Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, Plymouth

Admissions Policy

2021/2022

Last Update: February 2020 (version 4.0)

Document Control

Changes History

Version	Date	Amended by	Recipients	Purpose
1.0	Sep 2018	Louise Adams Director of Education and Standards	All Plymouth CAST Headteachers and LGBs	To provide a CAST-wide approach to admissions
2.0	Dec 2018	Louise Adams Director of Education and Standards	All Plymouth CAST Secondary Headteachers and LGBs	To ensure all admissions requirements are fulfilled
3.0	Feb 2019	Louise Adams Director of Education and Standards	All Plymouth CAST Secondary Headteachers and LGBs	To ensure all admissions requirements are fulfilled
4.0	Feb 2020	Raymond Friel - CEO	All Plymouth CAST Secondary Headteachers and LGBs	To ensure all admissions requirements are fulfilled

Approvals

This policy requires the following approvals:

Board	Chair	CEO	Date Approved	Version	Date for Review
x			September 2018	1.0	September 2019
x			February 2019	3.0	September 2019
x			February 2020	4.0	September 2020

National/Local Policy

This policy must not be changed, it is a National Policy

Position with the Unions

Does the policy require consultation with the National Unions under our recognition agreement? No

Distribution

This document has been distributed to:

Position	**Date**	**Version**
Plymouth CAST Directors and SEL	March 2020	4.0
Local authorities of CAST schools	March 2020	4.0
Plymouth CAST Headteachers and LGBs	March 2020	4.0

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Key information about the school

Department for Education school number	879/3761
What kind of school is this?	Academy
Does this school have a religious character?	Catholic Diocese of Plymouth
Who is the Admissions authority?	Plymouth CAST Multi-Academy Trust
Age range of children in this school:	4-11
Published Admission Number (PAN):	45
Catchment area?	No
School Supplementary Information Form (SIF)?	Yes – on faith grounds – appendix 1
Usual birthdate range for Reception children:	1 September 2016 to 31 August 2017
Do we ask children to wear a uniform?	Yes

Applications	
When can parents apply for admission to Reception?	15 November 2020 to 15 January 2021
How can parents apply for admission to Reception?	https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/schoolseducationchildcareskillsandemployability/schooladmissions/applyschoolplace
When will places be offered for Reception?	16 April 2021
When should appeals for admissions to Reception be submitted by?	15 May 2021
When can applications for in-year admissions be made? https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/schoolseducationskillsandemployability/schooladmissions/applyschoolplace/applyinyearschooltransferschoolplace	At any time

Oversubscription criteria
Any child whose Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) names this school will be admitted.
Oversubscription criteria (to be used only if we need to prioritise applications - see notes on page 16): **1. Looked after children and children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order. (See note 1)** **2. Children based on their exceptional medical (see page 10) or social needs or those of their parents.** **3. Children who are Baptised Catholic. (See note 2)** **4. Children who are siblings of pupils on roll at this school.** **5. Children who are members of any other faith.** 6. **Children of members of staff who have been employed at this school for more than two years or recruited within the past two years to fill a vacancy.** 7. **Other children.**
Tie breaker – to prioritise applications in the same oversubscription criterion, we will use straight-line distance from home to school

Information about this policy

Vision and values:

This policy supports the vision and values of Plymouth CAST.

Policy Principles:

This policy:

- Ensures Plymouth CAST schools comply with the requirements of the School Admissions Code
- Provides a CAST-wide approach to admissions
- Ensure all schools apply the same over-subscription criteria across the trust
- Provide a central point for consultation with local authorities
- Be reviewed each year by the trust leadership team and directors

Policy Aims:

- To enable parents to know when and how to apply for places at CAST schools
- To assist school leaders and Local Governing Boards in meeting statutory requirements
- To explain what supplementary documentation is required, when and to who
- To provide a transparent approach to allocation of places at CAST schools

Relevant legislation and linked policies

School Admissions Code 2014: DfE

Fair Access Protocols: DfE

School Admissions Appeal Code: DfE

Local authority admission arrangements and coordinated scheme

Roles and Responsibilities:

Headteachers are responsible for:

- Providing advice and guidance to the LGB and the directors as to requirements under the School Admissions and Appeals Codes
- Making arrangements for determining admissions and hearing admissions appeals
- Ensuring local authority deadlines are met

Local Governing Boards are responsible for:

- Supporting the Headteacher to determine arrangements
- Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for pupil recruitment

The trust senior executive leadership team are responsible for:

- Preparing a CAST wide admissions policy, which takes account of Diocesan guidance and the School Admissions and Appeals Code
- Providing oversight, and support, of the implementation of admissions arrangements across the company
- Ensuring that the impact of any proposed changes to an academy's admission arrangements are considered in light of the other academies in the company and other catholic schools generally in the diocese
- Report to the directors regarding admissions arrangements across the academies in the company
- Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for pupil recruitment to the academies in the company
- Providing advice and guidance to directors regarding the requirements of the Schools Admissions and Appeals Codes

Directors are responsible for:

- Approving a CAST wide admissions policy, which takes account of Diocesan guidance and the School Admissions and Appeals Code
- Adopting the CAST-wide admissions policy prepared by the senior executive leadership and ensure that it complies with all diocesan requirements

Local authorities are responsible for:

- Providing information to parents about the school
- Providing applications and other available documentation to the school to be able to order parents who have applied for a place at the school at the point of entry.
- Managing in-year admissions

This policy applies to all admissions for the school year 2021-22.

Religious education and worship are in accordance with the teachings and doctrines of the Catholic Church. **This does not affect the right of parents or carers who are not of the faith of these schools to apply for and to be considered for places**. We ask all parents or carers applying for a place to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community.

Our schools serve the Catholic communities of Plymouth. **We also welcome applications from all parents and carers, regardless of faith or background, who would like their children to be educated in a Christian environment.**

Plymouth CAST is the admission authority for the academies listed above and is responsible for determining the admissions policies for these schools. On behalf of the Trust, the admissions process for our schools is coordinated by the local authority of each school.

The directors of the academy trust are responsible for the admissions policy and for ensuring the policy is implemented in CAST schools. School leaders (supported by Local Governing Boards) are responsible for following the admissions policy and providing information to directors to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities.

Contacts for Further Information

Plymouth CAST Multi-Academy Trust
Edmund Rice Building, St Boniface College, 21 Boniface Lane, Manadon Park, Plymouth, PL5 3AG
01752 686710
admin@plymouthcast.org.uk

Churches Together in England
020 7529 8131 www.cte.org.uk/

Diocese of Plymouth
01364 645390 www.plymouth-diocese.org.uk/
Plymouth County Council School Admissions Service
www.plymouth.gov.uk/schooladmissions
Primary.admissions@plymouth.gov.uk
Telephone 01752 307166

Plymouth County Council policies, information and admissions application forms
https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/schoolseducationchildcareskillsandemployability/schooladmissions/applyschoolplace

Plymouth County Council Admission Appeals
01752 307166
Email schooladmissions@plymouth.gov.uk

Plymouth Education Transport Team
Email school.transport@plymouth.gov.uk
Telephone 01752 308770
https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/schoolsandeducation/schooltransport/freeschooltransport

Children's Education Advisory Service – advice for service families
01980 618244 enquiries@ceas.detsa.co.uk

The Department for Education (DfE)
0870 000 2288 www.education.gov.uk

The Education &Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
0370 000 2288 www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency

Office of the Schools Adjudicator
01325735303
https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-schools-adjudicator/about

The Application Process

Application Form

Applications at the main point of entry (Reception) must be made on the local authority application form. Applications must be made to your local authority by the national closing date.

Local Authority	Deadline for applications	Website link
Plymouth	15 January 2021	https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/schoolseducationchildcareskillsandemployability/schooladmissions/applyschoolplace

Applications deadlines:

Any applications received later than the deadline will be dealt with as late applications.

Please ensure applications and supplementary evidence is submitted by the deadline.

Applications under faith criteria

Applicants wishing to apply for a place under faith criteria should complete the Supplementary Form (appendix 1).

The completed form, together with any required evidence, (see below), should be returned to the relevant local authority for which a preference has been made by the closing date.

Parents and carers applying under the faith criteria should either:

- Complete part A of the SIF (appendix 1) along with a copy of the child's baptism certificate with the parish stamp and priest's signature

Or

- Complete part A and B of the SIF (appendix 1), signed by the relevant faith leader.

Exceptional need for admission to our school

We give higher priority for children where there is an exceptional need to attend this school and not another school. The need must be specific to this school: a child may have very challenging circumstances that require additional support but if that support could also be provided at another school, there would be no exceptional need to attend **this** school.

In order to seek priority on this basis, parents must provide evidence that this school is the only school which meets the needs of your child.

The exceptional need could be due to the parent's circumstances. Exceptional need could include:

- A serious medical condition, which can be supported by medical evidence.
- Significant caring responsibilities, which can be supported by a social worker.
- Where one or both parents or the child has a disability that may make travel to another school more difficult, which can be supported by medical evidence.

These examples aren't meant to be exhaustive or exclusive. Neither should it be assumed that similar circumstances would impact on different children and families in the same way.

- If there are medical reasons that make it essential for a child to attend this school, the parent must provide supporting information from a doctor, together with any other relevant information. This must make a compelling case as to why the child's needs or the parents can only be met here; a medical condition in itself will not automatically result in a place here. It is not essential for the doctor to name this school and we wouldn't expect a doctor to have sufficient, specific knowledge of the school but the evidence should explain exactly what the child's needs are and what specialist support and facilities are required.
- For social reasons, parents must provide independent evidence from a relevant professional supporting the family. The supporting evidence must set out the particular reasons why this school is the most suitable and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. It is not essential for the professional supporting the family to have in-depth knowledge of this school, but the evidence must explain exactly what the needs are and what specialist support and facilities are required.

Exceptional need for admission here will **not** be accepted on the grounds that:

- a child may be separated from a friendship group.
- parents wish to avoid a child from the current or previous setting.
- child-care arrangements before or after school would have to be changed.
- transport arrangements would have to be changed.
- there is a medical condition such as asthma that does not require specialised treatment.
- The child has a particular interest or ability in a subject or activity.

Evidence from a relevant professional, independent of the family will be required in every case and should be made available in time for the local authority which will not prioritise an application as demonstrating exceptional need.

Parents can indicate on a common application form that they believe there is an exceptional need for admission here. It is not expected that a parent will seek this priority at a school that was not named as the first preference. The onus is on parents to submit their supporting evidence and to provide further evidence if requested to do so. Parents who apply using a common application form from another local authority without a tick box for exceptional need should put a note in the reasons for their preference that they are requesting exceptional need priority and provide the required supporting evidence.

Catchment Area:

We do not operate a catchment area which gives priority for school admissions purposes.

How the Admissions Process works

Without exception, all parents have to make a formal application for admission to a state-funded school. Places are not allocated automatically, and no child has a guarantee of admission. This includes children with siblings at a school or those at a particular school or nursery. We welcome visits from parents - and their children - who are considering applying for a place here. This is an opportunity to see what we have to offer. Visits are not a compulsory part of the admissions process and will not affect decisions on whether a place can be offered here. Parents can arrange visits by contacting the school office.

Policy Changes:

Once our policy is determined, it cannot be changed unless an amendment is required to correct a typographical error, to ensure that the policy complies with the Codes, in response to a determination of the Office of the School's Adjudicator or where approval has been received to a request for an In-Year Variation. Any amendments that are made will be detailed in the Policy Version section above.

Statutory Information

Admission of children outside the normal age group

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of the normal age group for example if the child is exceptionally gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. However, this is a Trust decision and strict criteria apply. The Trust has the right to refuse if it believes it could compromise the child or school.

Parents of summer born children may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted outside of their normal age group to Reception rather than Year 1. This is an unusual request and should not be taken lightly. Parents who wish to seek a place for their child outside the normal age group should make an application for a school place for the child's normal age group and should also submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time, following the procedure set out by the relevant local authority.

Although the process is co-ordinated by the local authority, the decision is made by the Trust. The decision will be made based upon which age group the child should be admitted into, taking account of the circumstances of each case and the best interests of the child. Once that decision has been made the oversubscription criteria will be applied to determine if a place can be offered at the school.

The school is not required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Your statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which you have applied is unaffected. However, the right to appeal does not apply if you are offered a place at the school but it is not in your preferred age group.

Deferred Admission:

By law, children must attend school full time once they reach compulsory school age. A child reaches compulsory school age on the **prescribed day** following his/her fifth birthday or on his/her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day. The **prescribed days are 31st December, 31st March and 31st August**.

If your child is offered a full-time place before s/he reaches compulsory school age, you have the option of deferring the child's entry up until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age. A place will be held and will not be offered to another child provided the place is taken up within the same academic year.

Parents can request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Child's fifth birthday	**Parent can defer admission or child can attend part-time until the start of term in**
1 September – 31 December 2021	January 2022
1 January – 31 March 2022	January 2022 OR April 2022

1 April – 31 August 2022	January 2022 OR April 2022 OR September 2022 by making a fresh application for a Year 1 place (June 2022) or making a fresh normal round application for Reception in 2022-23

Late Applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with the local authority admissions policy within which the academy is located. Under the statutory arrangements, there is no flexibility permitted if you miss the application deadline.

In-year applications:

In-year applications will be considered in line with the local authority co-ordinated admissions arrangements in which the school is situated.

To make an in-year application, parents should apply to the local authority and the school, ideally after visiting the school. Once an in-year application has been made, it will be considered by the Local Governing Board on behalf of the directors.

The decision will be issued by email (or letter if no email available). Offers of places may be withdrawn if they are offered in error or it is established that an offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

In cases involving school transfers that do not require a house move or where there is no need for an immediate move, arrangements may be made for the child to start school at the beginning of term to minimise disruption to their own and other children's education.

Fair Access Protocols:

Local Authorities are required to have Fair Access Protocols in order to make sure that unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. This includes admitting children above the admissions number to schools that are already full.

Infant Class Size Regulations:

There is a statutory requirement for infant classes of 30 pupils. Parents/carers should be aware that when applications for places are being considered by the school, there is a requirement to keep to the 30 pupil limit in each Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 class. Parents/carers do have a right of appeal in accordance with the Infant Class Size Regulations if the school is oversubscribed and their child is refused a place.

Statutory right of appeal:

Information on how to appeal can be found on the local authority website. Your appeal should be lodged within twenty school days after the date of the decision letter.

If a child is not offered a place, parents/carers have a statutory right to appeal. An appeal should be made in writing to the local authority.

Fraudulent Information:

If the allocation of a place has been made on the basis of fraudulent or intentionally misleading information, the governors reserve the right to withdraw the place.

Waiting Lists:

Parents whose children have not been offered their preferred school in the normal admissions round will be added to their preferred school's waiting list. Waiting lists for admission will remain open until the end of the Autumn Term in the admission year but schools may maintain waiting lists after this date and for year groups other than the intake year.

Waiting lists are ranked in the same order as the oversubscription criteria listed below. Your child's position on the waiting list may change. This means that a child's waiting list position during the year could go up or down.

Any late applications will be added to the list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Inclusion on a school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

Applications for twins/multiple birth children:

Where a place available is offered to a child from a twin or multiple birth, a place will normally be offered to both twins, triplets etc even if this means exceeding the admission number.

Attendance at Nursery:

Attending a nursery, or a pre-school setting on the site of the academy, does not give any priority within the oversubscription criteria for a place in the academy.

Pupils who have EHCPs

All students who have an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which names the school, will be offered a place.

Notes and Definitions

Note 1 - **Definition of looked after children or previously looked after children**:

A "looked after child" is a child who is: (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in s.22(1) of the children's Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

A "previously looked after child" is a child who: (a) ceased to be looked after because they were adopted (this includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 [see s.12 adoption orders] and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 [see s.46 adoption orders] , or (b) became subject to a child arrangements order (under the terms of the Children's Act 1989 s.8, as amended by s.12 of the Children's and Families Act 2014 - an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the girl is to live), or (c) became subject to a special guardianship order (see S.14A of the Children's Act 1989 - an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian [or special guardians]).

Note 2 - **Definition of Catholic**: A child baptised in the Catholic Church (evidenced by a baptismal certificate or a completed SIF with the parish stamp and priest's signature).

Note 3 – **Other faith** evidence is provided through a dedication certificate or a completed SIF signed by the relevant faith leader.

Note 4 - **Definition of siblings**. 'Sibling' means a natural brother or sister, a half-brother or sister, a legally adopted brother/half-brother or sister/half-sister, a step brother or sister or other child living in the same household as part of the same family who, in any of these cases, will be living at the same address at the date of their application for a place.

Note 5 - Place of Residence: Places are offered here on the basis of where the child will attend school, not necessarily where they live when the application is made.

The home address is where a child normally lives. Where a child lives with parents with shared parental responsibility, each for part of a week, the address where the child lives is determined using a joint declaration from the parents stating the pattern of residence. If a child's residence is split equally between both parents, then parents will be asked to determine which residential address should be used for the purpose of admission to school. If no joint declaration is received where the residence is split equally by the closing date for applications, the home address will be taken as the address where the daughter is registered with the doctor. Any other evidence provided by parents will also be considered in reaching a decision on the home address for admissions purposes. This may be necessary, for instance, where parents do not agree on the child's home address. Parents are urged to reach agreement or seek a Specific Issues Order from a court to decide which parent should or should not pursue an application. Where they do not, the admissions authority will determine the home address. If the residence is not split equally between both parents then the address used will be the address where the child spends the majority of the school week.

Where we ask for evidence of a new address from which a child would attend school, this would often be written confirmation of a house purchase or a formal tenancy agreement. We recognise that some families may be unable to provide this. Parents who cannot provide this evidence should contact us or the local authority. There is no intention to penalise families where there is a genuine reason why evidence cannot be provided.

Note 6 - Parents:

A parent is any person who has parental responsibility or care of the child. When we say parent, we also mean carer or guardian. Where admission arrangements refer to parents this can mean one parent or both. We may ask for evidence of parental responsibility where a person is acting as a parent but does not hold formal parental responsibility.

Sometimes there is a dispute between parents over which school a child should attend. When we take decisions over admissions we will seek advice from the local authority and the diocese and will take into account imminent court hearings that may have an impact on parental responsibility and living arrangements.

Appendix 1 - Supplementary Information Form

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School		
To be completed only where a parent is seeking admissions priority on faith criteria. Where there are more applications than there are places, we will prioritise applications where a faith criterion has been met. Please complete and return this form to the school by 15 January 2021.		
You must also complete a Local Authority Common Application Form.		
PART A	**To be completed by parent**	
Full name of child		
Date of birth		
Please tick the appropriate description		
Catholic	Child is baptised Catholic – part B signed by Parish Priest or baptismal certificate provided	
Other faith	Child is a member of a faith other than Catholic – part B signed by faith leader	

Once you have completed Part A, please EITHER attach a copy of the Baptism Certificate OR pass the form to your priest, minister, faith leader or church official who should complete Part B and return it to the school. If you don't return this form, your application will be considered under the "non-faith" criteria.

PART B	**To be completed by Priest or faith leader**	
Full name of child		
Church		
Name of Priest or faith leader		
Address		
Telephone		
Please tick the appropriate description		
Catholic	Child is baptised Catholic	
Other faith	Child is a member of a faith other than Catholic	
I confirm that the information provided is accurate:	Signed by: Signature:	
Please return this form to: 2 Beaumont Road, Plymouth, Devon, PL4 9BE		