



Notre Dame Admissions Policy 2021/22

Last Update: February 2020 (version 4.0)

Document Control

Changes History

Version	Date	Amended by	Recipients	Purpose
1.0	Sep 2018	Louise Adams Director of Education and Standards	All Plymouth CAST Headteachers and LGBs	To provide a CAST-wide approach to admissions
2.0	Dec 2018	Louise Adams Director of Education and Standards	All Plymouth CAST Secondary Headteachers and LGBs	To ensure all admissions requirements are fulfilled
3.0	Feb 2019	Louise Adams Director of Education and Standards	All Plymouth CAST Secondary Headteachers and LGBs	To ensure all admissions requirements are fulfilled
4.0	Feb 2020	Raymond Friel	All Plymouth CAST Secondary Headteachers and LGBs	To ensure all admissions requirements are fulfilled

Approvals

This policy requires the following approvals:

Board	Chair	CEO	Date Approved	Version	Date for Review
x			September 2018	1.0	September 2019
x			February 2019	3.0	September 2019
X			February 2020	4.0	September 2020

National/Local Policy

This policy must not be changed, it is a National Policy (only change logo, contact details and yellow highlighted sections)

Position with the Unions

Does the policy require consultation with the National Unions under our recognition agreement? No

Distribution

This document has been distributed to:

Position	Date	Version
Plymouth CAST Directors and SEL	March 2020	4.0
Local authorities of CAST schools	March 2020	4.0
Plymouth CAST Headteachers and LGBs	March 2020	4.0

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Key information about the school

Department for Education school number	879/4605
What kind of school is this?	Roman Catholic Girls' Comprehensive Academy (admitting boys Post 16)
Does this school have a religious character ?	Catholic Diocese of Plymouth
Who is the Admissions authority ?	Plymouth CAST Multi-Academy Trust
Age range of students in this school:	11 - 18
Published Admission Number (PAN):	140
Catchment area?	No
School Supplementary Information Form (SIF)?	Yes – on faith grounds – appendix 1
Usual birthdate range for Year 7 girls:	1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010
Do we ask students to wear a uniform?	Yes

Applications

When can parents apply for admission to Year 7?	3 September 2020 – 31 October 2020
How can parents apply for admission to Year 7?	https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/schoolseducationchildcareskillsandemployability/schooladmissions/applieschoolplace
When will places be offered for Year 7?	2 March 2021
When will places be offered for Year 12?	TBC schooladmissions@plymouth.gov.uk for further information on this
When should appeals for admissions to Year 7 be submitted?	https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/schoolseducationchildcareskillsandemployability/schooladmissions/applieschoolplace
When can applications for admission be made?	From 1 September 2021 for Year 7
When can applications for In-year admission be made?	At any time

Oversubscription criteria

Any student whose Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) names this school will be admitted.

Oversubscription criteria (to be used only if we need to prioritise applications - see [notes](#) on page 17):

- 1. Looked after children and those who were previously looked after. (See note 1)**
- 2. Students who have an exceptional medical or social need or those of their parents. (See page 10)**
- 3. Students who are baptised Catholic. (See note 2)**
- 4. Students attending a Catholic Primary School.**
- 5. Students who are siblings of pupils on roll at this school.**
- 6. Students who are members of any other faith. (See note 3)**
- 7. Daughters of members of staff who have been employed at this school for more than two years or recruited within the past two years to fill a vacancy.**
- 8. Other girls.**

[Tie breaker](#): Where we have to choose between two or more children in the same category as each other, then the nearer to the school the child lives - as measured by a straight line on the map using Plymouth City Council's electronic mapping system¹.

Information about this policy

Vision and values:

This policy supports the vision and values of Plymouth CAST. (To be added to upon completion of vision and values consultation.)

Policy Principles:

This policy:

- Ensures Plymouth CAST schools comply with the requirements of the School Admissions Code
- Provides a CAST-wide approach to admissions
- Ensure all schools apply the same over-subscription criteria across the trust
- Provide a central point for consultation with local authorities
- Be reviewed each year by the trust leadership team and directors

Policy Aims:

- To enable parents to know when and how to apply for places at CAST schools
- To assist school leaders in meeting statutory requirements
- To identify a best practice approach to waiting lists
- To explain what supplementary documentation is required, when and to who
- To provide a transparent approach to allocation of places at CAST schools

Relevant legislation and linked policies

School Admissions Code 2014: DfE

Fair Access Protocols: DfE

School Admissions Appeal Code: DfE

Local authority admission arrangements

Roles and Responsibilities:

Headteachers are responsible for:

- Providing advice and guidance to the LGB and the directors as to requirements under the School Admissions and Appeals Codes
- Making arrangements for determining admissions and hearing admissions appeals
- Ensuring local authority deadlines are met

Local Governing Boards are responsible for:

- Supporting the Headteacher to determine arrangements
- Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for pupil recruitment

The trust senior executive leadership team are responsible for:

- Preparing a CAST wide admissions policy, which takes account of Diocesan guidance and the School Admissions and Appeals Code
- Providing oversight, and support, of the implementation of admissions arrangements across the company
- Ensuring that the impact of any proposed changes to an academy's admission arrangements are considered in light of the other academies in the company and other catholic schools generally in the diocese
- Report to the directors regarding admissions arrangements across the academies in the company
- Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for pupil recruitment to the academies in the company
- Providing advice and guidance to directors regarding the requirements of the Schools Admissions and Appeals Codes

Directors are responsible for:

- Approving a CAST wide admissions policy, which takes account of Diocesan guidance and the School Admissions and Appeals Code
- Adopting the CAST-wide admissions policy prepared by the senior executive leadership and ensure that it complies with all diocesan requirements

Local authorities are responsible for:

- Providing information to parents about the school
- Providing applications and other available documentation to the school to be able to order parents who have applied for a place at the school
- Managing in-year admissions

This policy applies to all admissions for the school year 2020-21.

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.** We ask all parents or carers applying for a place to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community.

Our school serves the Catholic communities of Plymouth. **We also welcome applications from all parents and carers, regardless of faith or background, who would like their daughters to be educated in a Christian environment.**

Plymouth CAST is the admission authority for the Notre Dame and is responsible for determining the admissions policies. On behalf of the Trust, the admissions process for our schools is coordinated by the local authority.

The directors of the academy trust are responsible for the admissions policy and for ensuring the policy is implemented in CAST schools. School leaders (supported by the Local Governing Board) are responsible for following the admissions policy and providing information to directors to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities.

Contacts for Further Information

Plymouth CAST Multi-Academy Trust

Edmund Rice Building, St Boniface College, 21 Boniface Lane, Manadon Park, Plymouth, PL5 3AG

01752 686710

admin@plymouthcast.org.uk

Churches Together in England

020 7529 8131 www.cte.org.uk/

Diocese of Plymouth

01364 645390 www.plymouth-diocese.org.uk/

Plymouth County Council School Admissions Service

www.plymouth.gov.uk/schooladmissions

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/schoolseducationskillsandemployability/schooladmissions/applyschoolplace/applysecondaryyear7schoolplacenextacademicyear>

Email: secondary.admissions@plymouth.gov.uk

Telephone 01752 307469

Plymouth County Council policies, information and admissions application forms

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/schoolseducationskillsandemployability/schooladmissions/applyschoolplace/applysecondaryyear7schoolplacenextacademicyear>

Plymouth County Council Admission Appeals

01752 307166

Email schooladmissions@plymouth.gov.uk

Plymouth Education Transport Team

Email school.transport@plymouth.gov.uk

www.plymouth.gov.uk/schoolsandeducation/schooltransport/freeschooltransport

Telephone 01752 308770

To view your options for home to school travel using bus, cycle, train and walking please visit:

www.plymouth.gov.uk/plymotion and www.travelinesw.com

The Department for Education (DfE)

0870 000 2288 www.education.gov.uk

The Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)

0370 000 2288 www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency

Office of the Schools Adjudicator

01325 735303 www.education.gov.uk/schoolsadjudicator

The Application Process

Application Form

Applications at the main point of entry (Year 7) must be made on the Plymouth local authority application form. Applications must be made to Plymouth local authority by the closing date of 31 October 2020.

Local Authority	Deadline for applications	Website link
Plymouth	31 October 2020	https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/schoolseducationchildcareskillsandemployability/schooladmissions/applyschoolplace

Applications deadlines:

The admission arrangements outlined in this section apply to children starting in Year 7 for the first time in 2021/2022. Allocation results will be notified on 2 March 2020. Notre Dame RC School follows Plymouth City Council's co-ordinated secondary admissions scheme available at www.plymouth.gov.uk/schooladmissions. Any applications received later than the deadline will be dealt with as late applications.

Please ensure applications and supplementary evidence is submitted by the deadline for the relevant authority.

Applications under faith criteria

Applicants wishing to apply for a place under faith criteria should complete the Supplementary Form (appendix 1).

The completed form, together with any required evidence, (see below), should be returned to the school by the closing date.

Parents and carers applying under the faith criteria should either:

- Complete Part A of the SIF (appendix 1) along with a copy of your son's baptism certificate

OR

- Complete part A and B of the SIF (appendix 1), signed by the relevant faith leader.

Exceptional need for admission to our school

We give priority to students where there is an exceptional need to attend this school and not another school. The need must be specific to this school: a girl may have very challenging circumstances that require additional support but if that support could also be provided at another school, there would be no exceptional need to attend **this** school.

In order to seek priority on this basis, parents **must** provide evidence that this school is the only school which meets the needs of your daughter.

The exceptional need could be due to the parent's circumstances. Exceptional need could include:

- A serious medical condition, which can be supported by medical evidence.
- Significant caring responsibilities, which can be supported by a social worker.
- Where one or both parents or the student has a disability that may make travel to another school more difficult, which can be supported by medical evidence.

These examples are not meant to be exhaustive or exclusive. Neither should it be assumed that similar circumstances would impact on different students and families in the same way.

- if there are medical reasons that make it essential for a girl to attend this school, the parent must provide supporting information from a doctor, together with any other relevant information. This must make a compelling case as to why the student's needs or the parents can only be met here; a medical condition in itself will not automatically result in a place here. It is not essential for the doctor to name this school and we wouldn't expect a doctor to have sufficient, specific knowledge of the school but the evidence should explain exactly what the student's needs are and what specialist support and facilities are required.
- for social reasons, parents must provide independent evidence from a relevant professional supporting the family. The supporting evidence must set out the particular reasons why this school is the most suitable and the difficulties that would be caused if the student had to attend another school. It is not essential for the professional supporting the family to have in-depth knowledge of this school, but the evidence must explain exactly what the needs are and what specialist support and facilities are required.

Exceptional need for admission here will **not** be accepted on the grounds that:

- a girl may be separated from a friendship group.
- parents wish to avoid a girl from the current or previous setting.
- child-care arrangements before or after school would have to be changed.
- transport arrangements would have to be changed.
- there is a medical condition such as asthma that doesn't require specialised treatment;
- the student has a particular interest or ability in a subject or activity.

Evidence from a relevant professional, independent of the family will be required in every case and should be made available before the deadline for applications.

Parents can indicate on a common application form that they believe there is an exceptional need for admission here. It is not expected that a parent will seek this priority at a school that was not named as the first preference. The onus is on parents to submit their supporting evidence and to provide further evidence if requested to do so. Parents who apply using a common application form from another local authority without a tick box for exceptional need should put a note in the reasons for their preference that they are requesting exceptional need priority and provide the required supporting evidence.

If the local authority accepts that exceptional need has been demonstrated, the application will be prioritised under oversubscription criterion 2. This does not guarantee that a place will be available. Where the local authority does not agree that the need is exceptional, the application will be prioritised according to other oversubscription criteria.

Catchment Area:

We do not operate a catchment area which gives priority for school admissions purposes.

How the Admissions Process works

Without exception, all parents have to make a formal application for admission to a state-funded school. Places are not allocated automatically and no student has a guarantee of admission. This includes students with siblings at a school or those at a particular school. We welcome visits from parents - and their daughters - who are considering applying for a place here. This is an opportunity to see what we have to offer. Visits are not a compulsory part of the admissions process and will not affect decisions on whether a place can be offered here. Parents can arrange visits by contacting the school office.

Policy Changes:

Once our policy is determined, it cannot be changed unless an amendment is required to correct a typographical error, to ensure that the policy complies with the Codes, in response to a determination of the [Office of the School's Adjudicator](#) or where approval has been received to a request for an In-Year Variation. Any amendments that are made will be detailed in the [Policy Version](#) section above.

Statutory Information

Admission of students outside the normal age group

Parents may seek a place for their daughter outside of the normal age group for example if the student is exceptionally gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. However, this is a Trust decision and strict criteria apply. The Trust has the right to refuse if it believes it could compromise the student or school.

Parents who wish to seek a place for their daughter outside the normal age group should make an application for a school place for the student's normal age group and should also submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time, following the procedure set out by the relevant local authority.

Although the process is co-ordinated by the local authority, the decision is made by the Trust. The decision will be made based upon which age group the student should be admitted into, taking account of the circumstances of each case and the best interests of the student. Once that decision has been made the oversubscription criteria will be applied to determine if a place can be offered at the school.

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

Late Applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with the local authority admissions policy within which the academy is located.

In-year applications:

In-Year applications will be considered in line with the local authority co-ordinated admissions arrangements in which the school is situated.

To make an in-year application, parents should apply to the local authority and the school, ideally after visiting the school. Once an in-year application has been made, it will be considered by the Local Governing Board on behalf of the board of directors.

The decision will be issued by email (or letter if no email available). Offers of places may be withdrawn if they are offered in error or it is established that an offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

In cases involving school transfers that do not require a house move or where there is no need for an immediate move, arrangements may be made for the student to start school at the beginning of term to minimise disruption to their own and other students' education.

Fair Access Protocols:

Local Authorities are required to have Fair Access Protocols in order to make sure that unplaced students, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. This includes admitting students above the admissions number to schools that are already full.

Statutory right of appeal:

Information on how to appeal can be found on the local authority website. Your appeal should be lodged within twenty school days after the date of the decision letter.

If a student is not offered a place, parents/carers have a statutory right to appeal. An appeal should be made in writing to the local authority.

Fraudulent Information:

If the allocation of a place has been made on the basis of fraudulent or intentionally misleading information, the trust reserves the right to withdraw the place.

Waiting Lists:

Parents whose daughters have not been offered their preferred school in the normal admissions round will be added to their preferred school's waiting list. Waiting lists for admission will remain open until the end of the Autumn Term in the admission year. A waiting list is maintained for year groups other than the intake year.

Waiting lists are ranked in the same order as the oversubscription criteria listed below. The student's position on the waiting list may change. This means that the student's waiting list position during the year could go up or down.

Any late applications will be added to the list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Inclusion on a school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

Applications for twins/multiple birth students:

Where a place available is offered to one student from a twin or multiple birth, a place will normally be offered to both twins, triplets etc even if this means exceeding the admission number.

Pupils who have EHCPs

All students who have an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which names the school will be offered a place.

Sixth Form Arrangements

The CAST board of directors is the admissions authority for Notre Dame School, with support from the local governing board. The arrangements apply to children transferring from Year 11 to Year 12 in 2021/2022. Applications should be made direct to the school. The sixth form takes boys and girls.

The number of students who have applied for each course will need to be taken into account, meaning that extra students can sometimes be accommodated over the admission number if the student's chosen course is not full.

The admission arrangements apply equally to those seeking admission from Year 11 within the school to those seeking transfer from other schools. All those seeking admission to Year 12 must achieve the necessary grades for access onto the courses they have chosen.

All applicants must:

(i) Complete the application form available from, and returnable to Notre Dame RC School. The form is also available on the school website.

(ii) In addition, applicants should complete the school's own supplementary information form if the application is made on faith grounds. If you only complete the school application form your application will be valid, but the school may not be able to rank your application against their admission criteria. If you only complete the school's supplementary information form, your application will not be valid and will not be considered.

A child with an Education, Health and Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) which names the applicant's preferred school will be admitted to that school subject to achieving the necessary grades for access onto the courses they have chosen.

All students must be willing to accept the whole course, including the RE programme.

Any student refused the offer of a place in Year 12 has the right of appeal to an independent appeals panel.

Admission Procedures for entry into Year 12 in September 2021:

- Sixth Form prospectus and application form will be available from the Sixth Form office from the day of the Sixth Form Opening Evening
- The Sixth Form Open Evening will be in November 2020
- The deadline for applications will be the end of the Autumn Term
- Applicants will be invited to interview to discuss course choices between January and March 2021
- Letters of offer will be sent by the end of the Spring Term 2021
- Letters which inform students of an unsuccessful application will also advise parents of the opportunity to request an independent appeal
- Late applications may be considered up to the end of August 2021

Where the number of eligible external applicants for a course of study exceeds the places available then admission will be determined in accordance with the oversubscription criteria:

Oversubscription criteria

Any student whose Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) names this school will be admitted, providing they achieve the necessary grades.

Oversubscription criteria (to be used only if we need to prioritise applications - see [notes](#) below):

- 1. Looked after children and those who were previously looked after. (See note 1)**
- 2. Students who have an exceptional medical or social need or those of their parents. (See page 10)**
- 3. Students who are Baptised Catholic. (See note 2)**
- 4. Students who are siblings of pupils on roll at this school or St Boniface College.**
- 5. Students attending a Catholic secondary school.**
- 6. Students who are members of any other faith. (See note 3)**
- 7. Children of members of staff who have been employed at this school for more than two years or recruited within the past two years to fill a vacancy.**
- 8. Other students.**

[Tie breaker](#): Where we have to choose between two or more children in the same category as each other, then the nearer to the school the child lives - as measured by a straight line on the map using Plymouth City Council's electronic mapping system¹.

Notes and Definitions

Note 1 - Definition of looked after child or previously looked after child:

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 (see the definition in s.22(1) of the children's Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

A "previously looked after child" is a child who: (a) ceased to be looked after because they were adopted (this includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 [see s.12 adoption orders] and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 [see s.46 adoption orders] , or (b) became subject to a child arrangements order (under the terms of the Children's Act 1989 s.8, as amended by s.12 of the Children's and Families Act 2014 - an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live), or (c) became subject to a special guardianship order (see S.14A of the Children's Act 1989 - an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian [or special guardians]).

Note 2 - Definition of Catholic: A child baptised in the Catholic Church (evidenced by a baptismal certificate or a completed SIF with the parish stamp and priest's signature).

Note 3 – Other faith evidence is provided through a dedication certificate or a completed SIF signed by the relevant faith leader.

Note 4 - Definition of siblings. 'Sibling' means a natural brother or sister, a half-brother or sister, a legally adopted brother/half-brother or sister/half-sister, a step brother or sister or other child living in the same household as part of the same family who, in any of these cases, will be living at the same address at the date of their application for a place.

A younger sibling who has been offered a place within the normal admissions round will be considered as if she were on roll for the purposes of oversubscription priority where a student seeks admission in-year.

Note 5 - Place of Residence: Places are offered here on the basis of where the student will attend school, not necessarily where they live when the application is made.

The home address is where a student normally lives. Where a student lives with parents with shared parental responsibility, each for part of a week, the address where the child lives is determined using a joint declaration from the parents stating the pattern of residence. If a student's residence is split equally between both parents, then parents will be asked to determine which residential address should be used for the purpose of admission to school. If no joint declaration is received where the residence is split equally by the closing date for applications, the home address will be taken as the address where the daughter is registered with the doctor. Any other evidence provided by parents will also be considered in reaching a decision on the home address for admissions purposes. This may be necessary, for instance, where parents don't agree on the student's home address. Parents are urged to reach agreement or seek a Specific Issues Order from a court to decide which parent should or should not pursue an application. Where they do not, the admissions authority will determine the home address. If the residence is not split equally between both parents, then the address used will be the address where the student spends most of the school week.

Where we ask for evidence of a new address from which a student would attend school, this would often be written confirmation of a house purchase or a formal tenancy agreement. We recognise that some families may be unable to provide this. Parents who can't provide this evidence should contact us or the LA. There is no intention to penalise families where there is a genuine reason why evidence cannot be provided.

Note 6 - Parents: A parent is any person who has parental responsibility or care of the child. When we say parent, we also mean carer or guardian. Where admission arrangements refer to parents this can mean one parent or both. We may ask for evidence of parental responsibility where a person is acting as a parent but does not hold formal parental responsibility.

Sometimes there is a dispute between parents over which school a student should attend. When we take decisions over admissions, we will seek advice from the local authority and the Diocese and will take into account imminent court hearings that may have an impact on parental responsibility and living arrangements.

Appendix 1 - Supplementary Information Form

Notre Dame		
<p>To be completed only where a parent is seeking admissions priority on faith criteria. Where there are more applications than there are places, we will prioritise applications where a faith criterion has been met. Please complete and return this form to the school by 15 January 2021.</p>		
<p>You must also complete a Local Authority Common Application Form.</p>		
PART A	To be completed by parent	
Full name of student		
Date of birth		
Please tick the appropriate description		
Catholic	Student is baptised Catholic – part B signed by Parish Priest or baptismal certificate provided	
Other faith	Student is a member of a faith other than Catholic – part B signed by faith leader	

Once you have completed Part A, please EITHER attach a copy of the Baptism Certificate OR pass the form to your priest, minister, faith leader or church official who should complete Part B and return it to the school. If you don't return this form, your application will be considered under the "non-faith" criteria.

PART B	To be completed by Priest or faith leader	
Full name of student		
Church		
Name of Priest or faith leader		
Address		
Telephone		
Please tick the appropriate description		
Catholic	Student is baptised Catholic	
Other faith	Student is a member of a faith other than Catholic	
I confirm that the information provided is accurate:	Signed by: Signature:	
Please return this form to: Notre Dame School, Looseleigh Lane, Derriford, Plymouth, PL6 5HN		