 2-5** should also obtain a **Certificate of Catholic Practice Form** from the Priest at the church normally attended or from the Diocesan website at:

https://education.rcdow.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Certificate-of-Catholic-Practice-7-9-15-Final.pdf

The Priest will only sign the form if you are known to him and he is aware that you are a practising Catholic family. **It is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure that the completed and signed form is returned to the school by the closing date. Parents/carers should also submit the original Certificate of Baptism.**

If you do not complete the necessary paperwork and submit the appropriate forms [**as highlighted within the oversubscription criteria**] by the closing date listed on the county council website at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions [15 January 2025] the Governing Body may be unable to consider your application fully and it is very unlikely your child will get a place at the school.

The Governors' Admissions Committee will consider all applications in accordance with the stated criteria. In compliance with the revised Statutory Framework, based on the 2021 Schools Admissions Code, co-ordinated admissions arrangements are in place with the Hertfordshire Local Authority. Applications must be made to your own Local Authority (LA) and returned to them in accordance with their instructions. The deadline for submission of both forms, for the school and the Local Authority, will be listed on the County Admissions webpage at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions. The final date for applications is 15 January 2025. Offers of places will be dispatched to parents/carers by the County Council on behalf of the Governors of the school on 16 April 2025. This is Primary National Allocation Day.

Applications received after the closing date will be dealt with after the initial allocation process has been completed.

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School Bushey

Closing date for online applications to be submitted to the LA	15 January 2025
Statutory deadline for receipt of paper applications	15 January 2025
School allocation day	16 April 2025
School allocation notification letters posted for delivery	16 April 2025
Date by which parents/carers to accept or reject place offered	2nd May 2025
Date by which parents/carers return appeal forms	20th May 2025 at 4.00pm

*Notification letters are posted first class only to parents or carers who applied on paper.

Parents/carers of children attending the Nursery **must** make a fresh application for Reception. Attendance at the Nursery **does not** guarantee a place in Reception.

Right of Appeal

If you are unsuccessful in your application, you may ask the Governors for the reasons for the refusal of a place. These reasons will be related to the oversubscription criteria listed above and you will have the right to appeal to an independent panel. Parents/carers wishing to appeal who applied on line should log into their online application and click on the link 'register an appeal'. Out of County residents and paper applicants should call the Hertfordshire Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request their registration details and log into www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals and click on the link 'log into the appeals system'.

Deferred Entry

Applicants may defer entry to school up until statutory school age, i.e. the first day of term following the child's fifth birthday. Application is made in the usual way and the deferment is requested. The place will be held until the first day of the Spring or Summer term. Entry may not be deferred beyond statutory school age or beyond the year of application. Therefore, applicants whose children have birthdays in the Summer term may only defer until 1 April 2026.

Applicants may also request that their child attend part-time until statutory school age is reached.

Continuing Interest (Waiting) List

After places have been offered, unsuccessful Reception applicants will be automatically placed on the continuing interest (waiting) list. Hertfordshire County Council will maintain a continuing interest (waiting) list for all community and voluntary controlled schools. A child's position on a CI list will be determined by the admission criteria outlined above and a child's place on the list can change as other children join or leave it. The county council will contact parents/carers if a vacancy becomes available and it can be offered to a child. Continuing interest lists will be maintained for every year group until the summer term (date to be specified and confirmed to parents at the time of allocation). To remain on the CI (waiting) list after this time, parents must confirm they are still interested in a place by completing an In Year application form.

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School Bushey

Summer Born Children

Parents/carers may now choose for their Summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1 April and 31 August 2021, to be admitted to Reception in the September following his/her fifth birthday, that is September 2026. Parents/carers making use of this option need not apply in the 2025-26 Admissions round. However, when such parents/carers do apply, they should inform the school of their decision, in writing, at the time of application. The application must then be made in the normal way and will be treated under the same procedure as all other applications and ranked in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. There is no guarantee that an offer will be made.

Children Educated outside their Chronological Age Group

(Except Reception applications for Sumer born children)

Parents/carers may apply for their child to be educated outside his/her chronological age group, i.e. a year behind or a year ahead. Application should be made to the Chair of Governors at the time of applying and any supporting evidence should be submitted at the same time. Governors will consider each case on its own merits and permission will only be given in exceptional circumstances.

In Year Admissions

For In Year admissions please make your application direct to: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/inyear. You will also need to complete the school's SIF form (Supplementary Information Form) and return it to the school office to ensure your application is considered correctly in our oversubscription criteria. The Local Authority will write to you with the outcome of your application and, if you have been unsuccessful, will include registration details to enable you to login and appeal online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals. Unsuccessful in year admissions applicants will be automatically placed on the continuing interest (waiting) list. This list will be maintained by the Governing Body in the order of the oversubscription criteria and not in the order in which the applications are received. Continuing interest lists will be maintained for every year group until the summer term (date to be specified and confirmed to parents at the time of allocation). To remain on the CI (waiting) list after this time, parents must confirm they are still interested in a place by completing an In Year application form. When a place becomes available, the Governing Body will decide which applicant meets the oversubscription criteria best and an offer will be made on our behalf by the Local Authority.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan

The admission of pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC) is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice[1]. If your child has an EHC Plan you must contact your local authority SEN Officer. Children with this school named in their EHC Plan will be admitted to the school.

[1]That Code of Practice can be accessed at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25; click on the link on that page to download the Code. Paragraphs 9.78 to 9.87 (pages 172-174) deal with requests for a specific school to be included in the Educational Health and Care Plan; the Code sets out the factors, including the necessary consultations that the local authority must take into account in reaching a decision.

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School Bushey

NOTES (these notes form part of the **oversubscription criteria**)

'Child Arrangements' Order': an order under the terms of Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989 and which defines it as an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

'Adopted': an adopted child is any child who has been formally adopted, having previously been in care and whose parent/carer can give proof of this.

'**Special Guardianship Order'**: an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.14A which defines it as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s).

'Parent/Carer': the adult or adults with legal responsibility for the child.

'Looked after Child': Places are allocated to children in public care according to Chapter 7, Section 2 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

'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 the 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. Further details of these circumstances can be found in the guidance issued to priests: http://rcdow.org.uk/education/governors/admissions

The **Certificate of Catholic Practice form can be obtained** from the priest at the church normally attended or from the Diocese of Westminster website at: https://education.rcdow.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Certificate-of-Catholic-Practice-7-9-15-Final.pdf

It is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure that the completed and signed form is returned to the school by the closing date.

'Family': includes the adult or adults who have legal responsibility for the child.

'Catholic': a member of Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. This must be evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism in a Catholic Church or Certificate of Reception into full communion of the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy, this includes a looked after child in the process of adoption and living with a Catholic family, where a letter from a priest demonstrates that the child would have been baptised were it not for his/her status as a looked after child.

'Sibling':

- brother or sister, to include adopted brothers and sisters, half, step or foster brothers and sisters;
- a looked after child or previously looked after and in every case living permanently in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of application.

A sibling link will not be recognised for a child living temporarily in the same house. For example, a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.

A sibling relationship does not apply when the older child will leave before the younger one starts.

'Catechumen': a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This would normally be evidenced by a Certificate of Reception into the Order of Catechumens.

'Christian children of other denominations': children who belong to other churches and ecclesial communities which, acknowledging 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.

'Christian': All members of Churches Together in England and of Churches Together in Wales (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.

'Eastern Christian Church': includes Orthodox Churches and is normally evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism or Reception from the authorities of that Church.

'Children of other faith communities': children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of 'Christian children of other denominations' 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.

Demonstrating 'exceptional social, medical, or pastoral need' for a child which can only be met at this school: The Governing Body will require written, compelling, professional evidence from a doctor, social worker or priest.

'Parish of The Sacred Heart of Jesus & St John the Evangelist': a map showing the boundaries of the parish of The Sacred Heart of Jesus & St John the Evangelist is available on the school website, is displayed within the school and is available from the School Office.

'At the time of application': means the closing date for applications.

'Permanent Home Address'
The address provided must be the child's current permanent address at the time of application

- "At the time of application" means the closing date for applications
- "Permanent" means that the child has lived at that address for at least a year

Where a family has not lived at an address for a year, they must be able to demonstrate that they own the property or have a tenancy agreement for a minimum of 12* months and the child must be resident in the property at the time of application.

The application can only be processed using one address. If a child lives at more than one address (for example due to a separation) the address used will be the one where the child lives for the majority of the time. If a child lives at two addresses equally, parents/carers should make a single joint application naming one address.

If a child's permanent residence is disputed, parents/carers should provide court documentation to evidence the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes. If two applications are received, with different addresses and/or different preferences, neither will be processed until the address issue is reconciled.

It is for a child's home Local Authority to determine address. If two applications, with different addresses are received from the same Local Authority, it will be for that Local Authority to determine permanent address. If two applications are received from two different Local Authorities, the above process will be used.

If two different applications are received for the same child from the same address, e.g., containing different preferences, parents/carers will be invited to submit a joint application or provide court documentation to evidence the preferences that should be used for the admission process. Until the preference issue is reconciled neither application will be processed.

For the transfer application rounds, if the initial differing applications (one or both) were received “on-time”, an amended joint application will also be considered “on-time” if received before the “late deadline”. If the amended joint application is received after the late date, it will be treated as “late”. The late deadlines for the 2025/26 transfer application process are 2nd December 2024 for Secondary and Upper applications and 1st February 2025 for Reception, Junior and Middle applications. If these dates change, amendments will be published on the admissions web pages at the start of the 2025/26 application process in September 2025.

* If, because of the nature of the agreement, it is not possible to provide a 12-month tenancy agreement, alternative proof of address will be requested and verified as necessary with the Shared Anti-Fraud Service.

Fraudulent Applications
The school works in close liaison with the Hertfordshire County Council to do as much as possible to prevent applications being made from fraudulent addresses.

Address evidence is frequently requested, monitored and checked and school places will be withdrawn when false information is deliberately provided.

Hertfordshire County Council will take action in the following circumstances:

- when a child’s application address does not match the address of that child at their current school;
- when a child lives at a different address to the applicant;
- when the applicant does not have parental responsibility;
- when a family moves shortly after the closing date of applications, when one or more of the following applies:
    - the family has moved to a property from which their application was less likely to be successful;
    - the family has returned to an existing property;
    - the family lived in rented accommodation for a short period of time (anything less than a year) over the application period;
    - Council Tax information shows a different residence at the time of application.
    - When a child starts at the allocated school and their address is different from the address used at the time of application.