



The Diocese of
Canterbury



Our vision is to ensure that every child and young person in the Diocese is at the heart of mission, having the opportunity of a life-enhancing encounter with the Christian faith and the person of Jesus Christ; that they reach their God-given potential and are an integral part of church life.

Admissions Guidance

2019-20

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Admissions

This guidance is designed to highlight The Canterbury Diocesan Board of Education (CDBE) hopes for any admissions policy within the Diocese. It is a guidance document which must be read in conjunction with the most up to date versions of the School Admissions Code.

The vision of CDBE is to ensure that every child and young person in the Diocese is at the heart of mission, having the opportunity of a life-enhancing encounter with the Christian faith and the person of Jesus Christ; that they reach their God-given potential and are an integral part of church life.

We believe that Schools and Academies remain at the centre of the Church's mission to the nation, the heart of local communities, for children of all faiths and none. We aim to develop distinctive, inclusive communities of learning that seek to be underpinned by Christian values sourced in the Gospel narrative, enriching the whole educational experience.

We believe that all human beings are made in the image of God and are precious and valued in God's sight. In schools, we commend a unique approach, serving young people in ways that relate to their humanity in all its fullness.

By enabling leaders in Christian Schools and Academies to interpret faith for their communities, we acknowledge and confront our responsibility to safeguard the vulnerable, those marginalised by society, living out Kingdom values of justice and mercy.

Principles

The CDBE acknowledges the overarching considerations for Admissions to Church of England Schools published as Board of Education/National Society Advice to Diocesan Boards of Education (June 2011). The publication is placed carefully in the context of church school heritage, mindful of changing times and changing circumstances, in which the CDBE seeks to promote distinctive and inclusive schools and academies.

The CDBE believes that Church of England schools and academies have a dual purpose; to offer a Christian education to the children of Christian parents whilst fulfilling the Church's historic mission in the practical expression of its pastoral responsibility to every child in the local community, irrespective of faith.

Given the mission imperative that underpins the Church's provision of schools, each Admissions Authority must hold in balance the nurture and service roles, mirroring the Church's own purposes in both building up those of faith and of serving and reaching out to those, not of faith. In individual schools, the balance will depend on ethos, history and tradition and local conditions.

Church schools and academies must have regard to their responsibility to be living Christian communities, strongly related to the local community and demonstrating wider inclusivity. The CDBE encourages the policy of offering open and foundation places, which ensures that local children who are unconnected to the church are able to gain admission.

Guidance for Setting Oversubscription Criteria

The School Admissions Code sets out the overarching legal requirements for each and every admissions policy. Core to the principles of the code are that

*14. In drawing up their admission arrangements, admission authorities must ensure that the practices and the criteria used to decide the allocation of school places are **fair, clear and objective**. Parents should be able to look at a set of arrangements and understand easily how places for that school will be allocated. (p7 School Admissions Code, December 2014)*

As such, Admissions Authorities must give due care and consideration to whether anyone reading their policy could easily understand how admissions are handled in each school or academy.

A key consideration for any admissions policy is the oversubscription criteria. As highlighted above, the CDBE wishes admissions authorities to ensure an even approach to their admissions which ensures the school's distinctive life and offer can be accessed by all members of their community. It is recognised, however, that this will mean different approaches in each local context. For example, a secondary provision is likely to serve a significant geographical area, when compared to a primary one, and so defining what the local community is will be more difficult.

Each Governing Body should take reasonable steps to ensure that their oversubscription criteria are informed, appropriate to their individual context and considers an even spread of places for the community which they serve. When reviewing the policy, questions that might be helpful to consider include:

- Can everyone reading it, understand the policy and oversubscription criteria?
- Is the policy compliant with the key requirements of the admissions code?
- How over/under subscribed were we last year?
- What is the furthest distance children travelled from last year?
- Does the policy reflect our distinctive values and mission?
- Were any decisions not to admit challenged last year and under what reasons?

Key Consideration and Legal 'Must Haves'

Admission authorities *must* consult on the full details of the admissions arrangements they propose to determine if they feel changes are necessary or at least every seven years. The policy *must* include:

- Published Admissions Number (PAN) for any year it is intended to admit pupils, including Year 12 (the PAN for any infant class *must* not exceed 30 pupils);
- application procedures, including in-year admissions;
- oversubscription criteria for each relevant age group which is procedurally fair, clear and objective;
- that the Admission Authority *must* admit all children in public care (Looked After Children) as their first priority.
- the tie-breaker that will be used in the event that oversubscription occurs within any given criterion;
- a Supplementary Information Form (where an Admission Authority uses one to apply its oversubscription criteria);
- any separate requirements and oversubscription criteria for Year 12 or nursery applications, where applicable;
- a waiting list - how long after the end of the autumn term in the admission year the waiting list will be maintained (the waiting list must be maintained until 31 December of each school year of admission, to facilitate in-year coordination of admissions);
- information about how late applications can be made and how they will be handled;
- details including maps of any catchment areas to be used;

- information about a parent’s right to appeal, how the appeal should be made and how it will be heard.
- Clear procedures for dealing with admissions outside of the normal admissions round (often referred to as casual admissions).

The Diocese Role in Admissions

The admissions code states

1.38 Admission authorities for schools designated as having a religious character must have regard to any guidance from the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination when constructing faith-based admission arrangements, to the extent that the guidance complies with the mandatory provisions and guidelines of this Code. They must also consult with the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination when deciding how membership or practice of the faith is to be demonstrated. Church of England schools must, as required by the Diocesan Boards of Education Measure 1991/30, consult with their diocese about proposed admission arrangements before any public consultation. (p16 School Admissions Code, December 2014)

Although an advisory role, the Office of the Schools Adjudicator has made clear that when reviewing guidance offered by any diocese, it is anticipated that admissions authorities will have given due consideration and be able to provide clear reasoning should they decide to go against the Diocesan Guidance. Admissions Authorities should, therefore, ensure that they are aware of the context of their policy and make sure it reflects the needs of their community.

Faith Based Criteria

The CDBE aspiration is that each admissions authority has a policy which reflects their founding purpose to serve the community. Our church schools and academies should serve those of the faith and those of none, but it is recognised that for some, serving their church community and offering places for those wishing to send their child to the school on the ground of their faith may also need to play a part in an admissions policy. Whilst it is preferable not to have such a criteria, it is the view of the Board that where admissions authorities determine a policy which includes faith as part of the oversubscription, the following should be considered:

- 1) Any criteria with a faith-based element should be created for those who are committed to the Christian faith and have specifically elected to send their children to the school for its distinctive ethos underpinned by Gospel narrative, the opportunities for spiritual exploration and daily opportunities for prayer and reflection. As such, admissions authorities must ensure faith-based criteria allow for those recognised as members of a worshipping community now, but also, after their child has been admitted.

The Board feels strongly that admissions on the basis of faith should be reserved for those who hold Christian fellowship close to their day to day lives and for whom the decision to attend church is for spiritual leadership, a better understanding of God’s word and of the mission of the church.

- 2) Where a faith-based criterion is applied, careful consideration should be given to how a place of worship is recognised. It would normally be appropriate to incorporate the church serving the parish within which the school/academy is located/associated, or that distance criterion within reasonable means is also implemented. If necessary, the Admissions Authority should consider its **it’s** trust deed particularly when the location of the school/academy is different to its original formation.

Admissions Authorities are free to incorporate other churches not associated with the Church of England, but which are recognised as members of Churches Together in England and Wales. In these instances, careful consideration should be given as to whether the admissions authority can be satisfied that the applications made are appropriate and in keeping with the policy. For example, ensuring the length of attendance is supported by the church leader via the Supplementary Information Form, and so the authority should be satisfied that the church is aware of the Admissions Policy as well as the purpose and importance of the form.

Where a parish reorganisation has taken place, authorities should ensure they recognise their founding purpose within their trust deeds and utilise former parish boundaries where necessary.

- 3) We believe that for parents who hold a Christian journey as part of their worshipping lives, the Incumbent or associated leader of the church should be able to identify and confirm that a parent or guardian is a member of that worshipping community. Admissions authorities may need to define what they feel a worshipping community is and may wish to include aspects such as Messy Church or those who receive home visits by members of the Clergy. In any case, the Admissions Authority must be satisfied that their Supplementary Information Form has been completed, is easy to understand, and that the Vicar/Rector/Minister signing the form on behalf of the applicant is aware of its purpose (i.e. to demonstrate that the child is a regular worshipping member of the church community). This is particularly important if your policy includes churches that may not normally be part of the day to day life of the school.

Ultimately the Board wishes to ensure that where an application is made on the basis of faith, it is a conscious decision of a person to send their child to a school community with faith at its core. Governors should carefully consider how their faith-based criteria are applied and whether it is robust enough to ensure that those who are committed members of the worshipping congregation are able to obtain a place. This is particularly important if the number of pupils admitted on the basis of the faith displaces those who are living in the immediate locality.

Questions governors may wish to ask are;

- How many children were admitted under the faith-based criterion in the previous year?
- Of those children who applied under the faith criterion, how many would have got a place under the location-based criterion?
- Of the furthest children from the school/academy, how many were admitted under the faith criterion?
- What measure is used for commitment to the Christian faith? Does this demonstrate commitment in our context?
- How many children admitted under the faith criterion continued to attend Church regularly once admitted?

Suggested Policy Format (for adaptation to local needs)

As a school founded by the Church of England and part of The Diocese of Canterbury, INSERT ACADEMY/SCHOOL NAME HERE has a distinctive Christian ethos at its heart. This is;

INSERT ETHOS/MISSION STATEMENT AND VALUES HERE

Our School/Academy aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the daily Christian act of worship and Religious Education. We welcome applications from all members of the community, and we ask all parents to respect the Christian ethos of our School/Academy and its importance to our community.

The Governing Body is responsible for the admission of pupils to the School/Academy and admits X pupils per year. This admission's number has been agreed between the Governing Body and the Local Authority (if applicable) and applies to the year 201X-201Y.

The Governors/Trust have set a maximum class size of [XX] pupils in Key Stage [X]. Legislation states that no infant class may exceed 30 pupils unless there are exceptional circumstances (remove as necessary).

To apply for a place at our School/Academy, parents must complete the Local Authority Common Admissions Form, often referred to as a Common Admissions Form (CAF) in the normal admissions round, or the In Year Casual Admissions Form (IYCAF) if applying in year. These can be found via the following link <http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places>

Where parents wish to be given preference on the grounds of their faith within their application for a place at this School/Academy, they should complete our supplementary information form in addition to the CAF. Our supplementary form is available from XXXXX. This form must be completed and returned to us together with all documentary evidence by [XXXXX] so that we can apply our Admission Criteria to your application.

Oversubscription Criteria

In line with the Department for Education (DFE) School Admissions Code, before the application of oversubscription criteria, children with a Statement of Special Educational Need or an Education, Health and Care Plan, which names the School/Academy, will be admitted. As a result of this, the published admissions number will be reduced accordingly.

Where the number of applications for admission exceeds the places available, applications will be considered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria below:

The CDBE recommends the following ordered list, however, recognises that each school or academy will have its own priorities. As such, some criteria may be omitted or amended according to local requirements. Items in bold must remain in their position.

1. Children in Local Authority Care or Previously in Local Authority Care

Children who are in Public Care or who have been adopted but were formerly in Public Care. A child in public care is defined as a child who is looked after by the Local Authority within the meaning of section 22 of the Children's Act 1989.

2. Vulnerable Children

- I. Children of families with confirmed refugee status
- II. Children with physical or medical needs where written evidence is available from a senior clinical medical officer and the child's general practitioner or specialist showing that it would be detrimental to the child's health not to admit him/her to the School/Academy. Details of this must accompany the initial application.

- III. Children where one or both parents have a disability that would make travel to a different School/Academy very challenging. Evidence from a registered health professional such as a doctor or social worker will need to be provided. Details of this must accompany the initial application.
- IV. Children from families associated with Military Services and eligible for the Service Premium. Evidence of eligibility may be requested.

3. Sibling / Current Family Association

A brother or sister is attending the School/Academy when the child starts and will continue to do so when the sibling is admitted.

In this context brother or sister means children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural siblings, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters.

The sibling link is maintained as long as the family live at the same address as when the first child applied, or

Has moved closer to the School/Academy than when the first child was offered a place, or

Has moved to an address that is less than 2 miles from the School/Academy using the distance measured by the method outlined in the distance criterion.

4. Location

Children who live within the designated area of the parish of X and live nearest to the School/Academy measured in a straight line from XXXXX to the home address. The home address is the place where the child resides permanently with their parent or parents or legal guardians.

5. Practising Christian

Children, who along with their parents or guardians, regularly attend public worship scheduled and advertised within the pattern of services of the Parish Church of INSERT NAME AND ADDRESS OF CHURCH HERE (PLEASE INCLUDE THE NAMES OF ANY OTHER PREFERRED PARISHES WHERE NECESSARY). For casual (in year) admissions, i.e. families moving into the area, evidence of regular attendance at public worship within the pattern of services at an Anglican church in the family's previous home area will be required.

Regular attendance is taken to mean at least once a month, for a period of at least two years (24 Months).

Parents wishing to apply under this criterion will need to complete the Supplementary Information Form.

Tie Breaker

In the event of tie meaning that two or more applications are unable to be separated, we will allocate to those applicants who live the closest distance to the school. Please see explanations for application of distance.

Explanations

Where any of the above criteria are oversubscribed, children will be ranked within each category on the following basis:-

(a) Medical / Health and Special Access Reasons

Medical, health, social and special access reasons will be applied in accordance with our legal obligations, in particular, those under the Equality Act 2010. Priority will be given to those children whose mental or physical impairment means they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Equally, this priority will apply to children whose parents'/guardians' physical or mental health or social needs mean that they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend a particular school. Written evidence from a suitably qualified medical or another practitioner who can demonstrate a special connection between these needs and the particular school will be required.

(b) Service Premium

The service premium is additional funding paid annually to Schools/Academies under section 14 of the Education Act 2002 for the purposes of supporting the pastoral needs of the children of Armed Services personnel. It is paid to schools for those children who:

- have parent(s) who are currently serving in the UK regular armed forces;
- have parent(s) who served in the UK regular armed forces at any time in the last three years;
- have parent(s) who died serving in the UK regular armed forces and are in receipt of a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or War Pension Scheme.

We may request evidence of eligibility in order for a place to be offered under this criteria.

(c) Distance / Nearness of children's home to school

We use the distance between the child's permanent home address and the school, measured in a straight line using Ordnance Survey address point data. Distances are measured from the point defined as within the child's home to the point defined as within the school as specified by Ordnance Survey. The same address point on the school site is used for everybody.

Summer Born Children

Reception children are usually admitted for full-time education in September although this can be reviewed on an individual basis, taking into consideration each child's needs. Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the School/Academy is deferred until later in the academic year or until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age. Parents can request that their child attends part-time until their child reaches compulsory school age. Discussions with the School/Academy are strongly recommended prior to making a decision.

Requests for Admission Outside of the Normal Age Group

In particular circumstances, and in accordance with the Department for Education's School Admissions Code, parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group - for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

Such requests should be discussed with the Headteacher as early as possible in the admissions round associated with that child's date of birth. This will allow the School/Academy sufficient time to make a decision regarding the request before the closing date for applications and national offer day. Decisions to admit a pupil outside of their normal age group will be based on the circumstances of each case and based on what is in the best interests of the child concerned. We may request supporting professional evidence to assist in the decision-making. There is no legal requirement for this medical or educational evidence to be secured from an appropriate professional. However, failure to provide this may impede our ability to make an informed decision.

If the request is agreed, the application will be considered for the year group sought and ranked alongside any and all other applications. There is no guarantee that a place will be offered at this

stage. Parents should complete an application for the usual point of entry at the same time, in case their request is declined, or they do not receive a place in the year group requested. This application can be cancelled if the School/Academy agrees to accept an application for entry into a different year group. Applications must be made via paper Common Application Form to the Local Authority, with written confirmation from the School/Academy attached. Deferred applications will be processed in the same way as all applications for the cohort in the following admissions round, and offers will be made in accordance with the oversubscription criteria specified for that round.

Where a child has been educated out of their normal age group, it is important for the parent to consider that this is not binding when they transfer to Secondary or any other School/Academy. It will be for the admission authority of that School/Academy to decide whether to admit their child out of their normal age group.

Withdrawal of an Offer

The Governing Body reserve the right to withdraw an offer of placement but only under the following circumstances;

1. It has been offered in error,
2. A parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time (two weeks).
3. It is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

We will write to parents prior to any potential case for withdrawal. Parents will be offered the opportunity to respond to our concerns.

Appeals Procedure

Parents have a right of appeal to an independent panel against the decision of the Governing Body to refuse an application for a place. Details of the appeals procedure are sent out with all refusal letters.

We will provide procedures relating to waiting lists, appeals, and late applications. INSERT WHERE THIS INFORMATION CAN BE OBTAINED AND ANY ASSOCIATED WEBLINKS WHERE NECESSARY.

In accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the Governors will make arrangements for parents to appeal against the refusal of the Governors to offer a place for their child. Details of the procedure will be supplied by the Headteacher on request.

Queries about the Admission Policy should be addressed to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors, c/o the School Office. We will establish an independent Appeals Panel in accordance with the relevant Education Act, or will use the services of the Local Authority Independent Appeals Panel.

Arrangements for Admissions and Appeals will be reviewed and published each year.

XXXXXXX Church of England School/Academy Supplementary Information Form

This form is only to be used if you wish your application for admission to be considered on faith grounds. This is not an application form for admission to the School/Academy.

Name of Your Child	First Name		Surname	
Date of Birth		Boy		Girl

Name of Parents/Careers/Guardians	1st First Name		Surname	
	2nd First Name		Surname	
Address				
Postcode		Telephone number		
The place(s) of Worship attended by at least one parent and the named child.	Name			
	Address			
The name of the Vicar/Priest/Minister/Faith Leader	Name			
	Address			
Worship Attendance: How frequently do you attend worship with your child?	Weekly			
	Fortnightly			
	Monthly			
For how long have you been so attending?	One Year			
	Two Years			
	Three Years or More (please indicate)			

Please sign that the details above are correct and that you understand that if any information is found to be falsified, that this may impact any offer of a placement.

Signed (Parent/Carer/Guardian) _____ Date _____

RECTOR/VICAR/MINISTER Section

In respect of an application for admission to the School/Academy above, the Parents advise that they attended Church/Sunday School

Please add comments if possible such as how frequently services are actually held at the Church in question

Please sign to confirm that you would consider this family to be committed member of the worshipping congregation

Signature of Rector/Vicar/Minister Date.....

Please note: Under the terms of the Appeals Procedure parents wishing to appeal have the right to see all correspondence relating to their application for admission.

Timetable for determining admissions years 19/20

Activity	Timetable
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Governors to consider existing arrangements and any amendments required	Term 6 or Term 1 2017 and before consultation
Governors to send proposed admissions arrangements to The Diocese before the public consultation.	
Earliest date to start public consultation on proposed arrangements if amendments are necessary	1 October 17
Minimum length of consultation	6 weeks
Deadline for completion of consultation on new arrangements	31 January 17
Deadline for all admission arrangements to be determined (agreed). This is required regardless of whether any consultation was undertaken.	28 February 18
Deadline for admission authorities to send determined arrangements to Local Authority and Diocese	15 March 18
Deadline for objections to the Schools Adjudicator and for the Local Authority to report on the admissions arrangements in their area.	15 May each year
Deadline for admission authorities to comply with a decision of the Schools Adjudicator	Within two months, or by 28 February (the deadline for determination), where the period before then is less than two months.
Deadline for all admissions authorities to provide information required by the Local Authority to allow them to compile composite prospectus	8 August 18
Deadline for Local Authority to publish composite prospectus for parents	12 September 18