

St. John Fisher Catholic School Admissions Policy, September 2020 admissions

2020 Admissions Cover Sheet

School Name	St John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School	
Address	(Years 7-8)	(Year 9 - 13)
	79 Maidstone Road Chatham ME4 6DP	Ordnance Street Chatham ME4 6SG
Telephone Number	01634 543123	01634 543123

The following documents form the schools final and determined 2020 admission arrangements.

St. John Fisher Catholic School

Admissions Policy, September 2020 admissions

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 schools ethos and mission statement. The schools admission policy, as such, provides for entry for all students, with preference given to those who adhere to the Catholic faith.

1. Practice

- Admissions to the school are made by the school governing board.
- Admission to the school is based on the principle of Fair banding. At St John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School, we operate a 'Fair Banding' admissions process to ensure we have a balanced proportion of students from across the whole ability range - a comprehensive intake. Students who wish to apply for a place at St John Fisher must take a Fair Banding test to be considered for admission to the School and this will be required if their parents/carers intend to put St John Fisher on the common admissions form. This test is usually a cognitive ability test(s) – it is not a pass or fail test. Students are asked to take it and their scores on the test are then used to place them in an ability band. Students taking the test are placed in one of five ability bands representative of the national ability range. Please see the table below for information regarding the number of student places in each ability band. These banding arrangements are an effective practice in schools providing fair oversubscription criteria, provided arrangements are fair, objective and not used as a means of unlawfully admitting a disproportionate number of high ability children. If places in a band are not filled or become vacant, for example, because parents/carers accept offers of places at other schools, and no applicants in those bands remain without a place, they must be evenly filled by children falling into the next nearest bands (i.e. the bands on either side, or below or above, if the first child is from the band above then the next must be from the one below). This allocation is carried out randomly by the Local Authority. Banding Children in Care or Children with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) or Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs Children in Care, with an EHCP or with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, who apply in the normal admissions round, must be included in any banding arrangements and given top priority within each band.

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Total
% of students in each ability band	10%	20%	40%	20%	10%	100%
Number of student places available in each ability band	18 places	36 Places	72 Places	36 Places	18 Places	180 places

- St John Fisher is an all ability school and in order to secure an all ability intake that is representative of the national ability range, all applicants for admission must take a fair banding test which is prescribed by NFER (National Foundation for Educational Research). This is not a 'pass or fail' test. This is to ensure that children across the ability range are admitted. All applicants for places at St John Fisher will be banded according to the principles of fair banding, using the national profile 10:20:40:20:10.
- The tests will be administered during September/October – in the year preceding entry. Parents and Carers can access the test for their child by filling in and returning a test registration form which will be available via the School website (www.stjohnfisher.school) and from the School reception during term 6 of Year 5.
- The school caters for children of all abilities, including those with special educational needs
- Those students with statements of special educational needs, who name the school as an option will be offered places first
- The school's planned admission number is 180

2. Annual Year 7 Intake

1. Applications will be dealt with in accordance with the Medway co-ordinated secondary admission scheme. *(Full details will be set out in the Medway secondary admissions booklet).*
2. Parents who wish to apply for admission to the School must complete the Medway common application form (CAF) and return it to their child's primary school by the required date.
3. In addition to completing the CAF, parents must send/take a copy of the School's supplementary application form with a copy of their child's baptismal certificate, if applicable, to the School by the same date.
4. Ministers of Religion should be asked to fill in the relevant part of the form confirm the applicant's religious commitment, if applicable.
5. Offers of places will be posted to parents by the LA, on behalf of the governing body.
6. A waiting list will operate for year 7 according to the co-ordinated scheme.

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 made 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

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 a waiting list. The waiting list 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.

5. Oversubscription

Having consulted with the Local Authority, the Diocese and other admission authorities, the Governors intend to admit, in September 2020, up to 180 pupils using the fair banding system

Where the number of applications exceeds (n) the Governors will offer places using the following criteria in the order stated: -

1. Looked after 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.
2. Catholic children, a baptismal certificate or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church must accompany the supplementary information form. . See *note a*.
3. Children enrolled in the catechumenate. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required.
4. 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. Non Catholic children who have attended a Catholic primary partner school, that is:
 - . English Martyrs', Strood
 - . St Augustine of Canterbury, Rainham
 - . St Benedict's, Lordswood
 - . St Edward's, Sheppey
 - . St Mary's, Gillingham
 - . St Michael's, Chatham
 - . St Peter's, Sittingbourne
 - . St Thomas More, Walderslade
 - . St Thomas of Canterbury, Rainham
 - . St William of Perth, Rochester.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. Any other children.

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.

- I. A brother or sister on the school roll at the time of admission. Evidence of the relationship may be required. *See note b.*
- II. 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 (eg qualified medical practitioner, education welfare officer, social worker or priest).
- III. Proximity to the School from the child's home address. *See note c.*

Notes

- 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.
- 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 eg cousins.
- 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 safe 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.
- 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 (eg 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 requirements are stated in the school prospectus.
3. The minimum entry requirements for Level Two courses are outlined in the prospectus
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.