



ADMISSIONS POLICY 2025-2026

ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
AYLESBURY AND HIGH WYCOMBE

APPROVED BY: LOCAL ACADEMY COMMITTEE

LAST CONSULTATION DATE: SUMMER 2021

DATE: November 2023

NEXT CONSULTATION DATE (unless required earlier): OCT 2028

St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. This Admission Policy applies to St Michael's Catholic School, which comprises a Primary and Secondary site at High Wycombe and a Secondary site at Aylesbury.

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below. The school is conducted by its governing body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and articles of association and seeks, at all times, to be a witness to Our Lord Jesus Christ.

As Catholic schools, 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 admissions authority for the school is the Board of Directors of the St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust who has responsibility for admissions to this school. The Board of Directors has delegated responsibility for the administration of the admissions process to the Local Academy Committee of the relevant school.

The admissions process for the above listed schools is part of the Local Authority co-ordinated admissions scheme. To apply for a place at any of the above listed schools in the normal admissions round, an application must be made using the school admission application process of the local authority in which you live naming the school on the application form. Application deadlines are:

- Primary School: 15 January 2025
- Secondary Schools: 31 October 2024

A Supplementary Admission Form must also be completed and returned directly to the school by the same date. Only hard copies will be accepted.

The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round¹. The relevant Local Academy Committees have set admission numbers for pupils to be admitted to the schools as follows:

School	Admission Numbers	Total Capacity*
St Michael's Catholic School – Nursery – High Wycombe	30	30
St Michael's Catholic School – Primary – High Wycombe	60**	60
St Michael's Catholic School – Secondary – High Wycombe	90**	150
St Michael's Catholic School – Secondary – Aylesbury	180	180
St Michael's Catholic School – Sixth Form High Wycombe	1***	120
St Michael's Catholic School – Sixth Form - Aylesbury	1***	120

* The total capacity number is the total capacity that can be admitted to that year group.

**A pupil who secures a Reception Class place at St Michael's Catholic School – Primary High Wycombe, has a school place up to the end of Year 11 and the pupil does not need to apply for a secondary school place at St Michael's Catholic School – Secondary High Wycombe. The admission number of 90 is the number of external pupils who will be admitted to the school, with the 60 pupils in the Primary phase already having a place at the school.

*** Typically, total capacity will be met from existing pupils moving from year 11 into Year 12. All pupils in Year 11 are automatically granted a place at Year 12 if they wish to move onto the Sixth Form and meet the academic requirements – the oversubscription criteria does not apply. Where capacity is not met with internal pupils, external applicants will be admitted up to the relevant capacity figure and subject to entry requirements.

Children attending St Michael's Nursery at the High Wycombe Campus are not automatically entitled to a Reception Class place and will have to apply for this in the normal way. Nursery places are not statutory.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (see note 1)

The admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with an 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.

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

Oversubscription Criteria:**St Michael's Catholic School, High Wycombe: Reception and Year 7****St Michael's Catholic School, Aylesbury: Year 7**

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, including those who have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see note 2).
2. Baptised Catholic children of practising Catholic families with priestly support for Catholic Practice. (see note 3)
3. Baptised Catholic children but without priestly support for Catholic Practice. (see note 3)
4. Children of other Christian denominations with the written support of their minister.
5. Children from other faiths or traditions whose parents wish them to have a Catholic education and whose application is supported by a religious leader
6. Any other children whose parents are in sympathy with the Roman Catholic ethos of the school.
7. Any other children.

Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.

- (i) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social or, medical need of the child which can most appropriately be met at this school. (see note 6).
- (ii) Children who attend any of the Buckinghamshire Catholic Partnership Schools: Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, St Edward's Catholic Junior School, St Joseph's Catholic Infant School, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, St Louis Catholic Primary School, St Peter's Catholic Primary School and St Teresa's Catholic Primary School at the time allocations are made.
- (iii) Siblings of children who will be on the school roll at the expected date of admission in order of nearest residence² (see note 4).
- (iv) Children of staff who have been employed at the school for two or more years at the time when the application for admission is made.
- (v) Primary admissions only: Children resident in the Local Authority's designated area. See map in Appendix A for priority admission area.
- (vi) Children whose homes are the shortest distance from the school, as measured according to the Buckinghamshire County Council's Geographical Information System as set out in the LA scheme.
- (vii) In the event that more than one child lives at the same distance from the school, the decision will be made by a lottery which will be overseen by an independent observer.
- (viii) In cases where there is one remaining place available and the next child is one of a twin, triplet or other multiple birth group both or all siblings will be admitted even if this goes above the admission number of the school.

² Nearest residence means the closest by distance from home to school. Distance from home to school is the distance from a child's home to school as measured by the Local Authority.

Admission to the Sixth Form (Aylesbury and High Wycombe)

Pupils currently studying at St Michael's are entitled to a place in their school's Sixth Form on the courses available, subject to achieving the grade entry criteria for the relevant pathway and the required GCSE grades for the specific subjects and course(s) to be studied as listed in the Sixth Form Prospectus. Courses offered may change year on year.

External applications to the Sixth Form will be considered in line with the oversubscription criteria for the school. Applicants must be in sympathy with the Roman Catholic ethos of the school and meet the required grades for admission to Sixth Form courses as stated above.

Overseas students must have the equivalent level of qualifications as UK based students for the specific courses they wish to study and may be requested to complete subject specific assessments in order to assess their suitability.

Tie Break

Priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. Distances are calculated according to the Buckinghamshire County Council's Geographical Information System as set out in the LA scheme. 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 one of our schools in the normal admission round³, you must complete a Common Application Form available from the local authority in which you live. You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Admission Form attached to this policy if you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria 2 to 5. The Supplementary Admission Form should be returned to the relevant school by:

- Primary School: 15 January 2025
- Secondary Schools: 31 October 2024

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on:

- Reception: 16 April 2025; or
- Year 7: 1 March 2025

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.

If you do not provide the information required in the Supplementary Admission Form and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child will not be placed in criteria 2 to 5, and 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 (as per above).

Late Applications

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

Appeals

Where a place is refused, an appeal can be lodged with an Independent Appeal Panel by contacting the Admissions Team, County Hall, Walton Street, Aylesbury, HP20 1UZ.

³ This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

Admission of Children Below Compulsory School Age and Deferred Entry

A child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday. A child's parents may defer the date at which their child, below compulsory school age, is admitted to the school, until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age, or beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which an offer was made. A child may take up a part-time place until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age. Upon receipt of the offer of a place a parent should notify the school, as soon as possible, that they wish to either defer their child's entry to the school or take up a part-time place.

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. In addition, the parents of a summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1 April and 31 August, may request that the child be admitted out of their normal age group, to reception rather than Year 1.

Any such request should be made in writing to the Chair of the Local Academy Committee of the relevant school at the same time as the admission application is made. The Local Academy Committee 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, including the head teacher's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the Local Academy Committee 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.

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 directly to the school. Any relevant documentation should be provided (eg baptism certificate) and the application should be signed by the Headteacher or other senior member of staff at the child's current 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 within 10 school days, 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 Local Academy Committee is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The Local Academy Committee has this power, even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number (subject to the infant class size exceptions).

Nursery

Nursery places are allocated by the school, in accordance with the oversubscription criteria detailed above, and applications for admissions should be made directly to the school.

Attendance at the school's nursery does not automatically guarantee that a place will be offered at the school and an application form must be submitted for transfer from nursery to primary school.

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



Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

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 arrangement order or special guardianship order.

Both categories include those children who have been in state care outside of England.

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. 'brother or sister' and '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.

5. 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.

6. To demonstrate an exceptional social or medical need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the governing body will require a letter from a Doctor (medical need) or Director of Children Services (social need) in the relevant Local Authority, specifying why the school is the only reasonable alternative for the child and the reasons why other schools in the catchment area for the child are not appropriate.

7. 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.

8. In the case of UK service personnel and crown servants returning to England, a place can be allocated in advance of the family arriving in the area provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declare a relocation date. The address at which the child will live will be applied as long as the parents provide evidence of their intended address. This address will also be used in the case of applying the over-subscription criteria and tie break. Further, a parent may request a Unit or quartering address is used as the child's home address when considering the application against the oversubscription criteria.

9. Who can sign a Supplementary Information Form:

- For Catholic Baptised children this must be signed by the Parish Priest where currently attending Mass/Church

- Christian Denominations – this form must be signed by the Vicar, Pastor, Selebant, Minister or Church Warden (with Vicar’s approval)
- For other faiths this must be signed by the Iman, Gianni, Rabi, pujari or archaka or other minister of the faith if appropriate authority with a stamp/seal for the place of worship
- For oversubscription criteria 6 parents must sign the supplementary information form to demonstrate their support for the Catholic ethos.



Appendix A – LA Designated Area for St Michael’s Catholic School at Reception Intake

