


Admissions Policy (2025-26)

Ellesmere Port Catholic High School



Approved by:	Mr J Coucill, Chair of Governors 
Lead of Review:	Mrs S Hilton, Headteacher's PA
Last reviewed on:	February 2024
Next review due by:	January 2025

Admission to our School

The majority of Roman Catholic schools in this country are defined as “Voluntary Aided”.

This means that they are partly built and maintained with finance from the local Roman Catholic Community. For that reason alone they are genuine community schools. Ellesmere Port Catholic High School is such a school.

Despite this they are governed and managed in close liaison with the local education authorities and Academy Trusts. In our case, Our Lady Help of Christians Academy Trust. The local authority pays salaries and most other costs. This money comes from local and national taxes. Some costs are borne by the local Roman Catholic parishes.

We welcome students of all faiths, or none. Catholic schools have become much more popular in recent years. Non-Catholic parents tell us that they appreciate the ethos and calm of our school. A growing number of non-Catholic parents appreciate the values our school upholds and have sought admission for their children.

Admissions to Ellesmere Port Catholic High School are made by the governing body. The governors will admit up to 180 pupils in each year group. All places are allocated according to the set of criteria, listed on the next page, in strict order.

Admissions Policy to Year 7 in September 2025

Ellesmere Port Catholic High School is a voluntary aided, 11 – 18, co-educational Catholic Secondary School under the trusteeship of the Diocese of Shrewsbury, maintained by Cheshire West & Chester Local Authority.

The school was founded 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.

We hope all parents applying for a place here to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community. This does not affect the right of parents who are not of the faith of this school to apply for and be considered for a place here.

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. The governing body has set its admission number at 180 pupils to Year 7 in the school year which begins in September 2025.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (see note 1)

The admission of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or 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. All looked after and previously looked after children. (see note 2)
2. Catholic children who attend a feeder Catholic primary school, namely Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School, St Bernard's RC Primary School, St Mary of the Angels Primary School and St Saviour's Catholic Primary and Nursery School. (see notes 3&4)
3. Other Catholic children. (see note 3)
4. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 5&6)
5. Non-Catholic children who attend the feeder Catholic primary schools namely Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School, St Bernard's RC Primary School, St Mary of the Angels Primary School and St Saviour's Catholic Primary and Nursery School.
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 (note 7).
- 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 (note 8).

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 are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form (SIF) if you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria 2, 3 or 4. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to the School by **31 October 2024**.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on **1 March 2025** 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 SIF and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child will not be placed in criteria 2, 3 or 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 2024.

Late applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with Cheshire West & Chester's 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 School Admissions Officer 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 Headteacher, 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.

Applications will be processed within 20 days.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan

The admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with a 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.

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 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 (years 7-11)

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. Application should be made to the school by contacting School Admissions Officer at admin@epchs.co.uk , <https://epchs.co.uk/epchs-admissions/>

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out above, will be applied.

If there are no places available, the child will be added to the waiting list (see above). 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 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 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.

Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

1. A Statement of Special Education Needs is a statement made by the local authority under section 324 of the Education Act 1996, specifying the special educational provision for a child. 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 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.

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. '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.
6. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.
7. Brother or sister' includes:
 - 7.1 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
 - 7.2 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.
8. 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.
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. Where applications in other categories, taken in order, take numbers above the admissions number, the tie-breaker to be used is that places will be offered in terms of distance from the school as notified by the LA (measured in a straight line from the centrally plotted Basic Land and Property Unit point (PLPU) of the child's home address to the PLPU point of the school as defined by Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG).