

# **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

## **2024/2025**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Christ is our teacher.

At St Bernard's we believe that all persons are created by God, unique and equal. We strive to create a caring Christian community in which we provide education based on Gospel values where all people reach their full potential. We aim to develop positive relationships with every individual and family, the parishes and the wider community.

**"I have come that they may have life and have it to the full"**

**John 10:10**

<b>Reviewed by:</b>	S Kent, Principal, September 2022
<b>Reviewed at:</b>	Governors' Raising Achievement Meeting, 5 <sup>th</sup> October 2022
<b>Approved at:</b>	Full Governing Body Meeting, 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2022
<b>Updated and approved by:</b>	Full Governing Body, 20 <sup>th</sup> July 2023
<b>Signed:</b>	Austin Senior, Chair of Governors

## **Introduction**

The family of Catholic schools across the Diocese of Hallam offers a Catholic Gospel based education for children whose parents (see note 9) seek a genuine alternative to other outstanding schools. Our schools are communities of faith where God is recognised and named. They are rooted in the Church's concept of mission and in living out a Christian lifestyle, they present a picture of Christ to catch the imagination.

Each Catholic school in the Diocese, in partnership with home and parish, has been established to be an integral part of the local Catholic community, which shares the mission of the Church to proclaim the Gospel of Christ. Members of the Parishes of the Diocese of Hallam have contributed towards the cost of the build of the school and continue to care for its buildings and its people. The provision of this network of schools is primarily intended to provide a place at a Catholic school for all baptised members or catechumens of the Church. However, should surplus places be available, governors are encouraged to give priority to parents of other Christian denominations who are seeking a Christian education for their children.

## **The admission number for Year 7, 2024/2025 is 155**

St Bernard's is a Catholic Voluntary Academy for students between the ages of 11 to 16 years. As a Catholic Voluntary Academy the Governing Body is responsible for admissions. It is guided in that responsibility by the requirements of law, the requirements of the Trust Deed and the school's Articles of Association and Funding Agreement; by advice from the Diocesan Trustees and its duty to the Catholic community and the common good. This policy should be read in conjunction with Annex B of the Articles of Association (Appendix 1 attached).

Please note that admission to a Catholic Primary School does not guarantee admission to a Catholic High School.

If you would like to visit the school before applying, please call 01709 828 183 to make an appointment.

## **Co-ordinated Scheme for Admission Arrangements**

The co-ordinated scheme for admissions is a mechanism that ensures that all parents resident in Rotherham LA and who have expressed a preference for St Bernard's Catholic High School before the closing date will receive a single offer of a school place on the same day from the Authority.

In order to provide every parent with an offer of a single place the Authority works with the Governing Bodies of the Voluntary Aided secondary schools within the Rotherham area, including St Bernard's Catholic High School. Details of the co-ordinated scheme are available from the Authority.

## **Application procedure**

Applications are made by the completion of the ONLINE APPLICATION FORM or a PAPER FORM, available from the Local Authority in which you live. You should also complete the Diocese of Hallam SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM (available online) and return to the school. Failure to complete and return the form may affect the admission category your child is placed in.

## **Parental Preference**

All applications will be placed in an admission category on an equal basis irrespective of preference.

## **Criteria for Admission**

Our priority is to provide Catholic secondary education for Catholic children resident in the parishes of Forty Martyrs', St Bede's, St Mary's (Herringthorpe), St Mary's (Maltby), Blessed Trinity, St Gerard's in the Rotherham Deanery and St Joseph's, Dinnington, in the Bassetlaw Deanery. Applications from Catholic and Non-Catholic children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (see note 1) will be admitted where the school is named in the Plan.

Where there are more applications for admission than the published admission number stated, as agreed with the Local Authority, the Governing Body will apply the following criteria in strict order of priority:

1. Catholic 'Looked After Children' and 'Previously Looked After Children' (see notes 2 and 3)
2. Other 'Looked After Children' and 'Previously Looked After'
3. Catholic children who are attending a Catholic feeder Primary School (see note 4)  
(St Bede's Catholic Primary School – Rotherham; St Gerard's Catholic Primary School – Thrybergh; St Joseph's Catholic Primary School – Dinnington; St Mary's Catholic Primary School – Herringthorpe; St Mary's Catholic Primary School – Maltby)
4. Other Catholic children who have a sibling (see note 8) in school, at the time of enrolment
5. Other children who have a sibling in school, at the time of enrolment
6. Other children who attend a Catholic feeder Primary School (see list of schools at point 3 above)
7. Catechumens, members of the Orthodox Church, members of an Eastern Christian Church and other Christian children, resident (see note 10) within the Parishes detailed above (see notes 5,6,7)
8. Other Catholic children
9. Children who have at least one parent currently employed by St Bernard's Catholic High School, irrespective of their faith
10. Catechumens, members of the Orthodox Church, members of an Eastern Christian Church
11. Other Christian children
12. Other applications, who wish to be educated in a Christ-centred environment
13. Other children

Please refer to the 'Supplementary Information Form' which details the supporting documentation required with your application.

## **Tie break**

With the exception of categories 1-6 above, should the published admission limit be reached mid category, priority will be given to those children who live nearest the school. The measurement (made by the Rotherham LA) is the shortest distance measured in a straight line from the applicant's home address to the school (for a full explanation of the method used to calculate distance please refer to the LA's Admission to Secondary School booklet). In circumstances where two or more children live the same distance from the school, the offer of a place will be decided by drawing lots. The first name drawn will be offered the place.

## **Late Applications**

Late applications received by the LA will be dealt with in accordance with the Authority's Co-ordinated Admission Scheme.

## **Admission of children outside their normal age group**

A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside their normal age group, for example if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. Any such request should be made to: Local Authority Admissions Team, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council Children and Young People's Services, Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham, S60 1AE at the same time as the Admission Application is made. The School's Governing Body will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the Principal, including the Principal's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the Governing Body will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

## **Waiting List**

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful children 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 above and **not** in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Waiting lists for admission to Year 7 will operate until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024.

**Inclusion in the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.**

## **In-Year Applications**

An application can be made for a place for a child at any time outside the admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. Applications for the school should be made to: Local Authority Admissions Team, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council Children and Young People's Services, Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham, S60 1AE.

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, the child will be added to the waiting list (see above).

You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

## **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 admission 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.

## **False Information**

Where the Governing Body has made an offer of a place at this school on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent, which has effectively denied a place to a child with a stronger claim to a place at the school, the offer of a place may be withdrawn.

Where a child starts attending the school on the basis of fraudulent and intentionally misleading information the place may be withdrawn by the Governing Body, depending on the length of time that the child has been at the school.

## **Timetable**

Closing date for receiving applications: **31<sup>st</sup> October 2023**

Offer day: **1<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 1<sup>st</sup> March or the next working day, by the Local Authority on our behalf. If you are unsuccessful (unless your child gained a place at a school you ranked higher) you will be informed of the reasons, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above, and you have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel.

## **Notes:**

### **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**

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 child. Please note that the school must be named in the EHCP.

### **2. Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children**

A 'looked after child' has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any child 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. children with foster parents) at the time of making application to the school.

A 'previously looked after child' is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because he or she was adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order and those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

### **3. Catholic children**

'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 child who is part of a Catholic family where a letter from a priest demonstrates that the child would have been baptised or received if it were not for their status as a looked after child living with a family where at least one of the parents is Catholic (e.g. a looked after child in the process of adoption by a Catholic family).

## ST BERNARD'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

For a child to be treated as Catholic, evidence of 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 laws of the Church.

### **4. Attendance at a Feeder Primary School**

For the purposes of this admission policy, attendance at a feeder primary school includes those who were prevented from attending a feeder school due to oversubscription of Catholics and whose application to attend was unsuccessful, normally evidenced by a letter of rejection from the feeder primary school.

### **5. Catechumen**

'Catechumen' means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens.

### **6. Eastern Christian Church**

'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.

### **7. Other Christian Denominations**

"Children of other Christian denominations" means children 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 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 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.

### **8. Sibling**

- (i) all natural brothers or sisters, half brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address; and
- (ii) the child of a parent's partner where that child for whom the school place is sought lives for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same home address as the child who is the subject of the application.

### **9. Parent**

A 'parent' means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for a child, and any person who has care of a child.

### **10. Place of residence**

The child's ordinary place of residence will be deemed to be a residential property at which the person or persons with parental responsibility for the child resides at the closing date for receiving applications for admission to the school.

## ST BERNARD'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Where parental responsibility is held by more than one person and those persons reside in separate properties, the child's ordinary place of residence will be deemed to be that property at which the child resides for the greater part of the week, including weekends.

A child's 'home address' refers to the address where the child usually lives with a parent or carer, and will be the address provided in the Common Application Form (CAF). Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives for part of the week with each parent, the home address will be the address given in the CAF, provided that the child resides at that address for any part of the school week.

### **Oversubscription Criteria**

At any time where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the order of priority, please refer to the 'Criteria for Admission' above.

### **Appeals against the Governing Body's decision to refuse admission**

1. If a place is not available, parents have the right of appeal. Such appeals will be heard by an Independent Appeals Panel formed in accordance with the DfE Admissions Appeal Code. Details of the appeals process can be obtained via the Local Authority Website, Admissions Appeal Booklet.
2. Parents who intend to make an appeal against the Governing Body's decision to refuse admission must submit a notice of appeal to:

**Appeals Clerk  
Legal & Democratic Services  
Town Hall, The Crofts  
Moorgate Street  
Rotherham  
S60 2TH**

**Tel No: 01709 822 054**

**Email: [schoolappeals@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:schoolappeals@rotherham.gov.uk)**

### **Date of Implementation:**

This policy was approved by the Full Governing Body in November 2022.

**Annex B (Appendix 1)**

**REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ADMISSION OF PUPILS TO ST BERNARD'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, A CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY**

**GENERAL**

1. This Annex may be amended in writing at any time by agreement between the Secretary of State and the Academy Trust.
2. The Academy Trust will act in accordance with, and will ensure that an Independent Appeal Panel is trained to act in accordance with, all relevant provisions of the School Admissions Code and the School Admission Appeals Code published by the Department for Education ("the Codes") as they apply at any given time to maintained schools and with equalities law and the law on admissions as they apply to maintained schools. For this purpose, reference in the Codes or legislation to "admission authorities" shall be deemed to be references to the Governing Body of the Academy Trust.
3. Notwithstanding the generality of paragraph 2 of this Annex, the Academy Trust will take part in any mandatory Admissions Forum set up by the local authority ("LA") in which they are situated and have regard to its advice; and will participate in the co-ordinated admission arrangements operated by the LA and the local Fair Access Protocol.
4. Notwithstanding any provision in this Annex, the Secretary of State may:
  - (a) direct the Academy Trust to admit a named pupil to the Academy on application from an LA. This will include complying with a School Attendance Order<sup>1</sup>. Before doing so the Secretary of State will consult the Academy Trust.
  - (b) direct the Academy Trust to admit a named pupil to the Academy if the Academy Trust has failed to act in accordance with this Annex or has otherwise failed to comply with applicable admissions and equalities legislation or the provisions of the Codes.
  - (c) direct the Academy Trust to amend its admission arrangements where they fail to comply with the School Admissions Code or the Admission Appeals Code.

<sup>1</sup> Local authorities are able to issue school attendance orders if a child is not attending school. These are legally binding upon parents. Such an order might, for instance, be appropriate where a child has a place at an Academy but his/her parents are refusing to send him/her to school. The order will require a parent to ensure his/her child attends a specified school.



## ST BERNARD'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

- 4.1 St Bernard's Catholic High School is a Roman Catholic Academy in the diocese of Hallam.
5. The Academy Trust shall ensure that parents and 'relevant children'<sup>2</sup> will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision of the Academy Trust. The Independent Appeal Panel will be independent of the Academy Trust. The arrangements for appeals will comply with the School Admission Appeals Code published by the Department for Education as it applies to Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools. The determination of the appeal panel is binding on all parties.

### **Relevant Area**

6. Subject to paragraph 7, the meaning of "Relevant Area" for the purposes of consultation requirements in relation to admission arrangements is that determined by the local authority for maintained schools in the area in accordance with the Education (Relevant Areas for Consultation on Admission Arrangements) Regulations 1999.
7. If the Academy does not consider the relevant area determined by the local authority for the maintained schools in the area to be appropriate, it must apply to the Secretary of State by 1 August for a determination of the appropriate relevant area for the Academy, setting out the reasons for this view. The Secretary of State will consult the Academy and the LA in which the Academy is situated in reaching a decision.

### **Requirement to admit pupils**

8. The Academy will:
- (a) subject to its right of appeal to the Secretary of State in relation to a named pupil, admit all pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan naming the Academy;
  - (b) adopt admission oversubscription criteria that give highest priority to looked after children, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the School Admissions Code.

<sup>2</sup> relevant children' means:

- (a) in the case of appeals for entry to a sixth form, the child, and;
- (b) in any other case, children who are above compulsory school age, or will be above compulsory school age by the time they start to receive education at the school.

**Oversubscription criteria, admission number, consultation, determination and objections**

9. The Academy admission arrangements will include oversubscription criteria, and an admission number for each relevant age group<sup>3</sup>. The Academy will consult on its admission arrangements and determine them in line with the requirements within the School Admissions Code.
10. The Academy Trust should make it clear, when determining the Academy's admission arrangements, that objections should be submitted to the Schools Adjudicator (OSA).
11. A determination of an objection by the OSA on behalf of the Secretary of State, or by the Secretary of State will be binding upon the Academy.

<sup>3</sup> 'Relevant age group' means 'normal point of admission to the school: for example, year R, Year 7 and Year 12.

**DIOCESE OF HALLAM**  
**ST BERNARD'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL**  
**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM**  
**2024/2025**

If you are expressing a preference for a place for your child at St Bernard's Catholic High School in Rotherham Local Authority **and wish to apply under a faith criterion**, you should complete this Supplementary Information Form (SIF).

- The completed Supplementary Information Form, together with all supporting documentation (see Notes below), should be **returned to The Local Authority Admissions Team, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, Children and Young People's Services, Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham, S60 1AE** by the closing date 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023.
- If you are applying to more than one Catholic school or academy you will need to complete a separate Supplementary Information Form for each school/academy.
- **If you do not provide the information required in this form and return it to the Admissions Team, with all supporting documentation, by the closing date, your child may not be placed in the appropriate faith category and this is likely to affect your child's chance of being offered a place.**
- Remember – you **must** also complete the Application Form.

**Name of child:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address of child:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Carer Details**

**Parent/Carer Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please read the relevant school/academy Admission Policy, noting in particular any faith criteria, and your Local Authority booklet, before completing this form.

**NOTE: When completing the Application Form, it is important that you provide details of any siblings (brothers or sisters) who will be attending the Catholic school/academy at the proposed time of admission. If this information is not provided, the admission authority of the Catholic school/academy may not be able to place the application within the correct criteria.**

**Religious Status of child (please indicate by placing a tick in the appropriate box – please note that a tick should be indicated in only a single box)**

Criteria	Tick Box	Evidence [insert details in accordance with the Notes below]
1. Catholic	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Catechumen, Member of the Orthodox Church, Member of an Eastern Christian Church, Other Christian	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Member of other Christian denomination	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Catholic Parish in which your child lives:

In compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, we wish to ensure that you are aware of the purpose for which we collect and process the data we have asked you to provide on this form.

1. We are St Bernard's Catholic High School (Academy Trust) and Data Controller, situated at Herringthorpe Valley Road, Rotherham, S65 3BE.
2. Being a Catholic education provider, we work closely with the School's Diocesan Authority, the School's Trustees, the Local Authority, the Catholic Education Service and the Department for Education, and may share the information you provide on this application form if we consider it is necessary in order to fulfil our functions.
3. The person responsible for data protection within our organisation is Sarah Graham, School Business Manager and you can contact them with questions relating to our handling of the data. You can contact them by telephoning the school on 01709 828 183.
4. We require the information we have requested for reasons relating to our functions as the admission authority of the School.
5. It is necessary for us to process personal data for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller (Article 6(1)(e) of the GDPR).
6. To the extent that you have shared any special categories of data this will not be shared with any third parties except as detailed in paragraph 2 above, unless a legal obligation should arise.
7. It is necessary for us to process special category data for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the

controller (Article 6(1)(e) of the GDPR). Additionally, processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest on the basis of Union or Member State law which is proportionate to the aim pursued and which contains appropriate safeguards (Article 9(2)(g) of the GDPR).

8. If the application is successful, the information you have provided on this form will be migrated to the School's enrolment system, and the data will be retained and processed on the basis of the School's fair processing notice and data protection policies which apply to that data.
9. If the application is unsuccessful, the application form and any documents submitted in support of the application will be destroyed after a period of 12 months. The school may keep a simple record of all applications and their outcome as part of their permanent archives in accordance with the School's data retention policy.
10. To read about individual rights and/or to complain about how we have collected and processed the information you have provided on this form, you can make a complaint to our organisation by referring to the Complaints Procedure on the school's website [www.sbch.org.uk](http://www.sbch.org.uk). If you are unhappy with how your complaint has been handled, you can contact the Information Commissioners Office via their website at: [ico.org.uk](http://ico.org.uk).

**I confirm that I have read the Admissions Policy of the school and that the information I have provided is correct. I understand that I must notify the Admissions Team immediately if there is any change to these details and that, should any information I have given prove to be inaccurate, the governing body may withdraw any offer of a place even if the child has already started school.**

Signed.....

Date.....

## Notes

### 1. Evidence of Catholic Baptism

If application is being made for a place at the school for a Catholic child evidence of Catholic baptism or reception into the Church is required. A certificate of baptism or certificate of reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church should be provided to the school at the same time as this form is returned.

The Admission Authority may request additional supporting evidence if the written documents that are provided do not clarify the fact that the child was baptised or received into the Catholic Church, e.g. where the name and address of the Church is not on the certificate or where the name of the Church does not state whether it is a Catholic Church or not. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism or reception into the Church should contact their Parish Priest.

### 2. Evidence for Catechumens

If application is being made for a place at the school for a catechumen evidence of their being a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church will be required. A certificate of reception into the order of catechumens should be provided at the same time as this form is returned to the school.

### 3. Evidence of Membership of an Eastern Christian Church

If application is being made for a place at the school for a member of an Eastern Christian Church, including Orthodox Churches, evidence of membership will be required. A certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church should be provided at the same time as this form is returned to the school.

### 4. Evidence for Other Christian Denominations and Other Faiths

If application is being made for a place at the school as a member of another Christian denomination or another faith a letter confirming membership of that Christian denomination or faith, and signed by the appropriate minister of religion or faith leader, will be required. The letter should be provided at the same time as this form is returned to the school.

## Checklist:

Have you enclosed?

- Copy of baptism or certificate of reception into the Catholic Church (where applicable).
- Letter confirming membership of a Christian denomination or other faith (where applicable).
- Have you completed and returned the Application Form?