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CONTENTS	Page No.
Introduction	1
Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan or a Statement of Special Educational Needs	1
Oversubscription Criteria	1
Tie Break	2
Application Procedures and Timetable	2
Late Applications	3
Admission of Children Outside their Normal Age Group	3
Waiting Lists	3
In-Year Applications	3
Fair Access Protocol	3
Notes	4

Gaudium et Spes
“Live, Love and Learn in the Light of Christ”

Introduction

St Mary's Catholic High School is a Catholic voluntary academy in the Diocese of Hallam. This means that the members of Parishes in the Dioceses of Hallam and Nottingham have contributed towards the cost of building the school and continue to care for its buildings and its people.

It is a Catholic voluntary academy in which the Governing Body is responsible for admissions. It is guided in that responsibility by the requirements of law, by advice from the Diocesan Trustees, and its duty to the Catholic community and the Common Good. The school provides distinctive, Christ centred, Catholic education for children aged 11 to 18.

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 be fully supported by all families in the school. We therefore hope that all parents will give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school. 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 governing body is the admission authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round (excluding admission to year 12). The governing body has set its admission number at 205 pupils to year 7 in the school year which begins in September 2021.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (see note 1)

The admission of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school must be admitted. Where this takes place before the allocation of places under these arrangements this will reduce the number of places available to other children.

Oversubscription Criteria

Our Parishes

Our Lady Queen of Peace Chesterfield
Immaculate Conception Spinkhill
St Michael's Hathersage
Christ the King Alfreton
St Joseph's Shirebrook
St Joseph's Matlock
All Saints Hassop
Our Lady of Sorrows Bamford

Family of Primary Schools

Christ the King Alfreton
Immaculate Conception Spinkhill
St Mary's Chesterfield

St Joseph's Staveley
St Joseph's Matlock
St Joseph's Shirebrook

At any time where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority:

1. Looked after and previously looked after children (see note 2).
2. Catholic children who live in one of our Parishes or attend one of our family of primary schools (see notes 3 and 4 below and the two lists at the top of this page).
3. All other Catholic children (see note 3).
4. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church (see notes 5 and 6).
5. Children who have brothers and sisters who, at the point of application and admission, attend St Mary's Catholic High School (see note 9).
6. Children of other Christian denominations and children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion or other religious leader who have attended one of our family of primary schools (see notes 7 and 8).
7. All other children of other Christian denominations and children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion or other religious leader (see notes 7 and 8).
8. Any other children who have attended one of our family of primary schools.
9. Any other children not in any of the above categories.

Tie Break

Should the planned admission limit be reached mid category priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. The Governing Body, as the admissions authority, will make a decision based on the GIS (Geographical Information System) used by Derbyshire Local Authority to measure a straight line distance from home to school (as plotted on the children's services department Geographic Information System). This "tie breaker" will apply for every category apart from category 2. In the event of distances being the same for two or more children where this would determine the last place to be allocated, random allocation will be carried out and supervised by a person independent of the school. All the names will be entered into a hat and the required number of names will be drawn out.

Application Procedures and Timetable

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round¹, you **must** complete a Common Application Form available from the local authority in which you live. You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form attached to this policy. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to Mrs L Roughley by 31 October 2020.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 1 March 2021 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.

¹ This is for applications to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

If you do not provide the information required in the SIF and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation this is likely to affect your child's chance of being offered a place.

All applications which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is 31 October 2020.

Late Applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with your home Local Authority Secondary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. You are encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.

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 in writing to **Mrs L Roughley at St Mary's Catholic High School** at the same time as the admission application is made. The 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 Headteacher, including the Headteacher'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 Lists

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 will operate throughout the school year. The waiting list will be held open until [insert date being the last day of the summer term]

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. Application should be made to the school by contacting Mrs L Roughley at St Mary's Catholic High School.

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 locally agreed protocol. The governing body has this power even where admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

The governing body reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place or, where the child is already attending the school the place itself, where it is satisfied that the offer or the place was obtained by deception.

Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

1. A Statement of Special Education Needs is a statement made by the local authority under section 324 of the Education Act 1996, specifying the special educational provision for a child. 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.
2. 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.

3. '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 (e.g. a looked after child in the process of adoption by a Catholic family).

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. For the purposes of this admission policy, attendance at a feeder primary school includes Catholic children 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' 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' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.
7. "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 CYTUN 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. "Children of other faiths" means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of 'other Christian denominations' at 7 above and which falls within the definition of a religion for the purposes of charity law. The Charities Act 2011 defines religion to include:

- A religion which involves belief in more than one God, and
- A religion which does not involve belief in a God.

Case law has identified certain characteristics which describe the meaning of religion for the purposes of charity law, which are characterised by a belief in a supreme being and an expression of belief in that supreme being through worship.

9. 'Brother or sister' includes:

- (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 address as the applicant.

10. 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.