

ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR 2021

St Joseph's and St Gregory's Catholic Primary School, St John Rigby Catholic Primary School and St Thomas More Catholic Secondary School are part of the Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Academies Trust (OLICAT) in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Northampton

The Directors of the OLICAT are responsible for determining and administering the policy relating to the admission of pupils to the schools within the Trust. It is guided in that responsibility by the requirements of the law, the advice of the Duns Scotus Trust and the Diocesan trustee, and its duty to the schools and the Catholic community.

The schools primarily serve the parishes of: Holy Cross; St 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.

We welcome applications from those of all faiths and none and hope that all parents will give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the schools. 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 Directors of the OLICAT have set its planned admissions numbers as:

- 60 pupils for St John Rigby Catholic Primary School
- 60 pupils for St Joseph's and St Gregory's Catholic Primary School
- 150 pupils in Year 7 for St Thomas More Catholic Secondary School

Parents living in Bedford Borough who wish to apply for a place in the school for their child beginning in September 2021 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 OLICAT Directors 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.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA for ST JOSEPH'S & ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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

1. Children 'Looked After' and children previously 'Looked After' (see definitions)
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. Children attending St Joseph's & St Gregory's Nursery who will be of Reception age
7. Children of staff who have either
 - a. been employed at the school for two or more years at the time the application for admission to that school is made
 - b. or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage
8. Siblings other than Catholic attending the school
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 JOHN RIGBY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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

1. Children 'Looked After' and children previously 'Looked After' (see definitions)
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. Children of staff who have either
 - a. been employed at the school for two or more years at the time the application for admission to that school is made
 - b. or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage
7. Siblings other than Catholic attending the 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
10. Any other children

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA for ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

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

1. Children 'Looked After' and children previously 'Looked After' (see definitions)
2. Children attending St John Rigby Primary School or St Josephs and St Gregory's Primary School
3. Catholic siblings of children attending the school whose application is supported by their Parish Priest or a priest known to them
4. Catholic children from practising families from the parishes of Bedfordshire, whose application is supported by their Parish Priest or a priest known to them
5. Catholic children from practising families from other parishes whose application is supported by a priest
6. Other Catholic children with proof of catholicity e.g. a baptismal certificate or evidence of enrolment on a catechumenate programme
7. Children of staff who have either
 - a. been employed at the school for two or more years at the time the application for admission to that school is made
 - b. or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage
8. Siblings other than Catholic attending the school
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. Children attending Scott Primary School
12. Children attending St James' VA Primary School
13. Any other children

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 John Rigby – Front door
- St Joseph's & St Gregory's – Front door of the Lower Primary site

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

Pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs/Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are required to be admitted to the school which is named, even if the school is full.

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

In any situation where the application of the above criteria results in more children with an equal right to admission to the school than the number of available places, the tie-break will be made by a lottery. The names of all those with an equal right to admission will be allocated to numbered counters. These will then be drawn and the order in which they are drawn will give the order of priority for the allocation of the places available. The places will be allocated, in order, up to the number of places available. This process will be carried out under the supervision of an independent observer from Bedford Borough Council.

Transport

Generally as a parent or carer you are responsible for your child's journey to and from school. Bedford Borough Council provides free transport in certain circumstances. Please check the policy at www.bedford.gov.uk/schooltransport as it provides further information on the local authority's statutory duties and eligibility criteria.

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. Applications made on the basis of Catholicity must include a copy of the baptismal certificate or evidence of enrolment in a catechumenate programme.

Practising means attending Mass weekly for Roman Catholic families.

Children 'Looked After'

A child 'looked after' 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).

Children previously 'looked after'

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

A "*Christian*" is a member of a Christian Church which is recognised as a full member of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, or the Evangelical Alliance or, otherwise, which believes the Nicene Creed, at the time Governors make their decision on admissions. Proof of membership must be provided by the appropriate church leader.

Additional Information

Appeals

Parents/carers who may wish to appeal against non-admission will have the right of appeal to an **Independent Appeals Panel**. The decision of the Appeals Panel will be binding. Details of admissions and appeals arrangements will be published each year.

In Year Admissions

There is no longer a requirement on Local Authorities to co-ordinate in-year admissions although it is our understanding that Bedford Borough will continue to undertake this on behalf of all schools within the Borough. Any requests for admission into other year groups than the normal year of transfer should still be made directly to the Local Authority in the first instance.