

BISHOP CHALLONER CATHOLIC FEDERATION OF SCHOOLS ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR ADMISSIONS IN SEPTEMBER 2017

GIRLS SCHOOL

Bishop Challoner Catholic Federation of Schools were founded by the Church to provide education for Catholic students who will have priority in accordance with this policy.

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. 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 is fully supported by all families in the school. All applicants are therefore expected to give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school.

The Tower Hamlets Co-ordinated Scheme

The Girls' School is its own admission authority and its Governing Body decides on applications for places in the school. In common with other maintained schools in the Borough, the school is obliged to participate in the Tower Hamlets Borough co-ordinated scheme for admissions. Applicants will need to complete their form using the e-admissions system and submit to Tower Hamlets by **31 October 2016**. Tower Hamlets will make offers on behalf of the school. Applicants from other Boroughs will need to complete their application using their own Local Authority e-admissions website. Paper forms are also available from the LA on request.

The Supplementary Information Form

In addition to completing your Tower Hamlets application form, the school strongly encourages parents to complete the school's Supplementary Information Form (SIF). Completion of the SIF allows the school to collect the necessary information needed for full consideration of applications by the Governing Body in the event that the school is oversubscribed and oversubscription criteria (see below) need to be applied. If an applicant does not complete the SIF, the Governing Body will apply the school's oversubscription criteria using only the information submitted on his or her Local Authority Form. This may result in the application being given a lower priority against those criteria due to lack of available information. Supplementary Information Forms are available from the Clerk to the Admissions Committee at the school and at tdavis@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk. The SIF must be completed and returned to the school by **31 October 2016**

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC)

The admission of pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC) is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the EHC Code of Practice. If your child has an EHC plan you must contact your local authority SEN officer. Children with this school named in their EHC Plan will be admitted.

Published Admission Number

The Governing Body intends to admit 150 girls' in Year 7 in the school year which begins 1st September 2017.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where there are more applications for places than the total of 120 places available (after allowing for student's with an EHC Plan naming the school). Children with this school named in their EHC Plan will be admitted. Places will be offered according to the following order of priority. In the past 3 years governors have been able to offer places in all categories.

1. Catholic looked after girls' and Catholic girls' who have been adopted (or made subject to child arrangements order or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after.¹
2. Baptised Catholic girls with a Certificate of Catholic Practice
3. Baptised Catholics

¹ 'Looked-after child' means a child in the care of the Local Authority or provided with accommodation by them e.g. children with foster parents (see section 22 of The Children's Act 1989)

4. Other looked after girls' and girls' who have been adopted (or made subject to child arrangements order or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after.
5. Children of Catechumens and baptised children of Eastern/Orthodox Churches where the application has a letter confirming membership of the faith community.
6. Practising Christians as evidenced by a letter confirming membership of the faith community from the applicant's vicar, priest or equivalent religious leader.
7. Other Christians
8. Practising members of other faiths as evidenced by a letter confirming membership of the faith from their religious leader.
9. Any other applicant

The Governors will give top priority within a category to children in respect of whom the Governors are satisfied that there is a well-documented pastoral, social or medical reason showing that it is essential for the child to attend the school, and that their needs cannot be readily met by any other school. All evidence that the applicant wishes the Governing Body to take into account must be supplied to the school at the time of application and it must include support from either a registered medical practitioner, parish priest or a local authority social worker.

Tie-Breaker

If the school is oversubscribed in any of the above criteria, (i.e. the remaining number of places is less than the number of children meeting relevant criterion) priority will be given in the following order:

- a. To applicants with a sibling (which includes adopted, half, step and foster siblings) attending either the Girls' school, Boys' school or Sixth Form and is expected to be attending that school at the date of intended admissions. If there are more children qualifying under this rule than there are available places, the further distance tie-breaker below will apply to allocate places to them.
- b. Thereafter priority will be given to those who live nearest to the school by the shortest walking route. A digitised map is used by the Local Authority to measure the distance from the home address to the schools nearest available entrance in constant use. For this purpose the address to be used is the permanent domestic address of the parents. Business addresses are not acceptable. If the child does not live with both parents, it is the address of the parent, guardian or carer with whom the child lives permanently or for 50% or more of the week. If access is equal then it is the address nearest to the school. In the event of there being two or more applicants at a flat or multi-occupational dwelling vying for the last available place a random lottery will be used as a further tie-breaker. The school reserves the right to require evidence that the address stated is the permanent domestic address after an offer has been made and accepted. If it subsequently appears that a place has been offered in reliance on information that is shown to be materially incorrect or misleading (e.g. the parental address) and that a place would not have been offered had the information been correct, offer may be withdrawn.

Fair Access Protocol

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

In-Year Admissions

Applications for In-Year admissions are made directly to the school. Where there is no waiting list the local authority will be notified and the child will be admitted. If more applications are received than there are places available then applications will be ranked by the governing body in accordance with the oversubscription criteria, with the following modifications: Catholic children without an offer of a school place elsewhere are given priority immediately after Catholic 'looked-after' children; similarly, other children without an offer of a school place are given priority immediately after other 'looked-after' children. If a place cannot be offered at this time then you may ask us for the reasons and you will be informed of your right of appeal. You will be offered the opportunity of being placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained by the governing body in the order of the oversubscription criteria (as modified above) and not in the order in which the applications are received. Names are removed from the list at the end of each academic year. When a place becomes available the governing body will decide who is at the top of the list and make an offer.

Multiple Births

When the last offer is made to a child of a multiple birth i.e. twin, triplet etc., the remaining child(ren) will also be offered a place, even though it will mean exceeding the published admission number.

Appeals

The Governors operate a procedure for handling appeals against non-admission. Details will be sent to unsuccessful candidates. A waiting list will be established for unsuccessful applicants who wish to be placed on it. The waiting list will remain open for a full year from the date of admission.

Definitions

- **'Practising Catholic'** Defined by the 'Certificate of Catholic Practice'. This is a certificate given by the family's parish priest (or the priest in charge of the church which the family attends) in the form laid down by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.
- **A 'looked after child'** has the same meaning as in section 22 of the Children's Act 1989, and means any child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by them (e.g. children with foster parents).
- **'Adopted'**. 'Adopted' applies to a child who was adopted from care and whose parents can give proof of this status.
- **'Child Arrangements'**. A child arrangements order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.8 which defines it as an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.
- **'Special Guardianship Order'**. A special guardianship order is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.14A which defines it as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s).
- **'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 for a child by a certificate of baptism in a Catholic church or a certificate of reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church.
- **'Parent'** is defined as the person or persons who have legal responsibility for the child.
- **'Christian'** is defined as a member of a church which belongs to 'Churches Together in Britain and Ireland'.

CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE

Applicants applying under criterion 2 must submit a Certificate of Catholic Practice (CCP) by the closing date. This form (which used to be called a priest's reference form) is available from the school or from the diocesan website. Parents should fill in the top part of the form with their details and then take the form to their parish priest (or the priest at the parish where they normally worship) for signature. It is the parent's duty to ensure that the CCP is submitted to the school in good time. The priest will only sign this form if he knows you and agrees that you are a practising Catholic family.

CHILDREN EDUCATED OUTSIDE THEIR CHRONOLOGICAL AGE GROUP

Parents may apply for their child to be educated outside his/her chronological age group i.e. a year behind or a year ahead. Application should be made to the Chair of Governors at the time of application and any supporting evidence should be submitted at the same time. Governors will consider each case on its own merits and permission will only be given in exceptional circumstances.