

ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR FEDERATION OF BEDFORD CATHOLIC SCHOOLS 2013

Basic information

St Joseph's Lower, St John Rigby Primary (Early Years – Yr 5), St Gregory's Middle and St Thomas More Upper Catholic schools are promoted by the Diocese of Northampton and are maintained by the Bedford Local Authority. (Each of these schools is part of the Federation of Bedford Catholic Schools).

The Governing Body is responsible for determining and administering the policy relating to the admission of pupils to the schools. It is guided in that responsibility by the requirements of the law, the advice of the Diocesan trustee, and its duty to the schools and the Catholic community.

In accord with the provisions of Regulation 49 of the Education (School Government) Regulations 1999, the Governing Body has delegated responsibility for determining admissions to the Admissions Committee with regard to the schools.

The schools primarily serve the parishes of: Holy Cross; Saint Joseph's; St Phillip and St James; Christ the King; Our Lady's, Kempston; St Francesca Cabrini; Sacred Heart and St Cuthbert and the whole of the Catholic community of Bedfordshire .

The Governing Body has set its planned admissions numbers as 60 for each of St Joseph's Lower and St John Rigby Primary, 90 for St Gregory's Middle, 200 (Year 9) and 20 external applicants (Year 12) for St Thomas More Upper for the school year commencing in September 2013

Parents living in Bedford Borough who wish to apply for a place in the school for their child beginning in September 2013 must complete the paper version of the Local Authority application form or can apply on line at: www.bedford.gov.uk/onlineadmissions by no later than the dates to be confirmed by the Local Authority and in accordance with the co-ordinated arrangements. Parents who do not live in Bedford Borough should apply to the Local Authority in which they live. All applications will be considered at the same time.

Children with a Statement of Educational Needs naming the school will be admitted in accordance with Bedford Borough policy and regulations.

The Admissions Committee of the FBCS Governing Body will consider all applications made in accordance with the criteria set out below without reference to the aptitude or ability of the child. All applications will be considered on an equal preference basis.

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**ADMISSIONS CRITERIA for ST JOSEPH'S LOWER and ST JOHN RIGBY
PRIMARY CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

In case of over subscription the Governors will give priority to children in the following order:

1. 'Looked After' children and previously 'looked after' children (see definition)
2. Catholic siblings of children attending the school whose application is supported by their Parish Priest or a priest known to them.
3. Catholic children from practising families from the parishes of Bedfordshire, whose application is supported by their Parish Priest or a priest known to them.
4. Catholic children from practising families from other parishes whose application is supported by a priest.
5. Other Catholic children, with proof of catholicity e.g a baptismal certificate or evidence of enrolment on a catechumenate programme .
6. Siblings from other Christian denominations whose parents wish them to receive a Christian education, whose application is supported by a Christian minister.
7. Siblings from other faith backgrounds, whose application is supported by their Faith minister or leader
8. Other siblings
9. Children from other Christian denominations whose parents wish them to receive a Christian education, whose application is supported by a Christian minister.
10. Children from other faith backgrounds, whose application is supported by their Faith Minister or leader
11. Any other children

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA for ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC MIDDLE SCHOOL

In case of over subscription the Governors will give priority to children in the following order:

1. 'Looked After' children and previously 'looked after' children (see definition)
2. Catholic siblings of children attending the school whose application is supported by their Parish Priest or a priest known to them.
3. Catholic children from practising families from the parishes of Bedfordshire, whose application is supported by their Parish Priest or a priest known to them.
4. Catholic children from practising families from other parishes whose application is supported by a priest.
5. Other Catholic children, with proof of catholicity e.g a baptismal certificate or evidence of enrolment on a catechumenate programme .
6. Siblings other than Catholic attending the school.
7. Other children attending St Joseph's and St John Rigby Catholic Lower Schools.
8. Children from other Christian denominations whose parents wish them to receive a Christian education, whose application is supported by a Christian minister
9. Children from other faith backgrounds, whose application is supported by their faith minister or leader.
10. Any other children.

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ADMISSIONS CRITERIA for ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC UPPER SCHOOL

In case of over subscription the Governors will give priority to children in the following order:

1. 'Looked After' children and previously 'looked after' children (see definition)
2. Catholic siblings of children attending the school whose application is supported by their Parish Priest or a priest known to them.
3. Catholic children from practising families from the parishes of Bedfordshire, whose application is supported by their Parish Priest or a priest known to them.
4. Catholic children from practising families from other parishes whose application is supported by a priest.
5. Other Catholic children, with proof of catholicity e.g a baptismal certificate or evidence of enrolment on a catechumenate programme .
6. Siblings other than Catholic attending the school.
7. Other children attending St Gregory's school.
8. Children from other Christian denominations whose parents wish them to receive a Christian education, whose application is supported by a Christian minister.
9. Children from other faith backgrounds, whose application is supported by their faith minister or leader.
9. Children attending Beauchamp Middle School.
10. Any other children

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- If applying these criteria results in there being more children with an equal right to admission to the school than the number of available places, the tie break will be the distance the pupil lives from the school, measured in a straight line, using the Local Authority's computerised mapping system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. The local authority will measure the distance from the address point of the pupil's home to the following points on the school sites:

St Thomas More – Front door (opposite Reception)
St Gregory's – Front door
St John Rigby – Front door
St Joseph's – Front door

Priority will not be given within each criterion to children who meet other criteria.

- Pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs are required to be admitted to the school which is named on the statement, even if the school is full. (Save when the naming of a mainstream school is unreasonable).

Priority will also be given to the admission of pupils in accordance with the 'Fair Access Protocol'.

Transport on 'Denominational Grounds'

The local authority has revised its Transport Policy and this will be effective from September 2012

In response to the Federation seeking some clarity on the current situation, the following is an extract from the local authority response:

"We (Local Authority) are able to support families on a low income with transport to school provided that the following criteria are met. Pupils must be aged over 11 and under 16 attending their nearest qualifying school in accordance with their parent(s)/carer(s) religion or belief where they live between 2 and 15 miles from their home. The pupil must be of the relevant age on 31st August prior to the academic year for which transport is requested. For those pupils who are currently receiving free home to school transport on denominational grounds to your school who will be of mainstream school age, they would all meet the minimum distance criteria and would be attending on denominational grounds. If those families meet the low income criteria of being eligible for free school meals or being in receipt of the maximum rate of Working Tax Credit, they will be entitled to free home to school transport on low income grounds. If those families wish to apply, we are happy to take their details and write to them with further information on when and how to apply. Some parent(s)/carer(s) may be entitled to purchase a privilege pass, if there are spaces on vehicles which provide transport for entitled pupils. This will not be known however until later in the year, once decisions regarding transport entitlement have been made. There are of course still some scenarios where children may continue to be eligible for free home to school transport"

The local School Transport policy can be accessed by viewing the Admissions Booklets at www.bedford.gov.uk/admissions or www.bedford.gov.uk/schooltransport or by reference to the Admissions Information booklet. Further information is available via the School Transport Help Line 01234 718004.

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Definitions

Catholic child

A catholic child is a child baptised according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church or a child enrolled in a catechumenate programme.

'Looked after' children

A 'looked after' child is a child who is (a) in the care of the local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989)

Previously 'looked after' children

A previously 'looked after' child is one who immediately after being 'looked after' became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. An 'adoption order' is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. A 'residence order' is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under section 8 of the Children Act 1989. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians)

Sibling

A sibling refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister or the child of the parent / carer's partner, and in every case, the child should be living at the same address. The sibling must be in the school at the time of application and be likely to remain in the school at the proposed date of admission.

Home Address

A pupil's home address will be regarded as the address of the parents or carers with parental responsibility with whom the child normally lives. This will not usually include grandparents, aunts or uncles. Where a child spends time with parents at more than one address, the address used to allocate a school place will be the one at which the pupil is ordinarily resident and where the child spends the majority of the school week (Mondays to Fridays) including nights. If there is any query on the home address this will be checked against original official documentation e.g. council tax bill, a recent utility bill (gas, electricity or water), a rental agreement, child benefit annual statement or family tax credit information.

Christian

Christian means a member of the Churches Together in England: Antiochian Orthodox Church, Baptist Union of Great Britain, Catholic Church, Cherubim and Seraphim Council of Churches, Church of England, Church of God of Prophecy, Church of Scotland (Presbytery of England), Congregational Federation, Coptic Orthodox Church, Council of African and Caribbean Churches UK, Council of Oriental Orthodox Christian Churches, Ichthus Christian Fellowship, Independent Methodist Churches, Joint Council for Anglo-Caribbean Churches, Lutheran Council of Great Britain, Methodist Church, Moravian Church, New Testament Assembly, New Testament Church of God, Oecumenical Patriarchate (Arch. of Thyateira and Great

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Britain , Redeemed Christian Church of God, Religious Society of Friends, Russian Orthodox Church, Salvation Army, Transatlantic Pacific Alliance of Churches, United Reform Church, Wesleyan Holiness Church. Church in Wales, Church of Ireland, Church of Scotland, Evangelische Synode Deutscher Sprache in Grossbritannien, Independent Methodist Churches, Mar Thoma Church, Methodist Church in Ireland, Presbyterian Church of Wales, Scottish Episcopal Church, Serbian Orthodox Church, Undeb Yr Annibynwyr Cymraeg, United Free Church of Scotland.
Proof of membership must be provided by the appropriate church leader.

Additional Information

1. All parents/carers whether or not successful will be informed in writing of the outcome of their application
2. The parents/carers of those children whose application for a place was unsuccessful will be informed in writing of the decision of the Admissions Committee and its reasons for not offering a place and of the right of the parents/carers to lodge an appeal against the decision including detail of how and to whom such appeal should be lodged
3. The Admissions Committee will keep a 'waiting list' of those children who have not been offered a place and this will be maintained until the end of the Autumn Term
4. Open Evenings will be on dates yet to be confirmed.

In Year Admissions

There is no longer a requirement on local authorities to co-ordinate in-year admissions. Any requests for admission into other year groups than the normal year of transfer should be made directly to the school