

ADMISSIONS POLICY

2016-2017

St Thomas More Catholic School

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Admission number: 90

This school is in the trusteeship of the Diocese of Nottingham and serves the Catholic families of the parishes of Buxton, Chapel en le Frith, Whaley Bridge and New Mills. Our first responsibility therefore is to the children of Catholic families in this area and these children must have priority in gaining a place at the school. Additionally, 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.

Our school is under the trusteeship of the Diocese of Nottingham and belongs to the Nottingham Diocesan family of schools. It is founded by and is part of the Catholic Church and seeks at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ. Religious education and worship are in accordance with the teachings and doctrines of the Catholic Church. We ask all parents applying for a place to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community. This does not affect the right of parents who are not of the faith of this school to apply for and be considered for a place here.

The Governing Body are the Admissions Authority for our school and places can only be offered by the Governing Body. We are committed to providing a place for every Catholic child attending our linked primary schools.

In order to provide a system for the allocation of places, which takes into account the work of the Governing Body, a set of oversubscription criteria have been drawn up. The responsibility clearly stated in the opening paragraph will mean that the criteria for admission to the school will give priority to baptised Catholic children and other applications will only be considered if there are places available.

In drawing the criteria the Governing Body has used the following principles:

- the responsibility to serve the appropriate Catholic population as part of the Diocesan provision;
- a desire to keep families together;
- a desire to ensure continuity of education;
- a responsibility to the wider community;
- a desire to serve the general population.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR ADMISSION 2016 - 2017

Details of arrangements for admission can be found in "How to apply for a place at Secondary School - A guide for parents 2016/17" or by visiting www.derbyshire.gov.uk

The closing date for applications will be October 2015. The National Offer Day will be 1 March 2016.

YOUR APPLICATION - DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

Common Application Form: All applications for transfer from primary school to secondary school must be made on the Local Authority's Common Application Form. This form should also be used for applications to schools in neighbouring authorities.

The Supplementary Form and Supporting Faith Evidence: In addition all applicants applying under faith criteria should complete the Supplementary Form which should be returned to the Local Authority with the Common Application Form by the same closing date. Parents / carers of Catholic children should also supply the child's baptism certificate or written verification that the child has been received into the Catholic Church, signed by a Catholic priest and stamped with the parish stamp. If the child is participating in a course of preparation leading to baptism, written verification signed by a Catholic priest and stamped with the parish stamp should be provided. Applicants whose children are members of other Christian denominations should supply a baptism certificate or certificate of dedication. If the Supplementary form or required documents are not provided, the child might be ranked in a lower admissions category.

YOUR APPLICATION - HOW PLACES ARE ALLOCATED

Using the information on both the Common Application Form and the Supplementary Form, the Governing Body draws up a ranked list using the oversubscription criteria listed below. The Authority then allocates places on behalf of the Governing Body up to the admissions number.

APPLICATION FOR TWINS AND MULTIPLE BIRTH CHILDREN

Governors will normally offer places to twins, triplets etc even if this means exceeding the published admission number.

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.

The school anticipates that children will be educated out of their normal age group in only a small number of very exceptional circumstances. However should you wish to seek a place for your child outside of their normal age group you should still make an application for a school place for your child's normal age group but you should also submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time and follow the procedure set out by your home local authority.

A decision will then be made on which age group the child should be admitted taking into account 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.

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.

LATE APPLICATIONS

Late applications for places in Year 7 will only be accepted in very exceptional circumstances. Please consult the Local Authority Booklet for more details.

WAITING LISTS

Parents whose children have not been offered their preferred school will be informed of their right of appeal and 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. Popular schools may maintain waiting lists after this date.

Waiting lists are ranked in the same order as the oversubscription criteria listed below. Waiting lists 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 order of priority for allocating places.

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

IN YEAR APPLICATIONS

For applications from Parents/Carers made during the school year, details of the application process are available from the school and from the Local Authority. Once an application has been made, it will be passed to the Admissions Committee of the Governing Body for consideration. If the respective year group total is below the published admission number for that year group, the child will be offered a place. If the published admission number has been reached, the child will be only offered a place if the Admissions Committee decides that the education of pupils in that year group will not be detrimentally affected by the admission of an extra pupil.

Popular schools may maintain waiting lists for in year applications. Details will be provided on request. Inclusion on a school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

All places offered are subject to the child starting at school within seven days of the starting date stated within the offer letter. Any place not taken up within seven days may be withdrawn and offered to another child. Governors

reserve the right to extend the timescale of an offer if they consider there to be exceptional circumstances at the time.

If your child is not allocated a place, you have a statutory right to appeal (see 'Appeals' below). Your appeal should be lodged within 20 school days after the date of your refusal letter.

THESE ARE THE OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

Pupils with an Educational Health Care Plan or a Statement of Special Educational Needs which names the school will be admitted. This will reduce the number of places available.

Category A - Catholic looked after and previously looked after children (see note 3)

Category B - Catholic Pupils

1. Catholic pupils who attend one of the linked primary schools
2. Catholic pupils with brothers or sisters at the school at the time of admission
3. Other Catholic pupils

Category C - Pupils who are not Catholic who are classed as looked after or previously looked after children (see note 3)

Category D - Pupils who are not Catholic and who attend one of the linked primary schools

1. Pupils who are baptised or dedicated members of other churches as recognised by Churches Together in England (see Note 4)
2. Pupils with brothers or sisters at the school at the time of admission
3. Other pupils

Category E - Pupils who are not Catholic and who attend other schools

1. Pupils who are baptised or dedicated members of other churches as recognised by Churches Together in England (see Note 4)
2. Pupils with brothers or sisters at the school at the time of admission
3. Other pupils.

If a tie breaker is needed any of the above categories, allocation of places will be decided on a distance basis. This means that places will be allocated first to children whose home address is nearest to the school using the same method of measurement as used locally by the Local Authority. Distance measurements will be supplied by the Local Authority.

DEFINITIONS

Note 1 - Definition of Brothers, Sisters

Siblings (brothers or sisters) are considered to be those children who live at the same address and either:

- a. have one or both natural parents in common
- b. are related by a parent's marriage
- c. are adopted or fostered.

Note 2 - Definition of Catholic

1. A child baptised in the Catholic Church (Roman or Eastern rites) whose members are in full ecclesial and canonical communion with the Bishop of Rome, (Pope Francis). see footnote* below). Further Advice available from Diocesan Education Service.
2. A child baptised in another Christian denomination who has been received into full ecclesial and canonical communion with the Catholic Church
3. A child who, with his or her family, is participating in a recognised course of preparation leading to baptism or reception into the Catholic church (parishes are requested to keep appropriate records).

Note 3 - Definition of Child in Public Care (Looked after).

A "looked after child" is a child who is:

1. in the care of a local authority, or
2. being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.
3. A "previously looked after child" is a child who:
 - a. ceased to be looked after because they were adopted or
 - b. became subject to a residence order (under the terms of the Children Act 1989 Section 8 - an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live), or
 - c. became subject to a special guardianship order (see Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 - an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians)).

Note 4 - Churches Together in England

See www.cte.org.uk for details of 'member churches of Churches Together in England'

Note 5 -Linked Primary schools

St Anne's Catholic School, Buxton and St Mary's Catholic School, New Mills are the two primary schools that are linked to St Thomas More School.

Arrangements for Appeals

Following allocations, parents / carers may appeal if they are not allocated a place for their child at their preferred school. Requests for appeals must be made in writing and addressed to the Head at St Thomas More School. Appeals must be received by the Head no later than twenty working days after allocation day or, the case of 'In Year' applications, twenty working days after the date of the refusal letter. The Catholic Schools Appeals Service arranges all appeals on behalf of the governing body. Appeals will be heard by an independent panel and the final decision of the panel is binding on all parties.

**Full ecclesial and canonical communion with the Catholic Church requires the recognition that the Bishop of Rome has full, supreme, and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered (Catechism of the Catholic Church, §882). For Christians baptised outside of the Catholic Church, the restoration of full ecclesial and canonical communion requires reconciliation and a formal act of reception into full communion. Full communion with the Catholic Church is not established by the reception of Holy Communion alone.*