# Holy Rood Catholic Primary School

## Determined Admission Policy for 2025/2026

The Governing Body will admit 60 children to Reception in September 2025.
This is the published admissions number.

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. All applicants are therefore expected to give their full unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school.

To apply for a place at this school you must complete Hertfordshire County Council's Common Application Form (either online or on paper). In addition, parents/Legal Guardians are requested to complete the attached supplementary information form (SIF) and return it to school. Supplementary information forms can be downloaded from our website www.holyroodcatholicprimaryschool.co.uk. If a SIF is not completed the Governing Body will apply the school's admission arrangements using only the information supplied on the HCC application form, which may result in the application being given a lower priority. If you do not live in Hertfordshire, you must complete and return the common application form to the county/borough in which you live.

Applications are welcome from any family whose child reaches 5 years of age between 1st September 2025 and 31st August 2026. Parents/Legal Guardians of nursery children must apply for a place in reception. Attendance at the nursery does not guarantee a place in reception. Offers of places will be sent to parents on 16th April 2025.

The following forms will need to be submitted to Holy Rood Catholic Primary School for each application so it can be considered complete:

- Supplementary information form (SIF).
- Original baptism certificate, for Catholic applicants. Refer to notes below for cases where alternative documentation could be presented.
- Certificate of Catholic Practice, for those applying under criterion 2, 3, 4 or 5.
- Applicable letter confirming membership of the faith, for applicants of other Christian denominations or faiths. Refer to notes below for more details.
- Other documentation as required in the notes below, e.g. as evidence of special circumstances.
- Documentation checklist.

The documentation checklist will be checked at the time of submission by the school and a copy will be provided to applicants confirming which documents have been correctly submitted.

Forms which are incorrectly or partially filled in may result in the application being given a lower priority. In particular, lack of evidence for some conditions will likely result in lower priority.
Similarly, late applications including those where part of the documentation required is submitted after the County deadline will be assigned lower priority than those that meet the deadline, i.e.

they will be assigned lower priority than any other application received on time. As the school is usually oversubscribed, it is very unlikely that late applications will obtain a place.

**Oversubscription Criteria** (refer to notes below for definitions and more details)

Where there are more applications than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority :-

1. Catholic Children looked after and Catholic children who were previously looked after, including those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England, and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order[1] or a special guardianship order[2]
2. Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice who have a sibling at Holy Rood Catholic Primary School at the time of admission.
3. Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice who are resident of the parishes of Holy Rood, Watford and St Helen's North Watford. Maps are enclosed.
4. Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice who are resident of other parishes.
5. Baptised Catholic children with a Certificate of Catholic Practice of a Holy Rood staff member who has been employed at the school for at least two years at the time of application
6. Other Baptised Catholic children who have a sibling at Holy Rood Catholic Primary School at the time of admission.
7. Other Baptised Catholic children who are resident of the parishes of Holy Rood, Watford and St Helen's North Watford.
8. Other Baptised Catholic children of a Holy Rood staff member who has been employed at the school for at least two years at the time of application.
9. Other Baptised Catholic children.
10. Other children looked after and children who were previously looked after, including those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England, and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order[1] or a special guardianship order[2]
11. Other children of a Holy Rood staff member who has been employed at the school for at least two years at the time of application.
12. Children of Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church.
13. Christians of other denominations, whose application is supported either by a certificate of baptism or by a letter confirming membership of the faith community.
14. Children of other faiths whose application is supported by a letter confirming membership of the faith community.
15. Any other applicants.

Priorities will be applied within each criterion in the following order:

a) The Governors will give top priority within a criterion to a Catholic child in criteria 2 to 7 and a non-Catholic child in criteria 8 to 15 who has a special social, pastoral or medical need which can only be met at Holy Rood Catholic Primary School. The Governing Body will require compelling professional written evidence from the local church or health authorities and this evidence must be provided by the closing date for applications.

b) In criteria 9 to 15 priority will be given to siblings where the sibling is attending Holy Rood Catholic Primary School when the child starts school.

c) In the event of two or more children meeting the same criteria, and provisions described within these supporting notes, priority will be given to the child who lives the shortest straight line distance measurement provided by Hertfordshire County Council's GIS system. Where the final place is offered to two or more families that live equal distance to the school a lottery will take place in the presence of an independent witness to determine which applicant will be given priority. Home address is where the child resides for 50% of the week or more.

d) Where the final place is offered to a child who has a twin/triplets etc. applying for a place in the same school year, these siblings will also be admitted.

Notes:

**Parish Boundaries**

For the purpose of this Policy, parish boundaries are as shown on the attached map. Where the home address is in a road marked as a boundary, the side of the road which is closest to the parish catchment area belongs to the parish. Where the home address is in a road that does not appear in the map, e.g. as it is a new development, or in case of any doubt, the school must be contacted.

**Baptised Catholic**

For those criteria which refer to baptised Catholic children, the child should be baptised by the closing date for applications.

**'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 full communion with the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy this includes a looked after child in the process of adoption and living with a Catholic family, where a letter from a priest demonstrates that the child would have been baptised were it not for his/her status as a looked after child. For a child to be treated as Catholic, evidence of Catholic baptism or reception in the Catholic 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 law of the Church.

'**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 the 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. Further details of these circumstances can be found in the guidance issued to priests http://rcdow.org.uk/education/governors/admissions/

'**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.

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

**"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 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.

"**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 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.

**Looked After Children**

A "child looked after" 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 (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989)

**Adopted**

Adopted children are those who have proof of adoption.

**Child Arrangements Order**

Child Arrangements Order - under the terms of the Children Act 1989, section 8 defines a child arrangements order as an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

**Special Guardianship Order**

Special guardianship order - under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians.

**Children in the process of being placed for adoption**

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under Rule 1.

**Sibling**

A Sibling means the brother, sister, half-brother or half-sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent/Legal Guardian or partner or a child looked after or previously looked after and in every case living permanently in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of application.

A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.

A sibling must be living at the same address as the applicant.

**Distance**

A 'straight line' distance measurement is used in all home to school distance measurements. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child's house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

**Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC)**

The Governors will accept children who have an Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plans) nominating Holy Rood Catholic Primary School. The admission of pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plans) is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. This procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of EHC Plans by the pupil's home LA. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the Special Educations Needs Code of Practice2015.

**Children of staff**

Children of staff including step children will qualify under criteria 5, 8 or 11 if they live at the same address as the relevant member of the staff, otherwise they will be treated as regular applicants.

**Unsuccessful applicants**

In addition to their right to appeal to an independent panel, unsuccessful applicants will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list which will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria for the academic year following the proposed admission.

**In-Year Admissions**

Parents can make an online in year application via the Hertfordshire County Council website www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions or contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 for a paper application form. Parents should return the application form direct to the County Council.

**In Year Appeals**

The county council will write to you with the outcome of your In Year application and, if you have been unsuccessful, will include registration details to enable you to login and appeal online at www.hertfordshire.gov/schoolappeals"

**Continuing Interest (Waiting lists)**

After places have been offered, Hertfordshire County Council will maintain a continuing interest (waiting) list for all community and voluntary controlled schools. A child's position on a CI list will be determined by the admission criteria outlined above and a child's place on the list can change as other children join or leave it. The county council will contact parents/carers if a vacancy becomes available and it can be offered to a child. Continuing interest lists will be maintained for every year group until the summer term (date to be specified and confirmed to parents at the time of allocation). To remain on the CI (waiting) list after this time, parents must confirm they are still interested in a place by completing an In Year application form.

**Appeals**

At transfer time parents wishing to appeal who applied on line should log into their online application and click on the link 'register an appeal '. For those who did not apply on line, please contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request an appeal pack.

For in-year applications parents wishing to appeal should contact the school directly in the first instance.

**Fair Access Protocols**

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 admissions round the governing body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol that has been agreed by both the Diocese and the governing body for the current school year. The governing body has this power even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

**Children Educated Outside Their Chronological Age Group**

Parents may request that their child be educated out of his/her chronological age group. Such requests must be made in writing to the Chair of Governors during the autumn term in the year of application Governors will consider each request on its own merits and permission will only be given in exceptional circumstances. When the application is made, it will be ranked with all the other applications and no further exceptions will be given. A statutory right of appeal will be given upon refusal if no place has been offered in any school year.

**Reception Year Deferred Entry**

Applicants may defer entry to school up until statutory school age i.e. the first day of term following the child's fifth birthday. Application is made in the usual way and then the deferral is requested. The place will then be held until the first day of the spring or summer term as applicable. Applicants may also request that their child attend part-time until statutory school age is reached. **Entry may not be deferred beyond statutory school age or beyond the year of application**. Applicants who wish to defer and whose children have birthdays in the summer term should note that the latest admission date for this year will be 1st April 2026.

**Admission of Summer Born Children**

Parents may now choose for their summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1st April – 31st August to be admitted to Reception in the September following his/her 5th birthday. Parents should inform the Chair of Governors of this at the time of making an application, submitted in the usual way, during the 2025-2026 academic year instead, for a September 2026 place. This application will be treated in the same way as all other applications and ranked according to the oversubscription criteria. There is no guarantee that an offer will be made.

**Proposed Timescales for 2025/2026 - Under 11s Admissions Round**

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| Closing date for on time applications to be submitted to the LA | 15/01/25 |
| Statutory deadline for receipt of paper applications | 15/01/25 |
| Applications forwarded to school | TBD |
| School provides LA with ranked lists of applicants | TBD |
| Allocation information available to school | TBD |
| Offer letters posted for delivery which parents/Legal Guardians may accept or reject place offered | TBD |
| Date by which parents/Legal Guardians return appeal forms | TBD |