Sacred Heart R.C. Primary School

WESTHOUGHTON

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

ADMISSIONS POLICY 2026



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Sacred Heart is a Roman Catholic Primary School in the trusteeship of the Diocese of Salford and is maintained by Bolton Local Authority as a Voluntary Aided Primary School. The school's Governing Board is the admission authority and is responsible for taking decisions on applicants for admission. The co-ordination of admissions arrangements is undertaken by the Local Authority.

For the school year commencing September 2026 the Governing Board has determined that the number of children to be admitted to Reception will be 60.

The school's role is to participate in the mission of the Catholic Church by providing a curriculum, including Catholic religious education and worship, which will help children to grow in their understanding of the Good News and in the practice of their faith. The school will help the children develop fully as human beings and prepare them to undertake their responsibilities as Catholics in society. The school requires all parents applying for a place here to understand and respect this ethos and its importance to the school community. This does not affect the rights of parents who are not of the Catholic faith to apply for a place here.

Admissions to the school will be determined by the Governing Board. Parents must complete a Local Authority Preference Form or apply online via the Council website. If you wish to have your application considered against the school's religious criteria then you must also complete the Supplementary Form which is available from the school.

All preferences listed on the Local Authority Preference Form will be considered on an equal basis. If there are fewer than 60 applications, all applicants will be offered places. If there are more applications than the number of places available, the following oversubscription criteria will be applied:

1. Looked after Children and Previously Looked After Children

2. Children with proven and exceptional social, medical, educational or religious need which can be best met, or only met at this school*

3. Baptised Roman Catholic children who will have a brother or sister attending the school at the time of admission and resident in the parish of Sacred Heart of Jesus, Westhoughton, or another parish.

4. Baptised Roman Catholic children resident in the parish of Sacred Heart of Jesus, Westhoughton.

5. Other baptised Roman Catholic children who are resident in another parish.

6. Other children who will have a brother or sister attending the school at the time of admission.

7. Children of staff at the school where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years, or has been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

8. Other children.

*Exceptional needs of this kind will occur very rarely. It is strongly recommended that a written application is submitted in advance of the normal admissions timetable.

If in any category there are more applications than places available, priority will be given on the basis of proximity to the school. This will be calculated (by using a straight line) using the LA computerised measuring system from the front door of the child's address (including flats) to the main entrance of the school. In the event of distances being the same for two or more applicants and where this distance would be last place/s to be allocated, a random lottery will be carried out in a public place and the required number of names will be drawn out.

The Governing Board is the admissions authority. The admissions committee is agreed at the meeting of the full Governing Board each autumn term.

In the autumn term, all parents who have expressed an interest in a school place will be sent a copy of the Local Authority 'Primary Admission Booklet' which gives details of the LA co-ordinated admission arrangements. These are available from Local Authority offices, public libraries and primary schools.

Parents must complete a common application form and express three preferences for primary school admission. The closing date for all applicants is published by the LA each year. All applications will be considered by the Governors at the same time in a fair way according to the published criteria.

The admission of a non-Catholic child in a year when there are vacancies remaining after the demand from Catholics is met does not guarantee a place for a sibling in a year where the Catholic demand is greater.

Notes for Applicants:

a) All applications will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is 15 January 2026 (primary) / 31st October 2025 (secondary). Applications received after this date will be **treated as a late application** and will not be considered until **after** the main allocation of places has taken place.
b) 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 (under section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989. A previously Looked After Child is one who immediately moved on from that status after becoming subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. This includes IAPLAC (those children adopted from state care outside of England).
c) For a child to be considered as a Catholic evidence of a Catholic Baptism or reception into the Catholic Church is required. Written evidence of reception into the Catholic Church can be obtained by referring to the Register of Receptions, or in some cases a sub-section of the Baptismal Registers of the Church in which the Rite of Reception took place. If, for example, a child has been baptised in the Church of England and the parents are subsequently admitted to the Catholic Church through the RCIA programme, the child must also be admitted to the Church by the Rite of Reception.

   The Governing Board will require written evidence in the form of a Certificate of Reception before applications for school places can be considered for categories of 'Baptised Catholics'. A Certificate of Reception is to include full name, date of birth, date of reception and parent(s) name(s). The certificate must also show that it is copied from the records kept by the place of reception.

   Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism for a good reason, may still be considered as baptised Catholics but only after they have been referred to the parish priest who, after consulting with the Director of Education or officers of the Diocesan Department For Education will decide how the question of baptism is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church.

d) Home Address is considered to be the address where the child normally lives. Where care is split and a child moves between two addresses, the household in receipt of the child benefit would normally be the address used but the admission authority body reserves the right to request other evidence as fit the individual circumstance. Applicants should not state the address of another relative or person who has daily care of the child.
e) 'Sibling' is defined in these arrangements as full, half or step brothers and sisters, adopted and foster brothers and sisters who are living at the same address and are part of the same family unit. This does not include cousins or other family relationships.
f) A waiting list for children who have not been offered a place will be kept and will be ranked according to the Admission Criteria. The waiting list does not consider the date the application was received or the length of time a child's name has been on the waiting list. This means that a child's position on the list may change if another applicant is refused a place and their child has higher priority in the admissions criteria.
g) For 'In Year' applications received outside the normal admissions round, if places are available they will be offered to those who apply. If there are places available but more applicants than places then the published oversubscription criteria will be applied.
h) If an application for admission has been turned down by the Governing Board, parents may appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel. Parents must be allowed at least twenty school days from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful to submit that appeal. Parents must give reasons for appealing in writing and the decision of the Appeals Panel is binding on the Governors.
i) The Governing Board reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a school place where false evidence is received in relation to the application.

j) It is the duty of governors to comply with regulations on class size limits for children aged between rising five and seven. The Governing Board may exceed the regulations for twins and children from multiple births where one of the children is the 30th child admitted. This also applies to in-year applicants who are Looked After/previously Looked After Children of UK service personnel or children who move into the area for whom there is no other school available within a reasonable distance.

k) If a child is a "summer born child", parents may request that the date their child is admitted to school is deferred to later in the school year. However, the child must start school before the end of that school year. If a parent wishes their child to be educated out of their normal school year (kept back a year), they must discuss this with the school before applying. However, the final decision on this rests with the headteacher.

l) Parents may request that their child attend school part-time until he/she reaches his/her fifth birthday.