

# Admissions Policy

## 2025-2026

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## Admissions Policy for September 2025

The Catholic High School, Chester was founded by the Catholic Church 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 it's the Chester Catholic Academies Partnership as the academy trust 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 the admission arrangements.

The Academy Trust 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 round (excluding admission to year 12). The Academy Trust has set the School's published admission number (PAN) at 165 pupils to year 7 and 50 for external applicants to year 12 in the school year which begins in September 2025.

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.

### Admission to the Sixth-Form

The school operates a sixth form for a total of up to 240 students. 120 places overall will be available in year 12. While the admission number for external students is 50, if fewer of the school's existing pupils transfer into year 12, additional external pupils will be admitted until year 12 meets its capacity.

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 at least five GCSE passes at Grade 5 or above, or the equivalent in different subjects. English Language and English Literature count as separate

subjects, as does the Double Science GCSE. Subjects offering 'multiple' GCSE equivalencies such as some BTEC courses will count as one pass.

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, where possible, 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.

When there are more external applicants that satisfy any academic entry requirements, priority will be given in accordance with the oversubscription criteria 1 and 3-7 set out below.

Where there is a space in year 13 i.e. where there are fewer than 120 pupils in the year group, the school will admit additional pupils up to this number using the oversubscription criteria 1 and 3-7 set out below.

### **Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (see note 1)**

The admission of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or 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.

### **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:***

1. Catholic looked after and previously looked after children. (see notes 2&3)
2. Catholic children who attend a feeder Catholic primary school, namely, St. Clare's, Lache; St. Werburgh's and St Columba's, Hoole; St. Theresa's, Blacon; St. Luke's, Frodsham; St. Winefride's, Neston. (see notes 3&4)
3. Other Catholic children. (see note 3)
4. Other looked after and previously looked after children. (see note 2)
5. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 5&6)
6. 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 7&8)
7. 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 (1) above. (see note 9)
- (ii) The children of staff will be given increased priority 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 (1) above (see note 10).

### **Tie Break**

Priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. 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.

Distances are determined by the local authority. 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 for Year 7, you must complete a Common Application Form either on paper or online available from the local authority in which you live by October 31<sup>st</sup>. The school will download this information into the Admissions Plus software that we use and all applicants will be asked to complete the information requested online.

Admissions to Year 12: use the admissions form available from the Sixth Form Office and should be returned to Mrs Letissier, Director of Sixth Form by February 28<sup>th</sup>.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application for a place in Year 7 on 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

Applicants for places in Year 12 will be interviewed to discuss the available courses and entry criteria early in the Summer Term and places offered by the end of April. Places in Year 12 will be conditional on meeting the academic criteria in this policy and subject specific criteria published on the school website and in the Sixth Form Prospectus.

If you do not provide the information required in the Admissions Plus software package, together with all supporting documentation, your child will not be placed in criteria 1 to 3 or 5 or 6, and this may affect your child's chance of being offered a place.

All applications for Year 7 which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024.

### **Late Applications**

Late applications will be administered in accordance with the 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 Mr D De Winton, Assistant Headteacher, at the same time as the admission application is made. 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, including the headteacher's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the governing body will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, 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 July 24<sup>th</sup> 2025.

Inclusion on 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 admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. Application should be made to Cheshire West and Chester by contacting School Admissions, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Wyvern House, The Drumber, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 1AH. [School Website](#)

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.

## **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 the Cheshire West and Chester 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 locally agreed protocol. The governing body has this power even where admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

## **Deception**

The governing body 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.

## ***Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)***

1. A Statement of Special Education 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. 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.

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 governing body) 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 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.

4. 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.

5. '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.
6. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.
7. "Children of other Christian denominations" means children who 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 CYTŪN (Churches Together in Wales) 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.

8. '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 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.

9. '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 for whom the school place is sought lives for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same address as the applicant.
10. This applies where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
11. 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.