

ST JOHN PLESSINGTON CATHOLIC COLLEGE

ADMISSION POLICY SEPTEMBER 2024

St John Plessington is a Catholic Secondary School under the trusteeship of the Diocese of Shrewsbury. As a Catholic Voluntary Academy the Holy Family Catholic Multi Academy Trust is the Admissions Authority.

All decisions relating to admission applications to this school will be taken by the Governing Body of this school.

St John Plessington Catholic College was founded by the Shrewsbury Diocese 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 college is conducted by its Governing Body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its articles of association and seeks at all times to be a witness to Our Lord Jesus Christ.

As a Catholic college, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. As a Catholic college, 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 college. 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 Local Authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round (excluding admission to year 12). The Governing Body has set its admission number at 270 pupils to year 7 September 2024.

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. Looked after and previously looked after children. (See note 2 below)
2. Catholic children who attend a feeder Catholic primary school, namely, Christ the King (Bromborough); Our Lady and St Edward's (Birkenhead); St Anne's (Rock Ferry); St John's (New Ferry); St Joseph's (Birkenhead); St Michael and All Angels (Woodchurch); St Peter's (Noctorum); St Werburgh's (Birkenhead). (See notes 2, 3 and 4: below)
3. Other Catholic children. (See note 3 below)
4. Other children from our feeder Catholic primary schools.
5. 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 5 below)
- (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.

Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria for Year 7)

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 governing body) to have been in a 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 who is part of a Catholic family where a letter from a priest demonstrates that the child would have been baptised or received if it were not for their status as a looked after child (e.g. a looked after child in the process of adoption by a Catholic family).

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.

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

4. For the purposes of this admission policy, attendance at a feeder primary school includes those who were prevented from attending a feeder school due to oversubscription of Catholics and whose application to attend was unsuccessful, normally evidenced by a letter of rejection from the feeder primary school.
5. '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 address as the applicant.
6. 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.
7. 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.

Tie Break

Priority will be given pupils who live nearest to the school. We measure distances from home to the school gate nearest to the seed point of the child's home address to the nearest pedestrian entrance to the school using the shortest road route, unless it is possible to use a footpath which we consider to be a safe walking route, using the Council's computerised Ordnance Survey Address Point based routing system. 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 this school in the normal admission round, you **must** complete a Common Application Form available from the local authority in which you live.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 1st March 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. Appeals must be made within 20 school days of the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful. Parents must give the reasons for their appeal in writing and the decision of the Appeals Panel is binding on all parties.

If you do not provide supplementary information in the catholicity section of the form and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child will not be placed in criteria 1 to 4 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 which is 31st October the previous year.

Late Applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with your home Local Authority Secondary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. 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 Clerk to the Governors 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 each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the head teacher, 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 appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful children are 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 autumn term. The waiting list will be held open until the last day of the autumn 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 admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. Enquiries may be made at the school office but application must be made via the transfer form available on the Wirral Council website at www.wirral.gov.uk/school admissions or by calling 0151 606 2020 during office hours. Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out above, will be applied. You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

Fair Access Protocol

The college 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 locally agreed protocol. The Governing Body has this power even where admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

The Governing Body 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

In addition to places available for students already at the College the Governing Body will make available a further 30 places for external students. For both, entry to the Sixth form is subject to the Entry Qualification for individual courses of study, as published annually in the sixth Form Prospectus. If more applications are received from external candidates than the number specifies then the oversubscription criteria applied in year 7 will be used to determine admissions.

Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria for year 12)

- a) Arrangements will be instituted by the college to allow discussion of subject choice with those applying for the sixth form as internal or external candidates.
- b) If an application for admissions from either internal or external candidates has been turned down by the Governing Body, then an appeal can be made to an Independent Appeals Panel. Parents and students are able to appeal jointly or separately against any decision refusing a young person admission and, where they appeal separately the appeals must be heard together. This appeal must be sent in writing to the Clerk to Governors at the school within 20 school days of refusal. Reasons for the appeal must be given in writing and the decision of the Appeals Panel will be binding on all parties.
- c) The Governing Body expects all students specifically selecting a Catholic Sixth Form education will be fully involved in the ethos and spiritual life of the College, in achieving the aims set out in its Mission Statement.