



ADMISSIONS POLICY 2027-2028

SECONDARY SCHOOLS
LUTON & SLOUGH AREA

APPROVED BY: LOCAL ACADEMY COMMITTEE LAST CONSULTED ON: NOV-DEC 2024

DATE: JANUARY 2026

NEXT CONSULTATION DATE (unless required earlier): NOV 2031

St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. This Admission Policy applies to the Secondary and Sixth Form Schools that form part of the St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust. They include:

- **Cardinal Newman Catholic School and Sixth Form, Luton**
- **St Joseph's Catholic High School and Sixth Form, Slough**

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below. The school is conducted by its governing body 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 Catholic schools, 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 the admission arrangements.

The admissions authority for the school is the Board of Directors of the St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust who has responsibility for admissions to this school. The Board of Directors has delegated responsibility for the administration of the admissions process to the Local Academy Committee of the relevant school.

The admissions process for the above listed schools is part of the Local Authority co-ordinated admissions scheme. To apply for a place at any of the above listed schools in the normal admissions round, an application must be made using the school admission application process of the local authority in which you live naming the school on the application form. Applications need to be made by 31st October 2026. Further, a Supplementary Admission Form must also be completed and returned directly to the school. The deadline for applications is:

School	Deadline	
	Submission of application to local authority	Submission of supplementary forms to school
Cardinal Newman Catholic School	31 October 2026	31 October 2026
St Joseph's Catholic High School	31 October 2026	31 December 2026

The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round¹ (excluding admission to Year 12). The relevant Local Academy Committees have set admission numbers for pupils to Year 7 and to Year 12 in the school year which begins in September 2026 as follows:

School	Admission Numbers		Total capacity in Sixth Form ²
	Year 7	Sixth Form	
Cardinal Newman Catholic School	274	1	150
St Joseph's Catholic High School	160	1	100

Typically, total capacity will be met from existing pupils moving from Year 11 into Year 12. If capacity is not met with internal pupils, external applicants will be admitted up to the relevant capacity figure and subject to entry requirements.

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 separate procedure. Children 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 children.

Oversubscription Criteria

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. Looked after and previously looked after children, including those children who have been in state care outside of England and cease to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see note 2 and 3).
2. Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice who attend a feeder Catholic primary school (see notes 4, 5 and 6).
3. Other Catholic children with a certificate of Catholic practice (see notes 4 and 5).
4. Catholic children who attend a feeder Catholic primary school (see notes 4 and 6).
5. Other Catholic children (see note 4).
6. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church (see notes 7 and 8).
7. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion or other religious leader (see note 9).
8. Children of other faiths whose application is supported by their minister of religion (see note 10).
9. Any other children.

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 or medical need of the child 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 13).

¹ This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

² All Year 11 pupils who wish to transfer into the Sixth Form and meet the academic entry requirements and subject specific requirements have a right to transfer, irrespective of the capacity number. The oversubscription criteria will not apply.

- (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 children in (i) above (see note 11).
- (iii) Other pupils within the category who do not fit into provision (i) and (ii) outlined above.

Admission to the Sixth Form

Where the school operates a Sixth Form, admission, in the first instance, will be from the existing Year 11. Additional external pupils will be admitted until Year 12 meets its capacity.

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, specified by the school.

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.

The schools will admit any pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan whose Plan names the school and who meet the minimum entry requirements.

Sixth Form Oversubscription Criteria for External Pupils

In the event of there being more applications than available places, priority will be given as follows:

Cardinal Newman Catholic School Sixth Form:

1. Looked after children and previously looked after children, who fulfil the entry requirements for their chosen courses including those children who have been in state care outside of England.
2. External applicants who fulfil the entry requirements for their chosen courses.
3. Late applications from pupils who fulfil the entry requirements for their chosen courses.

St Joseph's Catholic High School Sixth Form:

1. Catholic looked after children and previously looked after children, who fulfil the entry requirements for their chosen courses, including those children who have been in state care outside of England.
2. Other looked after children and previously looked after children, who fulfil the entry requirements for their chosen courses, including those children who have been in state care outside of England.
3. External Catholic pupils who fulfil the entry requirements for their chosen courses.
4. Any other pupils who fulfil the entry requirements for their chosen courses.
5. Late applications from pupils who fulfil the entry requirements for their chosen courses

Tie Break

In any situation where the application of the admission criteria results in more children with an equal right to admission to the school than the number of available places, the tie break will be determined by:

Cardinal Newman Catholic School	Random selection by an independent body.
St Joseph's Catholic High School	Priority will be given to children living closest to the school, determined by the shortest distance. Distances are calculated on the basis of a straight-line measurement between the front door of the child's home address (including the community entrance to flats) and the main entrance of the school using the local authority's computerised measuring system. In the event of distances being the same for two or more children where this would determine the last place to be allocated, random allocation will be carried out and supervised by a person independent of the school. All the names will be entered into a hat and the required number of names will be drawn out.

Application Procedures and Timetable

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round³, you **must** complete a Common Application Form (excluding admission to Year 12) available from the local authority in which you live. You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Admission Form attached to this policy if you are applying under oversubscription criteria 2 to 8. The Supplementary Admission Form should be returned to the relevant school by the applicable deadline detailed above, with any corresponding paperwork (baptismal certificate and/or certificate of Catholic practice).

Applications for Sixth Form:

Cardinal Newman Catholic School	Return to the Head of Sixth Form by the end of the Advent/Autumn Term. Late applications will be accepted up to the end of September in the academic year that studies begin, subject to available places.
St Joseph's Catholic High School	Details in relation to applications to Sixth Form will be published each year in the Autumn term on the school website.

For Year 7 applications, you will be advised of the outcome of your application on 1 March 2026 or the next working day, by the relevant local authority. If you are unsuccessful (unless your child 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.

For Sixth Form, provisional places (subject to GCSE results and course entry criteria) will be offered in April 2026 for courses which commence in September 2027.

If you are refused a Sixth Form place you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

If you do not provide the information required in the Supplementary Admission Form and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child will not be placed in criteria 1 and 3 - 8, and this is likely to 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 31 October 2026.

³ This is for applications to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

Late Applications

Cardinal Newman Catholic School	Late applications will be administered in accordance with your home Local Authority Secondary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. You are encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.
St Joseph's Catholic High School	Late applications will be considered after all other criteria and will be considered after all 'on time' applicants.

Admission of Children Outside their Normal Age Group

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

Any such request should be made in writing to the Chair of the Local Academy Committee of the relevant school at the same time as the admission application is made. The Local Academy Committee will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. 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 Local Academy Committee 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 children 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. Waiting lists are held open as follows:

Cardinal Newman Catholic School	Children remain on the waiting list until the parent asks for their removal from the list.
St Joseph's Catholic High School	The waiting list will be held open until 31 August 2028. Parents will need to reapply for a place after this date if they wish their child's name to be carried forward on the waiting list.

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 child at any time outside the admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. Application should be made directly to the school.

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 child will be added to the waiting list (see above).

You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing within 10 school days, 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 children who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as set out in locally agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal admission round the Local Academy Committee is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The Local Academy Committee has this power even where admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

The Local Academy Committee reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place or, where the child 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 child.
2. A 'looked after child' has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any child 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. children with foster parents) at the time of making application to the school. This includes those children who have been in state care outside of England.
3. A 'previously looked after child' is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because he or she was adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order. This includes those children who have been in state outside of England.
4. '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 child living with a family where at least one of the parents is Catholic. For a child 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.
5. 'Certificate of Catholic Practice' means a certificate issued by the family's parish priest (or the priest in charge of the church where the family attends Mass) in the form laid down by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. It will be issued if the priest is satisfied that at least one Catholic parent or carer (along with the child, if he or she is over seven years old) have (except when it was impossible to do so) attended Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation for at least five years (or, in the case of a child, since the age of seven, if shorter). It will also be issued when the practice has been continuous since being received into the Church if that occurred less than five years ago. It is expected that most Certificates will be issued on the basis of attendance. A Certificate may also be issued by the priest when attendance is interrupted by exceptional circumstances which excuse from the obligation to attend on that occasion or occasions. The Certificate of Catholic Practice can be obtained via the following link: [Certificate of Catholic Practice | Education Service \(northamptondioceseschools.org\)](http://northamptondioceseschools.org/Certificate%20of%20Catholic%20Practice)
6. Feeder primary schools, for the purposes of this Admission Policy, are:

Cardinal Newman School	St Joseph's Catholic High School
Catholic Feeder Schools in Luton and Central Beds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sacred Heart Primary School • St Joseph's Primary School • St Margaret of Scotland Primary School • St Martin's de Porres Primary School • St Mary's Primary School • St Vincent's Primary School 	Catholic Feeder Schools in Slough: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holy Family Primary School • Our Lady of Peace Primary School • St Anthony's Primary School • St Ethelbert's Primary School

7. '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.
8. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.

9. “children of other Christian denominations” means children 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 CYTŪN 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 (www.ctbi.org.uk/member-churches/) (as defined by these organisations on 31 October 2023).

10. “children of other faiths” means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of ‘other Christian denominations’ at 9 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.

11. ‘brother or sister’ includes:

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 the child of a parent’s partner where that child 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 child who is the subject of the application.

12. A ‘parent’ means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for a child, and any person who has care of a child.
13. To demonstrate an exceptional social or medical need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the governing body will require a letter from a Doctor (medical need) or Director of Children Services (social need) in the relevant Local Authority, specifying why the school is the only reasonable alternative for the child and the reasons why the other schools in the catchment area for the child are not appropriate.
14. A child’s “home address” refers to the address where the child 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 child, and the child lives for part of the week with each parent, the home address will be the address given in the CAF, provided that the child resides at that address for any part of the school week.
15. In the case of UK service personnel and crown servants returning to England, a place can be allocated in advance of the family arriving in the area provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date. The address at which the child will live will be applied as long as the parents provide evidence of their intended address. This address will also be used in the case of applying the over-subscription criteria and tie break. Further, a parent may request a Unit or quartering address is used as the child’s home address when considering the application against the oversubscription criteria.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADMISSION FORM FOR APPLICATION TO (Tick as appropriate):
CARDINAL NEWMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL, LUTON ☐
ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, SLOUGH ☐

Child's full name			
Full Address (incl postcode)			
Home Tel:		Mobile Tel:	
Date of Birth		Gender	Male/Female
Religion (tick as appropriate)	Catholic		
	Other – Christian		<i>Please specify:</i>
	Other – Non- Christian		<i>Please specify:</i>
Catholic applicants and those from the Eastern Christian Church must provide the child's original Baptismal Certificate to be photocopied.			
Current Junior/Primary School:			
If a sibling currently attends the school, please give full name(s) and Tutor Groups:			
Name:		Tutor Group:	
Name:		Tutor Group:	
Details of Parent/Carer 1	Name:	Address:	
		Tel no:	
Details of Parent/Carer 2	Name:	Address:	
		Tel no:	
Please provide the name, address and telephone number of a Priest/Minister of Religion who knows you and your child and will support your application. Please inform your Priest/Minister that you have given his/her name for this purpose.			
Name:			
Address:			
Tel no:			