



The Holy Cross School

Year 7-11 Admissions Policy

For entry into Year 7 in Year 2021-22

The Holy Cross School is under the Trusteeship of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark and has Academy status. Accordingly, this policy is based on the Archdiocesan Guidance on Admissions. The school exists to fulfil the Mission of the Church, “Go therefore and teach all nations” (Mt 28:19). This it aims to do by promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of its students in the context of a Catholic school community. The Governing Body welcomes applications from other denominations and faiths who support the religious ethos of the school.

Having consulted with the Local Authority and other admission authorities, the Governors intend to admit 150 students into Year 7 in September 2021 without reference to ability or aptitude. Where the number of applicants exceeds 150, the Governors will offer places in the order stated using the below criteria for entry.

All our successful Year 6 applicants will be tested (after offers have been accepted and confirmed) on the morning of **Saturday 8th May 2021, to determine any streaming. Streaming ensures students are taught in the appropriate teaching group for their ability.**

Criteria for Entry:

Places will be prioritised according to the following criteria:

- 1. Catholic (or those in the care of Catholic families) Looked After (or previously Looked After) girls¹**
- 2. Girls who are baptised Catholic²**
- 3. Girls enrolled and registered in the Catechumenate³**
- 4. Other Looked After (or previously Looked After) girls**
- 5. Girls who are baptised and verified members of Eastern Christian Churches including Orthodox Churches whose membership is supported by their religious leader**
- 6. Girls who are baptised or dedicated members of other Christian denominations that are part of Churches Together in England⁴ whose membership is supported by their religious leader**

¹ ‘Children Looked After’ currently children looked after and previously looked after are defined as:

- Children who are (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 an application for a school is made;
- Children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (under the Adoption Act 1976 or Adoption and Children Act 2002), or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order. Applications made under criterion 1 must be accompanied by details of circumstances and professionally supported evidence (e.g. from a social worker) and the relevant orders.

² ‘Catholic’ means members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome’. In the context of school admissions, Catholic children are defined as children who are baptised or received into the Catholic Church, (children baptised or received into the Eastern Churches in union with Rome and children of members of the Ordinariate.

³ ‘Enrolled and registered in the Catechumenate’ means formally registered as undergoing instruction leading to Baptism into the Catholic Church.



7. **Girls who are members of other faiths and whose membership is supported by their religious leader**
8. **All other girls**

For girls applying under criterion 2, the strength of evidence of commitment to the applicant's faith, where appropriate, demonstrated by the child's level of Mass attendance on a Sunday or equivalent, will be ranked according to evidence provided on the Priest Reference Form and must be endorsed by the priest where the child normally worships. Priority will be given to those who worship weekly, followed by those attending fortnightly, at least once a month and less often.

Oversubscription:

Within each level of attendance for criterion 2 (e.g. weekly, fortnightly etc.) and for applicants within all other criteria, where the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available, the following tie-breakers will be applied in the order stated:

- A. A girl with a **sister**, including a step-, half-, adopted or foster sister, living at the same address and attending this school at the time of admission.
- B. A girl who has **special medical, pastoral or social grounds** for attending the school. Applications must be accompanied by at least two supporting letters from a doctor, priest, social worker or other appropriately qualified person explaining why the school is necessary for the student.
- C. A girl who is **currently eligible to receive Free School Meals**. Applications must be accompanied by a letter from the student's current school verifying this status.
- D. A girl whose **parent is a permanent member of staff** and 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.
- E. A girl **living nearest to the school**, this being measured by a straight line to the school gate in Sandal Road. All distances will be measured using Kingston Council's School Admissions computerised Geographical Information System. Where the last remaining place is to be allocated and two or more children are deemed to live at the same distance from the school the place will be decided by the drawing of lots.

Other Relevant Information

- Please note if applying under **criteria 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 or 7** in addition to the **Supplementary Information Form**, you should also complete a **Priest or Faith Leader Reference Form**.
- If applying under **criteria 2, 5 and 6**, applicants must include a copy of their daughter's official signed Baptism Certificate or Certificate of Dedication.
- If applying under **criterion 3**, please include a formal letter of registration in the Catechumenate.

⁴ 'Churches Together in England' – The Governing Body will refer to the list of member churches on the Churches Together in England website.



Students with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP)

The admission of students with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. This procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of EHCPs by the student's home Local Education Authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice*. Any student admitted with an Education and Health Care Plan will reduce the total number of places on offer by one.

Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained in order of the over-subscription tie-breakers set out above. Names will be removed from the list at the end of the academic school year (July 2022). If parents would like to remain on the waiting list after this date, they must contact the school in writing. Placing a child's name on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place. It is possible that when a child is directed under the local authority's fair access protocol, they will take precedence over those children already on the waiting list.

Late Applications

Applications received after the Local Authority closing date of 31st October 2020 will only be considered after those applications received by the closing date. This is unless you are able to provide proof that there were **exceptional circumstances** that prevented you from applying on time. All applications received after 11th December will only be considered after those received by the closing date. Unless exceptional circumstances for lateness are proven, late applications will be held back until after the first round of offers and will then be inserted into the waiting list.

In-year (casual) admissions

Applications for a place at the school in-year must be made using the common application form of the local authority (LA) where the child resides. This form must be returned to the LA. The school's Supplementary Information Form should also be completed to enable the Governors to rank the application in the event of there being more than one application for a place. The Governors will use the same criteria to rank the application as that listed above. The offer of a place at the school will be made by the LA on behalf of the Governors. In the event of the Governors deciding that a place cannot be offered parents will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on the waiting list. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.



Appeals

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with section 85(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing and must set out the reasons on which the appeal is made. Appeals should be made to the Admissions Appeal Clerk at the school address. Parents/Carers have the right to make oral representations to the Appeal Panel.

Appeal forms will be available to download from the school website after the national offer date on 1st March 2021.

Fair Access Protocol

The school participates in the local authority's Fair Access Protocol to allocate places to vulnerable and other children in accordance with Appendix A of the School Admission Code 2014. Admitting students under the protocol may require the school to admit above the planned admission number for the relevant year group. It is possible that when a child is directed under the local authority's fair access protocol, they will take precedence over those children already on the waiting list.