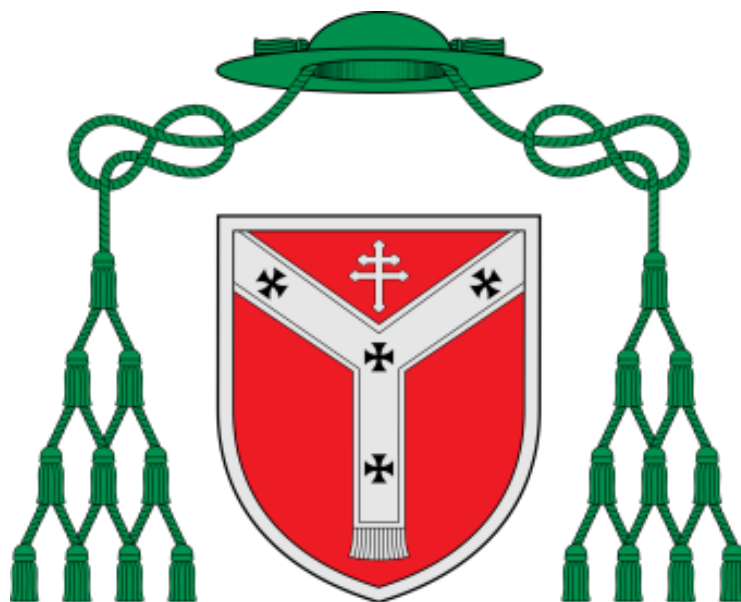


The Archdiocese of Cardiff



Policy on School Pupil Admissions March 2019

Introduction

The purpose of this policy and guidance is to help and guide Governors to fulfil their statutory responsibilities to preserve and develop the Catholic character of the school in relation to the admission of pupils.

Admissions

All pupil admissions to maintained schools must be enacted in accordance with current legislation for Wales. This policy and guidance is designed to be used alongside other policies and guidance issued by the Catholic Education Service of (CES), central Government and the Local Authority/Consortium (LA).

The 2013 *School Admissions Code* for Wales is at:

<http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/130715-admin-codes-en.pdf>)

In Catholic schools, the Governing Body is the Admissions Authority and makes decisions on admissions issues. The Governing Body must delegate this responsibility to a committee and, if it does so, the Headteacher must be a member. However, Headteachers have no individual role in school admissions and must not be delegated the power to accept or refuse admissions on their own. Admissions Over-subscription Criteria are set by the Governing Body and published in its Admission Policy.

In fulfilling this responsibility, Governing Bodies are guided by the requirements of law, the advice of the Archdiocese, their duties to the Catholic character of the school, and the Catholic community it serves.

The Governing Body **must** review and approve the Admissions Policy each year, including its Admissions Over-subscription Criteria (categories of children in descending order of priority) to show who is eligible for a place in the school. These criteria **must be** used for **all** applicants when the school is over-subscribed to identify which pupils are to be admitted up to the Planned Admission Number, ensuring that:

- admissions criteria are clear, fair and objective
- arrangements are as simple as possible
- all parents' preferences are treated on an equal basis.

In drawing up their admission arrangements Governing Bodies must take note of the restrictions detailed on page 12 of the School Admissions Code. It is recommended that Governing Bodies do not include a reference to the term 'practising Catholic' in over-subscription criteria of schools in the Archdiocese of Cardiff. (See p. 5 below for the Archdiocesan model Admissions Policy).

If admission arrangements need to be altered, the governing body must consult for the period beginning two years two years before the school year in which the arrangements will apply. Details of the process to be followed can be found on pages 6 to 11 of the *School*

Admissions Code (Wales). Please note this **must** also include consultation with the Archdiocesan Director of Schools.

Currently, 15 April each year is the deadline for admission arrangements to be determined even if they have not changed from the previous year and a consultation has not been required. 1 June is the date for submission of the admission arrangements to the Local Authority. Governing Bodies must then adhere to the published dates for the:

- distribution of application packs to parents,
- the decision on admissions,
- notification to parents, and
- appeals timetables.

Governing Bodies must also have an agreed policy on handling late applications. See Section 3.15-3.21 of the *School Admissions Code (Wales)* for further details regarding this. Governing Bodies must accept applications which are received after the closing date but before the governors have met to consider and make offers on applications in the following circumstances:

- When a good reason is given, for example when a single parent has been ill for some time.
- A family has just moved into the area or is returning from abroad.

Looked after children and children with SEN statements that name a specific school must be admitted regardless of when their application was received.

In dealing with applications outside the normal admissions round, whether in year or for a school year which is not the normal point of entry to the school, governors must comply with parental preference. That is the child must be offered a place unless the admission number for the year in question has been reached.

Anyone expressing an interest in admission must be given an application form and details of the admission process at the first point of contact.

Once an in year application has been received, the governors' Admissions Panel must consider the application without delay and a formal decision either to offer or to refuse a place should be made and notified to the applicant within **15 school days or 28 calendar days** whichever is the sooner.

Applicants must not be refused the opportunity to make an application, or told that they can only be placed on a waiting list rather than make a formal application.

Applications for admission to a school for a short period only must be treated in the same way as any other application for admission.

Governors must not refuse to admit a child because they followed a different curriculum at their previous school. However, in such circumstances, parents should be made aware of the curriculum on offer at the chosen school.

In cases involving school transfers that do not require a house move, or when there is no need for an immediate move, governors may wish to arrange for a child to start at the school at the beginning of term to minimise disruption to their own and other children's education.

Where an application outside the normal admission round is made for some time in advance of the requested start date, it would not normally be appropriate to hold a place for more than a school term.

In addition, Governing Bodies must also maintain waiting lists for applicants if the school is over-subscribed. See Section 3.27-3.29 of the *School Admissions Code (Wales)* for further details regarding this.

It is good practice to publish the current Admissions Policy on the school web site.

Copies of relevant documents can be found below. When approved, Governing Bodies of diocesan schools must send a copy of their admissions arrangements to the Archdiocese.

Parents have a right to appeal against an Admissions Authority decision.

**All Guidance documents on Admissions are in the accompanying document:
*Guidance of Schools Admissions***