ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
ADMISSION POLICY AND ARRANGEMENTS 2024/2025

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY is a Catholic School under the trusteeship of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. It is maintained by St Helens Council. As a Voluntary Aided School, the Governing Body is the Admissions Authority and is responsible for taking decisions on applications for admissions. The co-ordination of admissions arrangements is undertaken by the Local Authority. For the school's year commencing September 2024, the Governing Body has set its admissions number at 30.

Our principal role as a Catholic school is to participate in the mission of the Catholic Church by providing a framework which will help children to grow in their understanding of the Good News and in the practice of their faith. The school will help the children develop fully as human beings and prepare them to undertake their responsibilities as Catholic in society. The school asks all parents applying for a place here to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community. This does not affect the rights of parents who are not of the faith of this school to apply for and be considered for a place here.

ADMISSIONS TO THE SCHOOL will be determined by the Governing Body. Parents must complete a Local Authority Preference Form or apply online via the website www.sthelens.gov.uk/admissions. If you wish to have your application considered against that school's faith/denomination criteria then you should **ALSO** complete the Supplementary Form which is available from the school. All preferences listed will be considered on an equal basis and, where there are more applications than the number of places available, the following set of OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA will be applied:

1. Looked after children and previously looked after children. This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

2. Baptised Catholic children who have a sibling in the school at the time of admission.

3. Baptised Catholic children resident in the parishes of St Mary, Lowe House and St Thomas of Canterbury.

4. Other baptised Catholic children.

5. Other children who have a sibling in the school at the time of admission.

6. Children from other Christian denominations. Proof of Baptism in the form of a Baptismal Certificate or confirmation in writing that the applicant is a member of their Faith community from an appropriate Minister of Religion is required.

7. Children of other faiths. An appropriate Faith Leader would need to confirm in writing that the applicant is a member of their faith group.

8. Other children.

If it is not possible to offer places for all applications within any criteria above then places will be allocated to the children who live nearest to the school. The measurement shall be undertaken by the Local Authority in a straight line using a Geographical Information System (GIS) based on Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) data and the National Grid co-ordinates for the family home and the school.

Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health Care Plan that names a school will be offered place without using the admission criteria and will count as part of the school's published admission number.

Notes:

a. All applications submitted before the national closing date will be considered equally and included in the Local Authority initial allocation of school places. Applications received after the national closing date will be processed in accordance with the St Helens admissions scheme for schools detailed in the St Helens admissions information booklets.

b. 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 (under section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989. A previously Looked After Child is one who immediately moved on from that status after becoming subject to an adoption, child arrangements order or special guardianship order.

   A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. Applications must be supported with appropriate evidence that the child has been adopted from state care.

c. For a child to be considered as a Catholic evidence of a Catholic Baptism is required. Baptism should take place before the closing date for applications.

   A Baptised Catholic can also be defined as one who has been baptised by the Rites of Baptism of one of the various Churches in communion with the See of Rome (cf Catechism of the Catholic Church 1203). Written evidence of this baptism can be obtained by recourse to the Baptismal Registers of the church in which the baptism took place.

   Or

   A person who has been baptised in a separate ecclesial community and subsequently received into full communion with the Catholic Church by the Rite of Reception of Baptised Christians into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church. Written evidence of their reception into full communion with the Catholic Church can be obtained by recourse to the Register of Receptions, or in some cases a sub-section of the Baptismal Registers of the Church in which the Rite of Reception took place.

The Governing Body will require written evidence in the form of a Certificate of Reception before applications for school places can be considered for categories of 'Baptised Catholics'. A Certificate of Reception is to include full name, date of birth, date of reception and parent(s) name(s). The certificate must also show that it is copied from the records kept by the place of reception.

Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism for a good reason, may still be considered as baptised Catholics but only after they have been referred to the parish priest who after consulting with the Episcopal Vicar, 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.

d. "Children of other Christian denominations" means: children who belong to other churches and ecclesial communities which, acknowledging 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 of CYTÛN 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. Other faiths are defined as organisations whose values are based on faith and/or beliefs, which have a mission based on social values of a particular faith.

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e. Home address is considered to be the address where the child normally lives. Applicants should not state a childminder's or other relative's address. It may be necessary to carry out checks to confirm addresses given are genuine and parents may therefore be asked to provide documentary evidence of their child's home address.

f. Sibling is defined in these arrangements as full, half or step-brothers and sisters, adopted and foster brothers and sisters who are living at the same address and are part of the same family unit. This does not include cousins or other family relationships.

g. A waiting list for children who have not been offered a place will be kept and will be ranked according to the Admission Criteria. The waiting list does not consider the date the application was received or the length of time a child's name has been on the waiting list. This means that a child's position on the list may change if another

applicant is refused a place and their child has higher priority in the admissions criteria. The waiting list will be retained until at least the end of December of the relevant year of the admissions process.

h. For 'In Year' applications received outside the normal admissions round, if places are available they will be offered to those who apply. If there are places available but more applicants than places then the published oversubscription criteria for the relevant year group will be applied. A waiting list for those who have not been offered a place will be kept until the end of the relevant academic term.

i. If an application for admission has been turned down by the Governing Body, parents can appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel. Parents must be allowed at least twenty school days from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful to submit that appeal. Parents must give reasons for appealing in writing and the decision of the Appeals Panel is binding on the Governors.

j. The Governing Body reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a school place where false evidence is received in relation to the application.

k. It is the duty of governors to comply with regulations on class size limits at Foundation Stage and Key Stage One. The Governing Body may exceed the regulations for twins and children from multiple births where one of the children is the 30th child admitted. This also applies to in-year applicants who are looked after/previously looked after, children of UK service personnel or children who move into the area for whom there is no other school available within a reasonable distance.

l. Parents of children who are offered a place at the school before they are of compulsory school age can defer their child's entry until later in the school year or until their child reaches compulsory school age in that school year.

Parents can make a request to the Headteacher that the date their child is admitted to school is deferred to later in the school year. However, an application must be made for a place for the relevant September intake and the child has to start school before the end of that school year.

Where entry is deferred, the school will hold the place for that child and not offer it to another child during the remainder of the school year.

Parents cannot defer entry beyond the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the academic year for which the original application was accepted.

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

Parents of a summer born child, born between April and August, may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday.

A request to the Headteacher for a full year deferral with a start in Reception would be considered to be an application to admit outside the normal age range (see below).

m. If a parent wishes their child to be educated out of their normal age group they must discuss this with the Headteacher before applying for a place. The decision rests with the school as admission authority as per para 2.17 of the Admissions Code.

If there is more than one application for an available place reference will be made to the oversubscription criteria.