

St. John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School

Admissions Policy

School Name	St John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School
Address	City Way Rochester ME1 2FA
Telephone Number	01634 543123

The following documents form the schools final and determined 2024 admission arrangements.

Our mission statement:

St. John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School inspires students, spiritually and educationally forming them through Faith, so that they will achieve their aspirations and contribute to their community.



SUMMARY STATEMENT

St John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School (hereafter known as “the School”) strives for a school community built on the teachings of the Catholic Church as encapsulated in the school’s ethos and mission statement. The school’s admission policy, as such, provides for entry for all students, with preference given to those who adhere to the Catholic faith.

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1. Practice

St. John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School is a Voluntary Aided School in the Trusteeship of the Archdiocese of Southwark. The School is conducted by the Governing Body as part of the Catholic Church, in accordance with its Trust Deed and Instrument of Government and always seeks to be a witness to Jesus Christ. The School exists primarily to serve the Catholic community. However, the Governing Board welcomes applications from parents of children of other denominations and faiths, subject to the availability of places, who support the religious ethos of the School. They also welcome applications from the parents of children of no faith, subject to the availability of places, who support the religious ethos of the School.

As a Church School, the Governors make the decision to offer places for admission into the School. The School wishes to give extra consideration to children attending Catholic Primary schools in Medway. These schools are

- English Martyrs', Strood
- St Augustine of Canterbury, Rainham
- St Benedict's, Lordswood
- St Mary's, Gillingham
- St Michael's, Chatham
- St Thomas More, Walderslade
- St Thomas of Canterbury, Rainham • St William of Perth, Rochester.

Having consulted with the Local Authority (LA) and other Admission Authorities, the Governors intend to admit 180 pupils in September 2024 at age 11, without reference to ability or aptitude. Admissions will be decided without reference to aptitude or ability and on the overriding criteria that the "Catholic Character" of the school will always be preserved in accordance with the Trust Deed and the Instrument of Government.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

1. Application must be made using the Common Application Form provided by the child's home Local Authority. Applications are now made online at www.medway.gov.uk or by paper form and submitted directly to the Local Authority. Completion of a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) is not mandatory. However, if you believe your application meets the criteria for categories 1, 2, 5 or 6 and you do not return the SIF then the school cannot consider you for them. The SIF should be returned directly to the School, together with the additional documents requested, as appropriate. This may either be posted to the school or emailed to office@stjohnfisher.school with the subject line Y7 admissions.
2. A copy of the SIF may be obtained from St John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School [www.https://stjohnfisher.school/](https://stjohnfisher.school/)

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3. Catholics must also submit the Priest's Declaration Form. Depending upon the category in which you make your application, these additional documents are: 1. A Baptismal Certificate (Catholic applicants), 2. The Priest's Declaration Form (Catholic applicants), 3. A letter of Support from the Minister of your Church (other denominations or faiths).

The SIF and other documents must be completed and returned to the School no later than the date published on the form. Failure to supply the required documentation will mean that the Governors cannot consider your application under categories 1, 2, 5 or 6. If there are more applications than places, the over-subscription criteria are applied. The Declaration Form from a Priest or Minister of Religion, where these are required in the oversubscription criteria, will be considered as part of the application.

3. Appeals

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with sections 88 and 94 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 addressed to the Admissions Appeal Clerk at the school address. Parents/Carers have the right to make oral representations to the Appeal Panel.

4. Admission into Years 8-11 and Year 7 after the start of the Academic Year will be carried out using the in year admissions policy.

1. All applications for admission for students in Year 8 to 11 and for Year 7 after the start of the academic year will be referred to the LA and dealt with according to the co-ordinated scheme.
2. Parents of children who have not been offered a place at the school may ask for their child's name to be placed on the register of interest. The register of interest will be operated using the same admissions criteria listed below should a place become available. Placing a child's name on the register of interest does not guarantee that a place will become available. Parents may appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

5. Oversubscription

Having consulted with the Local Authority, the Diocese and other admission authorities, the Governors intend to admit, in September 2024, up to 180 pupils without reference to ability or aptitude.

Where the number of applications exceeds 180, the Governors will offer places using the following criteria in the order stated in the notes in section 5: -

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Notes

5.1 Looked after Baptised Catholic children or looked after children in the care of Catholic families and previously looked after Catholic children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.

A **“looked after child”** or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order. 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 definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).
Children in public care (Looked after Children) are children who are (a) in the care of a local authority.

Looked after children or looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order and children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and cease to be state care outside of England as a result of being adopted. 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 and children who are looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or become subject to a residence order or special guardianship order). See **Notification d**

5.2 Catholic children, a baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church must accompany the supplementary information form. Children enrolled in the catechumenate. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required. See notification a

5.3 Other looked after children and other previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.

5.4 Non Catholic children who have attended a Catholic primary partner school. These schools are listed in section 1 of this policy.

5.5 Children of families who are members of other Christian denominations that are part of Churches Together in England. Evidence of Baptism (or dedication) provided by a priest or minister of a designated place of worship will be required.

5.6 Children who are members of other faiths. Evidence of membership of the faith provided by a priest, minister or religious leader of a designated place of worship will be required.

5.7 Any other children.

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The following order of priorities will be applied when applications within any of the above categories exceed the places available and it is necessary to decide between applications.

5.7.1 A brother or sister on the school roll at the time of admission. Evidence of the relationship may be required. See **Notification b**

5.7.2 Social, pastoral and medical needs which make the school particularly suitable for the child in question. Strong and relevant evidence must be provided by an appropriate professional authority (e.g., qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker, or priest).

5.7.3 Proximity to the School from the child's home address. See **Notification c**

Notification a Catholics include members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome. Reference to other Christian denominations refers to denominations that are full members of Churches Together in England.

Notification b A “brother or sister” means children who live as brother and sister including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers or sisters. It would not include other relatives e.g., cousins.

Notification c Home refers to the permanent home address at which the child lives for the majority of his/her time and with the parent who is in receipt of child benefit. The distance calculated is the shortest available walking route known to the geographical information home/distance software used by Medway Student Services (Admissions). This graphical information software may not know all footpaths that are in existence and certain new roads may not be known. Where a footpath or new road is not known to the software an alternative route will be used. Where a child’s home is situated on a new road the distance calculation will begin from the nearest available known road plotted in the software. New developments may be subject to this. In certain cases it may not be possible to calculate a distance where the entire route is deemed as a safe walking route. In these circumstances the distance calculated is used purely to prioritise an application for admission. There is no expectation that the walk should be taken.

Notification d Looked after children are those in the care of a public authority and are in public care. Applications made under this criterion must be accompanied by details of circumstance and professionally supported evidence (e.g. from an appropriate social worker).

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.

Waiting Lists

Parents of children who have not been offered a place at the school may ask for their child’s name to be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list, which will be maintained in accordance with Medway Council Admissions Scheme, will be operated using the same admissions criteria listed above. 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 list.

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 the School Admission Code 2012. Admitting pupils under the protocol may require the school to admit above the planned admission number for the relevant year group.

6. Sixth Form

1. Planned admission to the Sixth Form is 185. All pupils will be expected to support fully the distinctive Catholic Ethos of the sixth form.
2. For Advanced, Advanced-Subsidiary and Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education courses, the minimum entry requirement is five level 4 grades at GCSE. Some courses will require a student to meet entry requirements in that subject as detailed in the sixth form prospectus.
3. There are no minimum entry requirements for Level Two courses.
4. The Governing Board is the Admissions Authority. The Head of Sixth Form will advise but the final discretion is with the governors.
5. All courses are subject to availability and timetabling constraints.