



St Nicholas Catholic High School

Admissions Policy 2025-26

Version Control

Current version	Previous version	Summary of changes made
2024-25	2023-24	Change of Admissions Officer – pg 5
2025-26	2024-25	Change of Admissions Officer – pg 5 New Diocesan & LA changes incorporated following consultation

Policy Impact Statement	
This Policy has been implemented:	
Fully	✓
Partially	
Occasionally	
Not at all (give reasons why)	
Adapted From:	
CWAC	
CES	✓
Other	



St NICHOLAS CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICY 2025-26

St Nicholas Catholic High School was founded by the **Diocese of Shrewsbury** to provide education for children of Catholic families. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always 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 instrument of government and seeks at all times to be a witness to Our Lord Jesus Christ.

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 admission authority has set its admission number at 215 pupils to Year 7 and 110 for external applicants to Year 12 in the school year which begins in September 2025.

The admissions authority will, where logistically possible, admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the last ranked child within the school's PAN.

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.

Oversubscription Criteria

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. Children looked after and previously children looked after. (see notes 2&3)
2. Catholic children who attend a Partner Catholic primary school, namely:
 - St Bede's, Weaverham
 - St Joseph's, Winsford
 - St Luke's, Frodsham
 - St Mary's, Middlewich
 - St Vincent's, Knutsford
 - St Wilfrid's, Hartford(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 and children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion or other religious leader. (see notes 6&7)
6. Any other children.

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

- (i) The attendance of a brother or sister at the school at the time of enrolment will increase the priority of an application within each category so that the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made after children in (1) above. (see note 8)
- (ii) The children of staff will be given increased priority within each category so that the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made after children in (1) above (see note 11).

Tie Break

If in any category there are more applications than places available, priority will be given on the basis of distance from home to school, with the provisions (i) and (ii) as stated above applied. Distances are measured in a straight line from the centrally plotted Basic Land and Property Unit point (BLPU) of the child's home address to the centrally plotted BLPU point of the school as defined by Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG). If the distance is the same for two or more applicants where this would be last place/s to be allocated, a random lottery will be carried out in a public place.

Application Procedures and Timetable

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round you **must** complete a Local Authority 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 if you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria 1 to 3 or 5 or 6. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to the Admissions Officer via admissions@st-nicholas.cheshire.sch.uk by 31st October 2024.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 1st 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 Information Form and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child may not be placed in criteria 1 to 3 or 5 or 6, and this may 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 31st October 2024.

Late Applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with Cheshire West & Chester processes. 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 the Admissions Officer (Mrs Jenny Toms Leech) via the school office at the same time as the admission application is made. The admission authority 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 admission authority 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 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 normal admissions round and the child will be admitted where there are available places.

An application should be made to the school via the Cheshire West and Chester admissions [webpage](#) as the local authority admissions team co-ordinate applications on behalf of the school's admission authority. The school will process all applications and advise applicants of the outcome.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing as soon as possible. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application within 15 school days of receipt, but the aim is to notify applicants of the outcome of their application within 10 school days of receipt.

You have the right to appeal to an independent appeal panel if your application is unsuccessful. Further details can be found [here](#).

If you have any questions in relation to in-year admissions please contact Mrs Jenny Toms at school (01606-706000) or the local authority admissions team via their website [here](#).

Full details of 'in year' admission arrangements can be found on the Cheshire West and Chester admissions website.

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 admission authority is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The admission authority has this power even where admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

The admission authority 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.

Admission to the Sixth-Form

Applications for Year 12 should be made using the online application form available at www.st-nicholas.cheshire.sch.uk

The school operates a sixth form for a total of 220 pupils. 110 places overall will be available in year 12. While the admission number is 110 if fewer than 110 of the school's existing pupils transfer into year 12, additional external pupils will be admitted until year 12 meets its capacity.

Both internal and external pupils wishing to enter the sixth form will be expected to have met the same minimum academic entry requirements for the sixth form. These are that pupils will have achieved at least seven 9-4 GCSEs.(see note12)

In addition to the sixth form's minimum academic entry requirements pupils will need to satisfy minimum entrance requirements to the courses for which they are applying. If either internal or external applicants fail to meet the minimum course requirements, they will be given the option of pursuing any alternative courses for which they do meet the minimum academic requirements. Course requirements are published annually in the school's prospectus and on its website.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application by 31st January 2025.

For any In-Year applications, please contact Mr Tom Bradley, Director of Sixth Form via the School Office.

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 arrangements order, or special guardianship order. Included in this definition are those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and who ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

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 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. '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.
5. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that 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 CYTÛN 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.

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 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.

8. '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 home address as the child who is the subject of the application.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. This applies where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

12. In line with the School Admissions Code 2021, Sixth Form applications from students who attain less than the minimum entry criteria (seven 9-4 GCSE passes), will be considered if there exist proven and exceptional medical and/or social needs where these needs can only be met by this school and requested courses meet

the needs of the student. It is essential that applicants submit professional supporting evidence from, for example, a doctor, psychologist, social worker or other qualified professional setting out the particular reasons why St Nicholas is the most suitable school for those difficulties. This must satisfy the school that admission to St. Nicholas would best support the child's needs.