

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL



SIXTH FORM ADMISSIONS POLICY 2025 26

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SACRED HEART CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, FENHAM SIXTH FORM ADMISSIONS POLICY 2025-26

Sacred Heart Catholic High School Sixth Form was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for students of Catholic families. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will be given to Catholic students in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below. The school¹ is conducted by the Catholic Education 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 students. 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 admission policy criteria will be dealt with on an equal preference basis.

Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust is the admissions authority and is responsible for determining the admission policy. The local authority coordinates the admissions process on behalf of the Trust. The administration and operation of the admission policy is delegated by the Trust to the Local Governing Committee.

Published Admission Number

The admissions authority has set its published admission number (PAN) at 140 students to year 12 in the school year which begins in September 2025.

Entry requirements

Both internal and external students wishing to enter the sixth form will be expected to have met the same minimum academic entry requirements for the sixth form.

- Applicants must achieve at least eight GCSE or equivalent Level 2 qualification passes at grade 9-1; these must include at least **five GCSE passes at grades 9-4 including English and/or Maths**.
- In addition, **all students must meet the specific requirements for each course they wish to study**, details of which are outlined in the prospectus and on the website.

If either internal or external applicants fail to meet minimum individual course requirements, they will be given the option of pursuing any alternative course for which they do meet the minimum academic requirements.

When Year 12 is undersubscribed all applicants meeting the minimum academic entry requirements will be admitted or permitted to progress *providing they will complete their courses by the age of 19*.

¹ The term 'school' is used throughout the document to mean a Catholic school or academy in the diocese.

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

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

Application Procedures and Timetable

The sixth form is available for all existing students subject to students fulfilling the individual requirements of suitable courses. Remaining places in the sixth form of the school will be offered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria, subject to applicants fulfilling the individual requirements of suitable courses.

To apply for a place as an external at this school, the parent must complete an application form available from the school or school website. The parent will be advised of the outcome of the application by the school.

The parent will be advised of the outcome of the application on *GCSE results day* or the next working day, by the school. If the application is unsuccessful the parent will be informed of the decision, related to the oversubscription criteria, and has the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

If the parent is required to provide supplemental evidence to support the application (e.g. a baptismal certificate), this evidence should be provided at the time of application. If not provided, evidence may be sought by the Admissions authority following the closing date for applications. This information must have been correct at the date of closing for applications. Evidence of GCSE results will need to be provided by external applicants at the time of enrolment to ensure entry requirements and the individual requirements of courses are met.

All applications which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is 6th September 2025.

Late Applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with the home local authority coordinated admissions scheme. Parents are advised to ensure that the application is submitted before the closing date.

Admission of Students outside their Normal Age Group

A request may be made for a student to be admitted outside of their normal age group, for example, if the student is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

Any such request should be made in writing to the *Head of Sixth Form* of the school. The Admissions authority will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the student. In addition to taking into account the views of the headteacher who has statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the Admissions authority will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals.

Students admitted to the Sixth Form outside of their normal age group are required to meet the relevant entry requirements for their proposed programme of study and each individual subject chosen.

We will not offer places to current Sacred Heart students or external applicants who fail to meet the entry requirements and for whom no reasonable programme of study can be arranged.

As a school-based sixth form we cannot offer places to students who will be older than 19 years of age at the end of their course.

Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, applicants 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 below 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 the last day of the summer term. Inclusion on the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

In-Year Applications

In all cases the school cannot offer places to students who will be older than 19 years of age at the end of their course.

An application can be made for a place for a student at any time outside the admission round and the student will be admitted where there are available places. Applications should be made to the school by contacting *Head of Sixth Form* on 0191 274 7373. [www.sacredheart-high.org/]

Parents will be advised of the outcome of their application in writing. 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, a request can be made that the student is added to the waiting list (see above). The parent has the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

Right of Appeal

Where a parent has been notified that a place is not available for a student, every effort will be made by the local authority to help the parent to find a place in a suitable alternative school. Parents who are refused a place have a statutory right of appeal. Further details of the appeals process are available by writing to the Chair of Governors at the school address.

Fair Access Protocol

The school is committed to taking its fair share of students who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as set out in locally agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal admission round the Admissions authority is empowered to give absolute priority to a student where admission is requested under any local protocol that has been agreed by both the diocese and the Admissions authority for the current school year. The Admissions authority has this power, even when admitting the student would mean exceeding the published admission number.

False evidence

The Admissions authority reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place or, where a student is already attending the school, the place itself, where it is satisfied that the offer or place was obtained by deception.

Oversubscription Criteria (for external applicants)

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority who meet entry requirements.

1. Catholic looked after and previously looked after students (see notes 2&3)
2. Other Catholic students. (see note 3)
3. Other looked after and previously looked after students. (see note 2)
4. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 4&5)
5. Children of a member of school staff who has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time of the application for admission to the school is made. (see note 10)

6. Students of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister or faith leader (see note 6)
7. Any other students

Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.

- (i) *Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made. (see note 11)*
- (ii) *The attendance of a sibling 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 (i) above. (see note 8)*

Tie Breaker

Where there are insufficient places to meet all applications within a category the school will allocate places using an electronic random allocation process, which will be independently monitored.

If your child is unsuccessful in gaining a place, you may request that your child is placed onto the school's waiting list, which will be maintained according to the schools admissions criteria. Within each criterion, children will be ranked by computer in random order.

Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

1. A **Statement of Special Educational Needs** is a statement made by the local authority under section 324 of the Education Act 1996, specifying the special educational provision for a student. 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 student.
2. A **looked after student** has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any student 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. students with foster parents) at the time of making application to the school.

A **previously looked after student** is a student who was looked after, but ceased to be so because 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 admissions authority) 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 student who is part of a Catholic family where a letter from a priest demonstrates that the student would have been baptised or received if it were not for their status as a looked after student (e.g. a looked after student in the process of adoption by a Catholic family).

For a student to be treated as Catholic, evidence of Catholic 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 law of the Church.

4. **Catechumen** means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. For the purposes of admissions this refers to the student on whose behalf the application is being made. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens.

5. **Eastern Christian Church** includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism or reception should contact the Diocese who will decide how the question of baptism or reception is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church.
6. **Students of other Christian denominations** means students 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 creedal 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 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.

Applicants must provide a baptismal certificate or where child baptism is not practised, a letter confirming their church membership from their minister or faith leader.

7. **Home address** is the primary parental address which will be used in applying the admission criteria. This means that, when stating the choice of school, the parental address at the time of application should be given. The address of childminders or other family members who may share in the care of the student must not be used as the home address. Documentary evidence may be requested.
8. **Sibling** includes:
 - (i) all natural sisters, half sisters, adopted sisters, stepsisters, foster sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address; and
 - (ii) the student of a parent's partner where that student lives for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same address as the applicant.
9. A **parent** means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for a student, and any person who has care of a student (having care of a student means that the student lives with and is looked after by that person).
10. **A member of staff** includes all school staff who are under the direct employment of the Trustees of the school.
11. To demonstrate an **exceptional social, medical or pastoral need** of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the admissions authority will require compelling written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the local authority's admission guidance for parents.