

**ST MARY'S CATHOLIC
SCHOOL, BENTON
ADMISSION POLICY 2026-27**

St Mary's Catholic School Sixth Form was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for students of Catholic families. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic students in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below. The school is conducted by its academy company as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and articles of association, and seeks at all times to be a witness to Our Lord Jesus Christ.

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. 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 be fully supported by all families in the school. We therefore hope that all parents will give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school. This does not affect the right of an applicant who is not Catholic to apply for and be admitted to a place at the school in accordance with these admission arrangements.

Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust is the admission authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school.

The admission authority will, where logistically possible, admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the students is the last student ranked within the school's PAN.

Admission to the Sixth Form

St Mary's Catholic School Sixth Form is available for all existing Year 11 pupils subject to pupils fulfilling the individual requirements of suitable courses and pathways.

In addition, the admissions authority has set its published admission number (PAN) at 20 pupils to Year 12 for external applicants, in the school year which begins in September 2026. These remaining places in the sixth form of the school will be offered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria, subject to applicants fulfilling the individual requirements of suitable courses and pathways.

Both internal and external pupils wishing to enter the sixth form will be expected to have met the same minimum academic entry requirements for the sixth form.

In addition to the sixth form's minimum academic entry requirements pupils will need to satisfy minimum entrance requirements to the courses for which they are applying. If either internal or external applicants fail to meet the minimum course requirements, they will be given the option of pursuing any alternative courses for which they do meet the minimum academic requirements. Course requirements are published annually in the school's prospectus and on its website.

When year 12 is undersubscribed, all applicants meeting the minimum academic entry requirements will be admitted or permitted to progress.

When there are more external applicants that satisfy any academic entry requirements, priority will be given in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out below.

Where there is a space in year 13 i.e. where there are fewer than [xx] pupils in the year group, the school will admit additional pupils up to this number using the oversubscription criteria set out below.

Entry requirements

Both internal and external pupils wishing to enter the sixth form will be expected to have met the same minimum academic entry requirements for the sixth form. These are detailed in the Sixth Form Prospectus.

In addition to the sixth form's minimum academic entry requirements pupils will need to satisfy minimum entrance requirements to the courses for which they are applying. If either internal or external applicants fail to meet the minimum course requirements, they will be given the option of pursuing any alternative courses for which they do meet the minimum academic requirements.

Course requirements are published annually in the school's Prospectus and on its website. When year 12 is undersubscribed, all applicants meeting the minimum academic entry requirements will be admitted or permitted to progress.

When there are more external applicants that satisfy any academic entry requirements, priority will be given in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out below.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (see note 1)

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

Oversubscription Criteria (for external applicants)

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. Catholic looked after and previously looked after students. (see notes 2&3)
2. Other Catholic students. (see note 3)
3. Other looked after and previously looked after students. (see note 2)
4. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 4&5)
5. Students of a member of school staff who has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time of which application for admission to the school is made (see note 10)
6. Students who have a brother or sister in the school not covered by oversubscription criteria 1 to 5 (see note 8)
7. Students of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion. (see note 6)
8. Students of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader. (see note 7)
9. Any other students.

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 student 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 10)
- (ii) 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 students in (i) above. (see note 8)

Tie Break

Where there are places available for some, but not all applicants within a particular criterion the school will allocate places using an electronic random allocation process, which will be independently monitored. In the instance of multiple births, and one sibling is chosen by random allocator both or more siblings will also be admitted. If your child is unsuccessful in gaining a place, you may request that your child is placed onto the school's waiting list, which will be maintained according to the schools' admissions criteria. Within each criterion, children will be ranked by computer in random order.

Application Procedures and Timetable

The sixth form is available for all existing pupils subject to pupils fulfilling the individual requirements of suitable courses. Remaining places in the sixth form of the school will be offered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria, subject to applicants fulfilling the individual requirements of suitable courses.

If you are required to provide supplemental evidence to support the application (e.g. a baptismal certificate), this evidence should be provided at the time of application. If not provided, evidence may be sought by the admissions authority following the closing date for applications. This information must have been correct at the date of closing for applications. If you do not provide the supplemental evidence, this may 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 **[date]**.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on **[date]** or the next working day, by the local authority on our behalf. If you are unsuccessful (unless your student 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.

Late Applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with the home local authority coordinated admissions scheme. Parents are advised to ensure that the application is submitted before the closing date.

Admission of Students Outside their Normal Age Group

A request may be made for a student to be admitted outside their normal age group, for example if the student is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

Any such request should be made in writing to the head teacher of the school at the same time as the admission application is made. The admission authority will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the student. 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 admission authority will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful students 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 the 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

An application can be made for a place for a student at any time outside the admission round and the student will be admitted where there are available places, subject to the Entry requirements being met. Applications should be made to the school by contacting Mr Turnbull, Assistant Headteacher, Sixth Form, at St Mary's Catholic School Benton Park Road, Newcastle upon Tyne. NE7 7PE (www.stmarysnewcastle.co.uk). Parents will be advised of the outcome of their application in writing.

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 student 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 students who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as set out in locally agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal admission round the admission authority is empowered to give absolute priority to a student where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The admission authority has this power even where admitting the student would mean exceeding the PAN.

False evidence

The admission authority reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place or, where the student is already attending the school the place itself, where it is satisfied that the offer or the place was obtained by deception.

Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

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 student.
2. A 'looked after student' has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any student 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. students with foster parents) at the time of making an application to the school.

A 'previously looked after student' is a student who was looked after, but ceased to be so because he or she was adopted, or became subject to a student arrangements order, or special guardianship order. Included in this definition are those students who appear (to the admission 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 student living with a family where at least one of the parents is Catholic.

For a student 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. '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.
5. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.
6. "students of other Christian denominations" means students 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.

7. "students of other faiths" means students who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of 'other Christian denominations' at 7 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.

8. 'brother or sister' 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 student of a parent's partner where that student for whom the school place is sought lives for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same home address as the student who is the subject of the application.
9. A 'parent' means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for a student, and any person who has care of a student.
10. A member of staff includes all school staff who are under the direct employment of the directors of the school.
11. Guidance on entry requirements for individual courses and pathways, whether academic or vocational can be found in the Sixth Form Prospectus.

12. To demonstrate an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the student which can be most appropriately met at this school, the admission authority will require compelling written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.
13. A student's "home address" refers to the address where the student 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 student, and the student lives for part of the week with each parent, the home address will be the address given in the CAF, provided that the student resides at that address for any part of the school week.