

# **ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR ST LEONARD'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL IN DURHAM LOCAL AUTHORITY**

## **ADMISSION POLICY 2021-22**

St Leonard's Catholic School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. The school is conducted by its governing body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and instrument of government and seeks at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below.

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 (see note 10) 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 admissions authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the coordination of admission arrangements.

The admission policy criteria will be dealt with on an equal preference basis.

### **Feeder primary schools**

- Our Lady Queen of Martyrs' Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary, Newhouse  
Durham Road, Esh Winning, Durham, DH7 9PA
- St Bede's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary, Sacriston  
Front Street, Sacriston, Durham, DH7 6AB
- St Benet's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary  
St Benet's Way, Ouston, Chester-le-Street, DH2 1QX
- St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary, Chester-le-Street  
Ropery Lane, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3PH
- St Godric's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary, Durham  
Carrhouse Drive, Durham, DH1 5LZ
- St Joseph's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary, Durham  
Mill Lane, Gilesgate, Durham, DH1 2JQ
- St Joseph's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary, Ushaw Moor  
Durham Road, Ushaw Moor, Durham, DH7 7LF
- St Michael's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary  
Esh Laude, Esh Village, Esh, Durham, DH7 9QW
- St Patrick's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary, Langley Moor  
Goatbeck Terrace, Langley Moor, Durham, DH7 8JJ
- St Thomas More Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary  
Thorndale Road, Cheveley Park, Belmont, DH1 2AQ

### **Published Admission Number**

The governing body has set its admission number at 232 pupils to year seven in the school year which begins in September 2021.

## **Children with an Education, Health and Care plan**

Children who have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan where the school is named as the most appropriate educational setting for the child will be admitted.

## **Application Procedures and Timetable**

To apply for a place at this school, the parent must complete a common application form (CAF) available from the local authority in which the child lives. The parent will be advised of the outcome of the application on 1 March 2021 or the next working day, initially by a letter or email from the local authority on behalf of the governing body.

If the parent is required to provide supplemental evidence to support the application (e.g. a baptismal certificate), this evidence should be provided at the time of application. If not provided, evidence may be sought by the governing body following the closing date for applications. This information must have been correct at the date of closing for applications.

All applications 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 the local authority coordinated admissions scheme. Parents are encouraged to ensure that their 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 of 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 the Head Teacher of the school. 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 Head Teacher who has 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.

## **Waiting Lists**

In addition to their right of appeal, applicants 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 below 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 the last day of the summer term. Inclusion on 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 should be made to the school by contacting the Head Teacher at St Leonard's Catholic School, North End, Durham, DH1 4NG. Parents will be advised of the outcome of their application in writing.

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria will be applied.

If there are no places available, a request can be made that the child is added to the waiting list (see above).

## **Right of Appeal**

Where a parent has been notified that a place is not available for a child, every effort will be made by the local authority to help the parent to find a place in a suitable alternative school. Parents who are refused a place have a statutory right of appeal. Further details of the appeals process are available by writing to the chair of governors at the school address.

## **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 Evidence**

The governing body reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place where false evidence is received.

## **OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA**

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority.

*First priority in categories 1 to 5 will be given to children who will have an older sibling attending the school in September 2021.*

1. Looked after and previously looked after children (see note 2)
2. Catholic children who attend a feeder primary school (listed on page 1) (see note 3)
3. Other Catholic children (see note 3)
4. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church (see notes 4 & 5)
5. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister or faith leader and attend a Catholic feeder primary school (see note 6)
6. Other children, who have an older sibling in school at the point of admission (see note 9)
7. Other children, who attend a Catholic feeder primary school
8. Children of other Christian denominations and do not attend a Catholic feeder Primary School whose membership is evidenced by a minister or faith leader (see note 6)
9. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a minister or faith leader (see note 7)
10. Any other children

## **Tie Breaker**

Where there are places available for some, but not all applicants within a particular criterion priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. In assessing home to school distance the LA uses a Geographic Information System (GIS) to identify and measure the shortest route utilising only the Ordnance Survey Integrated Transport Network (ITN) and Urban Paths Network (UPN) which are national recognised datasets. The LA will not include any other routes or any other method of measurement. Routes are measured from the centre point\* of the child's house, or in the case of a flat from the centre point\* of the building, to the nearest school site entrance. In all cases the GIS identifies the route to be measured by connecting in a straight line the centre point\* of the child's house to the closest point on the nearest route on the ITN/UPN.

\* In accordance with the co-ordinates of the Basic Land and Property Unit on the National Land and Property Gazetteer.

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 in a public place and supervised by a person independent of the school.

## NOTES AND DEFINITIONS

1. 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 living with a family where at least one of the parents is Catholic.

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

4. **Catechumen** means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. For the purposes of admissions this refers to the child on whose behalf the application is being made. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens.
5. **Eastern Christian Church** includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism or reception should contact the Diocese who will decide how the question of baptism or reception is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church.
6. **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.

Applicants must provide a baptismal certificate or where child baptism is not practised, a letter confirming their church membership from their minister or faith leader.

7. **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 6 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.

Applicants must provide a letter of support to confirm their faith membership from their minister or faith leader.

8. 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.

9. **Sibling** 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 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.

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 (having care of a child means that the child lives with and is looked after by that person).

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the local authority's admission guidance for parents.**