

Thomas More Catholic School



Admissions Policy 2027 to 2028

Mission Statement

To Care for, respect and value all people and our environment.

To Learn that justice and love are the foundations of our Faith.

To make these the guiding principles of our community in its commitment to academic excellence and personal integrity.

To Achieve beyond our highest expectations, creating challenging opportunities which take us all confidently through the 21st Century.

Date Reviewed	
Review Confirmed by	Full Governing Body
Statutory / Non-Statutory	Statutory
Review Frequency	1 Year
Next Review Due	

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Aims

Thomas More Catholic School is a voluntary aided school in the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is in the trusteeship of the Diocese. 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. The school exists primarily to serve the Catholic community and Catholic children always have priority of admission. However, the Governing Body also welcomes applications from those of other denominations and faiths or of no faith who support the religious ethos of the school.

This policy has been adopted by the Governing Body of Thomas More Catholic School and is subject to an annual review.

Legislation and guidance

This policy relates to the provisions made in the:

[School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#)

[The School Admissions \(Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)

[Equality Act 2010](#)

This policy meets the requirements of the guidance given in:

[School admissions code 2021](#)

[School admission appeals code 2022](#)

[Equality Act 2010: advice for schools](#)

[SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#)

[Guidance on School Admissions 2025 \(Education Service Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark\)](#)

Duties under the Equality Act 2010

Under the [Equality Act 2010](#) and the [Equality Act 2010: advice for schools](#), schools must not discriminate against, harass, or victimise pupils because of: sex; race; disability; religion or belief; sexual orientation; pregnancy/maternity; or gender reassignment. For disabled children, this includes a duty to make reasonable adjustments to any provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a substantial disadvantage, and the provision of auxiliary aids and services. In carrying out their functions, the public sector equality duty means schools must also have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The 'relevant protected characteristics' in this context are the characteristics mentioned above. Age is a relevant protected characteristic, but not when carrying out a function which provides education, benefits, facilities, or services to pupils. Religion is also a relevant protected characteristic but as a school designated by the Secretary of State as having a religious character ("faith school") we are permitted to use faith-based oversubscription criteria. Schools must ensure that any provision, criterion, or practice does not discriminate against pupils.

The governing body must also comply with their statutory duties in relation to pupils with Special Educational Need (SEN) including using their 'best endeavours' to ensure the appropriate special educational provision is made for pupils with SEN and having regard to the [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#).

Admission number

Having consulted with the Local Authority, the Diocese and other admission authorities, the governors intend to admit, in September 2027, up to 150 pupils, the published admission number (PAN), without reference to ability or aptitude.

Admission authority

The admission authority for Thomas More Catholic School is the Governing body.

Admissions criteria

All children whose education, health and care plans name the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

Where the number of applications exceeds our PAN the Governors will offer places using the following criteria in the order stated: -

1. Looked after Catholic children (see definitions A & B) and all previously looked after Catholic children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. Catholic children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.
2. Catholic children (see definition A), in possession of a Certificate of Practice (see Annex A).
3. Baptised Catholic children. A baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church must be provided.
4. Looked after children (see definition B) and all previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. Children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.
5. Children enrolled in the catechumenate. Evidence of enrolment will be required.
6. Children who are members of Eastern Orthodox Churches or other Christian denominations. Evidence of Baptism or a Priest reference will be required.
7. Children who are members of other faiths, Churches and denominations. Evidence of Baptism/dedication or evidence of membership required.
8. Any other children.

The following order of priorities will be applied when applications within any of the above categories exceed the places available and it is necessary to decide between applications.

1. A brother or sister (see definition C) on the school roll at the time of admission. Evidence of the relationship may be required. The governors will, where logistically possible, admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the last child ranked within the school's published admissions number.
2. Social, pastoral and medical needs which make the school particularly suitable for the child in question. Strong and relevant evidence must be provided, at the time of application, by an appropriate professional authority (e.g. qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker or priest).
3. Proximity to the school from the child's home address (see definition D), the distance measured in a straight line from the School designated main entrance by the local authority. Evidence of residence may be required. Where the last remaining place is to be allocated and two or more children are deemed to live at the same distance from the school the place will be decided by the drawing of lots.

Interpretation

- A. “Catholics” include members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome.
- B. A “looked after child” has the same meaning as in section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989 that is a 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 an application. A previously looked after child is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. This will include children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.
- C. A “brother or sister” means children who live as brother and sister including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers or sisters. It would not include other relatives e.g. cousins.
- D. “Home” refers to the permanent home address at which the child is resident for the majority of their time. For children who live in a shared-care arrangement, we consider the principal home address as being the address at which the child is registered while attending primary school, with a GP and, if applicable, the address of the parent who is in receipt of state benefit for the child.

Admissions procedure

The Common Application Form (CAF) required by your home Local Authority (the borough in which you reside) should be completed and returned to the home Local Authority not later than the national closing date (31 October 2026). The CAF is completed using the e-Admissions online platform, please contact your home Local Authority for support with this process if necessary.

The Certificate of Catholic Practice (if applicable) should be completed and submitted to the school no later than the national closing date. The Certificate of Catholic Practice is not mandatory and is only required for those applying under criteria 1 or 2 of the policy. The Certificate of Catholic Practice form can be accessed here: [COCP](#).

Any other supporting documents (if applicable) you may wish to submit if applying under criteria 3, 5, 7 or 8 should be completed and submitted to the school not later than the national closing date.

Offers of places will be sent to parents by the child’s home local authority on the common offer date (1st March 2027).

Challenging behaviour

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. We may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, i.e. where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

In a case that we have good reason to believe that a child may display challenging behaviour that would significantly adversely affect the provision we can offer we will refer the pupils to the Fair Access Protocol for advice prior to completing the pupil’s admission. We will not refuse admission on these grounds to looked-after children, previously looked-after children and children with EHC plans listing the school.

Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

The admission of pupils with an EHC plans is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. The procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of EHC plans by the pupil's home local authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the SEND code of practice. Pupils with an EHC plans naming the school will be admitted without reference to the above criteria.

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 The Admissions Officer 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 the 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 medical and/or education professionals, as appropriate.

Appeals

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with section 94 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing and must set out the reasons on which the appeal is made. Appeals should be made to the Admissions Appeal Clerk at the school address. Parents/Carers have the right to make oral representations to the Appeal Panel.

Waiting lists

Parents of children who have not been offered a place at the school may ask for their child's name to be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list will be operated using the same admissions criteria listed above. Placing a child's name on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place. It is possible that when a child is directed under the local authority's fair access protocol they will take precedence over those children already on the waiting list.

Fair Access Protocol

The school participates in the local authority's Fair Access Protocol to allocate places to vulnerable and other children in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021. Admitting pupils under the protocol may require the school to admit above the PAN for the relevant year group.

Late applications

Any late applications will be considered by the Governors' Admissions Committee, in the event of there being any available places using the above criteria. If all places have been filled, parents will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on the waiting list. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

Admissions other than to Year 7

These admissions procedures, although primarily relevant to children for whom a place is sought at the normal age of transfer to secondary education (Year 7), will also apply to succeeding years, and be subject to the availability of places.

Annex A Certificate of Catholic Practice



ARCHDIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK

CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE

Details of child (for identification only)

Full name of child: _____

Address of child: _____

Postcode: _____ Date of Birth: _____

I am [the child's parish priest] [the priest in charge of the Church where the child practices]
[delete as applicable]

I hereby certify that this child is known to me and, to the best of my knowledge and belief,
the child is a practising Catholic.

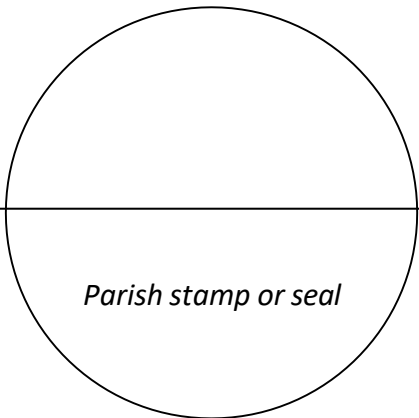
Priest's name _____ Position _____

Parish (or ethnic chaplaincy) _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Priest's signature _____



Date _____

Annex B Churches in union with Rome

Personal Ordinariate. Baptised children of parents who are members of the Ordinariate, established under The Apostolic Constitution Anglicanorum Coetibus of 4th November 2009, are to be given equal preference to that offered to children baptised in a Catholic church. It is important to note that these children may have been baptised in the Church of England.

Eastern Catholic (or Oriental Rite) Churches in union with Rome. The Holy See's [Annuario Pontificio](#) gives the following list of Eastern Catholic Churches.

1. Alexandrian liturgical tradition:
 1. Coptic Catholic Church (patriarchate):
 2. Eritrean Catholic Church (metropolia):
 3. Ethiopian Catholic Church (metropolia):
2. West Syrian, including Malankara, liturgical tradition (which is part of Antiochene Rite):
 1. Maronite Church (patriarchate):
 2. Syriac Catholic Church (patriarchate):
 3. Syro-Malankara Catholic Church (major archepiscopate):
3. Armenian liturgical tradition:
 1. Armenian Catholic Church (patriarchate):
4. Chaldean or East Syrian liturgical tradition:
 1. Chaldean Catholic Church
 2. Syro-Malabar Catholic Church (Major Archepiscopate):
5. Constantinopolitan (Byzantine) liturgical tradition:
 1. Albanian Catholic Church (apostolic administration):
 2. Belarusian Catholic Church (no established hierarchy at present):
 3. Bulgarian Greek Catholic Church (apostolic exarchate):
 4. Byzantine Church of Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro (an eparchy and an apostolic exarchate):
 5. Greek Byzantine Catholic Church (two apostolic exarchates):
 6. Hungarian Greek Catholic Church (an eparchy and an apostolic exarchate):
 7. Italo-Albanian Catholic Church (two eparchies and a territorial abbacy):
 8. Macedonian Catholic Church (an apostolic exarchate):
 9. Melkite Greek Catholic Church (patriarchate):
 10. Romanian Church United with Rome (major archiepiscopate):
 11. Russian Catholic Church (two apostolic exarchates, at present with no published hierarchs):
 12. Ruthenian Catholic Church (a sui juris metropolia, an eparchy & an apostolic exarchate):
 13. Slovak Catholic Church (metropolia and an eparchy):
 14. Ukrainian Catholic Church (major archiepiscopate):

There are an equivalent number of Eastern Orthodox Churches with similar names that are not in union with the See of Rome. The general rule is Eastern Rite Churches in union with the See of Rome will have the word Catholic in their titles. Churches with the word Orthodox in their titles are not in union with the See of Rome and children from these Churches should not be considered as Catholic children.

“Children of other Christian denominations” means: children who belong to other churches and ecclesial communities which, acknowledging 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.

“Children of other faiths” means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of ‘other Christian denominations’ 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.