

St Aidan's Catholic Primary School



Nursery Admissions Policy 2025/26

All members of our community are given equal opportunities in line with the Disability Equality Scheme (D.E.S.)

ST. AIDAN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

NURSERY ADMISSIONS POLICY 2025-2026

St. Aidan's Catholic Primary School provides a high quality education, founded on Catholic principles, recognising the needs of each individual and valuing the contribution of our whole community. 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 is fully supported by all families in the school. All applicants are therefore expected to give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school.

The Published Admissions Number (PAN) for the Nursery class at St Aidan's is 26. The Governing Body has sole responsibility for admissions to this nursery and intends to admit 26 children in the school year which begins in September 2025. Applications are welcome from families whose child's date of birth is between 1st September 2021 and 31st August 2022.

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic applicants in accordance with the criteria listed below.

In this Policy applicant refers to the person making an application on behalf of a child; candidate refers to the child on whose behalf the application is being made.

A place in the Nursery class does not automatically guarantee your child a place in the Reception class for the following year. A new application must be made for Reception class for September 2026.

Applications for nursery places should be made directly to the school before the end of January 2025. Offers of places will be made as soon as possible after this date.

It should be noted that places in a nursery school or nursery class should be on a part- time basis (5 morning sessions per week) and this will be the maximum amount of funding allocated. One nursery session is based on three hours in length.

Full time places can only be agreed in exceptional circumstances and in agreement with the Head of Commissioning and Fair Access.

False evidence

The governing body 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.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority.

First priority in each category will be given to children who will have an older sibling attending the school in September 2025.

Oversubscription Criteria

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. Catholic looked after and previously looked after children (see notes 2&3)
2. Catholic children who are resident in the parish served by the school (see page 1) (see note 3)
3. Other Catholic children (see note 3)
4. Other looked after and previously looked after children (see note 2)
5. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church (see notes 4&5)
6. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister or faith leader. (see note 6)
7. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a minister or faith leader. (see note 7)
8. 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, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made. (see note 11)*
- (ii) The attendance of a sibling 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 (i) above. (see note 9)*

Tie Breaker

Where there are places available for some, but not all applicants within a particular criterion priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. Distance is measured as a straight line, from the Ordnance Survey coordinates for the parental home residence (including flats) to the school main entrance, using North Tyneside Council's Geographic Information System (GIS), with those living closer to the school receiving higher priority. In the case of flats if there is more than one home address with the same measurement the flat with the lowest number will be offered the place.

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 in a public place and supervised by a person independent of the school.

Notes and definitions

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 admissions 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 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. **Catechumen** means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. For the purposes of admissions this refers to the child on whose behalf the application is being made. 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. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism or reception should contact the Diocese who will decide how the question of baptism or reception is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the 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.

Applicants must provide a baptismal certificate or where child baptism is not practised, a letter confirming their church membership from their minister or faith leader.

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 6 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.

Applicants must provide a letter of support to confirm their faith membership from their minister or faith leader.

8. 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.

9. **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.

10. 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 (having care of a child means that the child lives with and is looked after by that person).
11. To demonstrate **an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need** of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the admissions authority will require compelling written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.

There is no appeal procedure for parents refused a place in a nursery school/class but if parents feel that they have been unfairly treated then they can go through the Schools Complaints procedure through the Governing Body.

Waiting Lists

Where parents are refused a place schools will keep a waiting list of the names of applicants up to the start of the Autumn Term or ongoing. Children are placed on the waiting list according to the oversubscription criteria regardless of when their application was received. Within each criterion their place is ordered by shortest distance to the school measured in a straight line, from a single fixed central point of the home address (including flats) to the central point of the school using the Local Land and Property Gazetteer and the Council's Geographical Information System (GIS), with those living closer to the school receiving higher priority.

If a place becomes available it will be offered to the child at the top of the waiting list. This means a child who is on the waiting list will move down the list if another late application is received that falls within a higher priority under the oversubscription criteria.