

**2024-25 Admissions Policy for Catholic Secondary Schools in the
St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust**

School	Published Admission Number	Partner Primary Schools	Local Authority
De Lisle College, A Catholic Voluntary Academy , Thorpe Hill, LOUGHBOROUGH, Leicestershire LE11 4SQ	220	Bishop Ellis, Thurmaston Holy Cross, Whitwick Sacred Heart, Loughborough St Mary's, Loughborough St Clare's, Coalville St Francis', Melton Mowbray St Winefride's, Shepshed	Leicestershire
St Martin's Catholic Voluntary Academy , Stoke Golding NUNEATON, Warwickshire CV13 6HT	140	St Peter's, Hinckley St Peter's, Earl Shilton	Leicestershire
English Martyrs' Catholic School , Anstey Lane, LEICESTER LE4 0FJ	180	Bishop Ellis, Thurmaston Christ the King, Leicester Holy Cross, Leicester St Patrick's, Leicester St Peter's, Earl Shilton (pupils living in Narborough, Enderby, Littlethorpe, Whetstone, Glen Parva and Cosby)	Leicester City
St Paul's Catholic School , Spencefield Lane, LEICESTER LE5 6HN	180	Sacred Heart, Leicester St Joseph's, Leicester St Thomas More, Leicester St John Fisher, Wigston St Joseph's, Market Harborough English Martyrs', Oakham (Rutland)	Leicester City

This policy will apply to all admissions into year 7 for the academic year 2024-25.

The Catholic schools listed above belong to the Nottingham Diocesan family of schools. They are founded by and are part of the Catholic Church and seek at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ. Religious education and worship are in accordance with the teachings and doctrines of the Catholic Church. This does not affect the right of parents or carers who are not of the faith of these schools to apply for and to be considered for places, applications are welcome from all parents and carers, regardless of faith or background, who would like their children to be educated in a Christian environment. However, we ask all parents or carers applying for a place to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community.

The St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust is the admission authority for all the schools within the Trust and is responsible for determining the admissions policy. On behalf of the Trust the admissions process is coordinated by the relevant Local Authority.

All decisions relating to admission applications will be taken by the local governing body of the school applied for.

Each academy gives priority within the oversubscription criteria to Catholic children attending their partner primary schools (as listed above).

ARRANGEMENTS FOR ADMISSION

Dependent on place of residence parents/carers should consult their relevant home Local Authority website for full details of the admissions process, including information on the admissions cycle. Details are below:

Leicestershire: www.leicestershire.gov.uk

Leicester City: www.leicester.gov.uk

APPLICATION PROCEDURE AND TIMETABLE

Applications must be made on the Common Application Form provided by your **home** Local Authority. Applications must be made to your **home** Local Authority by the national closing date of 31st October.

In addition, **all applicants wishing to apply for a place under a faith criterion (oversubscription criteria 1-6)** should complete the Supplementary Information Form. This form can be downloaded from the Local Authority website within which the school is located and is also available from the schools. The completed form, together with any required evidence, (see notes 2-7), should be returned by the national closing date of 31st October to each Catholic school for which a preference has been specified.

If you do not provide the additional required evidence for ranking within the faith criteria and return it by the closing date your child will be ranked in a lower admissions category and this may affect your child's chances of being offered a place.

ALL APPLICATIONS – HOW PLACES ARE ALLOCATED

The Local Authority forward details of all applicants to the relevant school local governing body. Using the information on both the Common Application Form and the Supplementary Form, each school local governing body draws up a ranked list using the oversubscription criteria listed below. The Local Authority then allocates places on behalf of the relevant school local governing body up to the admissions number. When a place can be offered at more than one of the schools listed on your application, the Local Authority will offer a place at the highest preferred school where a place is available.

ADMISSION OF PUPILS OUTSIDE NORMAL AGE GROUP

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of the normal age group for example if the child is exceptionally gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. It is anticipated that children will be educated out of their normal age group in only a small number of very exceptional circumstances.

Should you wish to seek a place for your child outside of their normal age group you should still make an application for a school place for your child's normal age group and you should also submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time. This request should be made in writing (including any supporting evidence) to the Chair of the Local Governing Body, c/o the school, at the same time as the admission application is made.

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 school local governing body will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals. A decision will then be made on which age group the child should be admitted taking into account the circumstances of each case and the best interests of the child.

Once that decision has been made the oversubscription criteria will be applied to determine if a place can be offered at the school.

Your statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which you have applied is unaffected. However, the right to appeal does not apply if you are offered a place at the school but it is not in your preferred age group.

The school is not required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group.

LATE APPLICATIONS

Late applications will be administered in accordance with your home Local Authority Secondary Coordinated Admissions Scheme. You are encouraged to ensure that your application is submitted on time.

IN YEAR APPLICATIONS – APPLICATIONS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

Details of the application process are available from the school and from the Local Authority within which the school is located. Once an application has been made, it will be passed to the school local governing body for consideration. A Supplementary Form should also be completed if you wish to apply for ranking within a faith criterion.

Dependent on the location of the school for details of the application process for In-Year Applications parents/carers should consult the relevant Local Authority website:

Leicestershire: www.leicestershire.gov.uk
Leicester City: www.leicester.gov.uk

If your application is refused, parents have a statutory right to appeal (see 'Appeals' below). The appeal should be lodged within 20 school days after the date of your refusal letter.

WAITING LISTS

Parents whose children have not been offered a place will be added to the school's Waiting List unless they have been offered a place at a higher preference school. The Waiting List will be maintained until the end of the first term by the Local Authority.

At the end of the autumn term the Waiting List for admission to year 7 will be maintained by the school until the end of the Academic year.

Parents must make a further application for a school place in respect of a later academic year and if a place is not available the child's name can be added to the Waiting List for that academic year.

Waiting Lists are ranked in the same order as the oversubscription criteria listed below. Your child's position on the Waiting List may change. This means that a child's Waiting List position during the year could go up or down. Any late applications will be added to the Waiting List in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

Inclusion on a school's Waiting List does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

APPEALS

If a child is not offered a place, parents/carers have a statutory right to appeal. This should be done by writing to the school setting out your grounds for appeal no later than twenty school days after the decision letter has been received. The appeal will be arranged on behalf of the school local governing body by the Catholic Schools Appeals Service and will be heard by an independent panel. The decision of the panel will be binding on the school.

FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOLS

Local Authorities are required to have Fair Access Protocols in order to make sure that unplaced children especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. This includes admitting children above the published admissions number to schools that are already full. Students allocated as place under Fair Access Protocols will take precedence over those on a Waiting List. The schools listed in this policy participate in the Fair Access Protocol operated by the Local Authority within which they are located.

APPLICATIONS FOR TWINS AND MULTIPLE BIRTH PUPILS

In cases where there is one remaining place available and the next child on the Waiting List is one of a twin or of other multiple birth groups, then both twins (or all the siblings in case of multiple births) will be admitted even if this means that the Published Admission Number will be exceeded as long as the school local governing body decides that the education of pupils in that year group will not be detrimentally affected.

CHILDREN OF UK SERVICE PERSONNEL (UK ARMED FORCES) AND RETURNING CROWN SERVANTS

For families of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area, or crown servants returning to live in the area from overseas, the Governors will:

- Process an application in advance of the family arriving in the area provided it is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address to use when considering the application against the school's oversubscription criteria.
- Accept a Unit postal address or quartering area address for admissions purposes for a service child.

The Governors will not refuse a service child a place because the family does not currently live in the area.

FRAUDULENT INFORMATION

If the allocation of a place has been made on the basis of fraudulent or intentionally misleading information, the school local governing body reserve the right to withdraw the place.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

Where a school has more applications than places available the school local governing body will draw up a ranked list based on the criteria listed below and will allocate places accordingly.

In accordance with legislation Pupils with an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) (a plan made by the Local Authority under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 which specifies the special educational provision required for a child) which names the school will be allocated a place first. This will reduce the number of places available.

1. Catholic children who are 'looked after' or who were 'previously looked after' including those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see Notes 1 and 2).

2. Catholic children (see Note 2).

3. Other children who are 'looked after' or who were 'previously looked after' including those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see Note 1).

4. Catechumens, Candidates and members of Eastern Christian Churches (see Notes 3, 4 and 5)

5. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion (see Note 6).

6. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader (see Note 7).

7. Any other children.

First priority within the individual criteria will be given to applications from children who attend one of the partner primary schools.

Second priority within the individual criteria will be given to applications for children who will have siblings (see Note 8) attending the school in years 7-11 at the proposed time of admission.

In the event of oversubscription within any criterion allocation of places will be decided on distance measurements supplied by the Local Authority Priority will be given to children who live nearest to the school. (See below)

Leicester city: Measurement of distance will be in a straight line from the front door of the child's home to the school's main entrance using a computerised mapping system.

Leicestershire: Measurement of distance will be in a straight line from the point that the home property's front entrance (including flats) meets a public highway to the school's main designated front gate, using a computerised mapping system.

Therefore, the criterions 1-7 above will be sub divided A to D as follows:

SUB CRITERIA		
A	<i>Attends a partner primary school with a sibling on roll at the proposed time of admission</i>	<i>Distance ranked</i>
B	<i>Attends a partner primary school with no sibling on roll at the proposed time of admission</i>	<i>Distance ranked</i>
C	<i>Does not attend a partner primary school but has a sibling on roll at the proposed time of admission</i>	<i>Distance ranked</i>
D	<i>Does not attend a partner primary school or have a sibling on roll at the proposed time of admission</i>	<i>Distance ranked</i>

Tie Breaker

In a very few cases, it may not be possible to decide between the applications of those pupils who are the final qualifiers for a place (e.g. children who live at the same address or have the same distance measurement). In this exceptional situation the governors will admit the additional child above the Planned Admission Number.

NOTES (THESE FORM PART OF THE OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA)

1. A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions in accordance with section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of making an application to a school. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child-arrangements order or special guardianship order). This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 and children who were adopted under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

Child arrangements orders are defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

2. 'Catholic' means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. This will be evidenced by a certificate of baptism in a Catholic Church or a certificate of reception into full communion with the Catholic Church signed by a Catholic Priest and stamped with the parish stamp. 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 (i.e. a looked after child in the process of adoption by a Catholic family).

For a child to be ranked as Catholic within the oversubscription criteria 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.

3. 'Catechumen' means a member of the catechuminate of a Catholic Church. This will be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens or a letter of verification signed by the parish priest and stamped with the parish stamp.

4. 'Candidate' means a candidate for reception into the Catholic Church. This will be evidenced by a letter of verification signed by the parish priest and stamped with the parish stamp.

5. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches, and is 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 to 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 (CTE) and Churches Together in Wales (CYTUN) 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.

Evidence will be a Baptism Certificate, a Certificate of Dedication or a letter of verification confirming the membership of the child signed by the minister of religion for that church.

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 note 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.

This is evidenced by a Baptism Certificate, a Certificate of Dedication or a letter of verification confirming the membership of the child signed by the religious leader of the community.

8. 'Siblings' means a child who lives as a brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters with either one or both parents in common, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, or the child of a parent's partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling. It also includes natural brothers or sisters where the child for whom the school place is sought is not living in the same family unit as the same address as that sibling.

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. Home Address: The governors of each school use the same definition as used by the Local Authority within which the school is located.

Leicester City: The child's place of residence is taken to be the parental home at which they normally reside Where a child lives with parents that have shared responsibility for the child, the "residence" shall be considered as the home

which the child resides for the majority of the school week. Where the child is split equally throughout the school week then the “residence” shall be defined as the home which the child is registered with their GP, or alternatively where child benefits are paid.

Leicestershire: The child’s place of residence is taken to be the parental home at which they normally reside. Where parents claim equal or dual residency they must prioritise one address over the other, or risk the application not being processed.