



ARCHBISHOP
MCGRATH CATHOLIC
HIGH SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS POLICY

OUR VISION

‘Christ at the Centre’

Our core purpose is to ensure that all pupils reach or exceed their potential by using their God-given talents to develop as healthy, ambitious, capable, life-long learners ready to live as valued members of our local community, Wales and the world.

We aim for all our pupils to leave our school as:
Empowered, Virtuous and Employable individuals,



Admissions Policy

2025-2026

Formulated by:	Mr DA Howells - Headteacher
Approved by:	Full Governing Body – 26-6-2-24
Review:	Annually
Next Review:	June 2025

Date of any amendments made to policy and brief points:

Date	Section
Spring 2023	Document control information entered onto front page Front page updated.
September 2022	Amended following advice from Appeals Panel

Admissions

The Governing Body of the School is responsible for determining and administering the Policy relating to the admission of pupils to the school. It is guided in that responsibility by the requirements of the law, by the advice of the Diocesan trustees and its duty to the School and the Catholic community.

In accordance with the provisions of the Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005, the Governing Body has delegated responsibility for determining admissions to its 'Admissions Panel', a sub-committee of the Board of Governors. The Admissions Panel will consider all applications made in accord with the criteria set out on page 2 of this document, without reference to the race, gender, ability, disability, social background or aptitude of the child.

Having consulted with the LEA and others in accordance with the requirements of the law, the Governing Body has set its planned admission number at **145** pupils for the school year. Places in other year groups are also limited to **145**.

Parents/guardians wishing to apply for a place for their child for the **start of the academic year** must complete an online application form in full, and return it to the school no later than the published Closing Date for applications. Please note that ALL applications **must** be submitted online and all applications will be considered at the same time

Letters will be dispatched on the published Common Offer Date, informing you of the decision of the Admissions Panel in respect of your application. Where the application is unsuccessful, the reason(s) will be stated clearly in the letter, and you will be provided with information as to how to appeal the decision. Applicants who are not accepted will be placed on the school's Waiting List. Applicants will remain on the Waiting List until the end of the academic year. In the event that places become available, the applicants on the Waiting List will be reviewed against the Oversubscription Criteria and offers made to fill available places. Successful applicants will need to confirm acceptance of their child's place, by returning the electronic form to Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School, no later than 7 days after receipt of offer letter/e-mail. If the school does not receive confirmation of acceptance, the place may be given to the next applicant on the waiting list.

Parents have a **right of appeal** against a refusal by the Governing Body to admit their child. If they wish to do so, they should put their appeal in writing to the Clerk to the Governors at the School within 14 days (10 working days) from the notification date. Appeals will be arranged, with an independent panel and conducted in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code.

For all successful applications, the data contained in the application form will be stored on the school management information system and used for purposes outlined in the 'fair processes order'. Every effort is made to secure the accuracy and security of personal data held by the School. Under the Data Protection Act, individuals have the **right of access to personal information** held about them, and also the right for any errors to be corrected.

General:

Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School is an English medium, mixed, voluntary aided secondary school. It serves the parishes of Our Lady's and St Patrick's (Maesteg), St Robert's (Aberkenfig), St Mary's (Bridgend), Our Lady Star of the Sea (Porthcawl) and St Joseph of

Arimathea (Pyle).

The Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, section 86, gives parents the right to express a preference as to which school their children attend.

Admissions - Oversubscription Criteria and Order of Priority

Where the number of applicants for admission exceeds the Admission Number of **145** places available, places will be allocated to applicants in the under-mentioned categories in the following order of priority (please refer to the notes section below where indicated):

1. Looked After, and Previously Looked After Baptised Catholic Children.^A
2. Baptised Catholic children.^A
3. Other Looked After Children, and Previously Looked After Children.
4. Siblings of Baptised Catholic Children who will be attending Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School at the time of admission.^B
5. Children who are attending a Catholic primary school at the time of application and for whom the parents/guardians continue to seek a specifically Christian education.
6. Children who are attending a Church in Wales primary school at the time of application and for whom the parents/guardians continue to seek a specifically Christian education.^D
7. Siblings of other children who will be attending Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School at the time of admission.^B
8. Other children for whom parents/guardians seek a specifically Christian education.^D

Notes

- A. Evidence of baptism must be submitted with the application, if applying under criteria 1 or 2.
- B. Definition of a sibling – any sibling connection must be stated on the application form. For admission purposes, a sibling is a child who is the brother/sister/half-brother/half-sister (children who share one common parent), step-brother/sister where two children are related by marriage. This definition also includes adopted or fostered children living at the same address. Only pupils from Years 7 – 10, at the time of application, are classed as siblings for admission purposes, with the youngest commanding the highest degree of priority.
- C. Multiple birth children (twins/triplets etc) – If when applying the over-subscription criteria, the last child to be admitted is one of a multiple birth, the governors will admit the other sibling(s).
- D. In circumstances where, for reasons of capacity, it is not possible to admit all the children within a particular category, preference will be given those whose homes are closest to the school as determined by the safest practicable walking route; this is determined using the current BCBC approved GPS system.

Transfers

A transfer form can be obtained from Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School. A Transfer form, which is available upon request, should be used where a parent / guardian seeks a transfer to Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School from another school. You should not make an application using this form unless you have already discussed your intentions to transfer your child to Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School with the Head Teacher of the school your child currently attends / most recently attended. Once completed, the form should be sent, together with a letter outlining your reasons for seeking the transfer, and a certificate of Baptism in the case of Catholic applicants, to “The Admissions Panel, Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School” at the address below.

The Headteacher/Governing Body’s Admissions Panel will consider each application with reference to the published Oversubscription Criteria (below) and any specific recommendation from the Head Teacher. The applicant will be notified of the decision of the Admissions Panel within 14 days of application.

In arriving at its decision, the Panel will be mindful of the current number of pupils in the school year concerned. Currently, this is restricted to **145** (the “Admission Number”) in agreement with BCBC and the Wales Government. If there is no place available at the time of application, the name of the applicant will be added to our waiting list unless you request otherwise. In the event that a place becomes available at a later date, the applications on the waiting list will be reviewed and the available place allocated with regard to the school’s oversubscription criteria below. A prospective pupil’s name will remain on the Waiting List until the end of the academic year, when the list will be cleared. If you wish the name to be added to the Waiting List for the following year, you will need to reapply.

Transfers - Oversubscription Criteria and Order of Priority

Where the number of applicants for admission would exceed the Admission Number, places will be allocated in the following order of priority:

1. Looked After, and Previously Looked After Baptised Catholic Children.^A
2. Other Baptised Catholic children.^A
3. Other Looked After, and Previously Looked After Children.
4. Siblings of Baptised Catholic children who are currently attending Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School.^B
5. Siblings of other children who are currently attending Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School.
6. Other children for whom parents/guardians seek a specifically Christian education.

Notes

- A. Evidence of baptism must be submitted with the application, if applying under criteria 1 or 2.
- B. Definition of a sibling – any sibling connection must be stated on the application form. For admission purposes, a sibling is a child who is the brother/sister/half-brother/half-sister (children who share one common parent), step-brother/sister where two children are related by marriage. This definition also includes adopted or fostered children living at the same address. Only pupils from Years 7 – 10, at the time of application, are classed as siblings for admission purposes, with the youngest commanding the highest degree of priority.

- C. Multiple birth children (twins/triplets etc) – If when applying the over-subscription criteria, the last child to be admitted is one of a multiple birth, the governors will admit the other sibling(s).
- D. In circumstances where, for reasons of capacity, it is not possible to admit all the children within a particular category, preference will be given those whose homes are closest to the school as determined by the safest practicable walking route; this is determined using the current BCBC approved GPS system.

Parents have a **right of appeal** against a refusal by the Governing Body to admit their child. If they wish to do so, they should put their appeal in writing to the Clerk to the Governors at the School within 14 days (10 working days) from the notification date. Appeals will be arranged, with an independent panel and conducted in accordance with the Schools Admissions Appeals Code.

Data Protection:

For all successful applications, the data contained in the application form will be stored on the school management information system and used for purposes outlined in the 'fair processes order'. Every effort is made to secure the accuracy and security of personal data held by the School. Under the Data Protection Act, individuals have the **right of access to personal information** held about them, and also the right for any errors to be corrected.

Appeals

Parents who wish to appeal against the decision of the Governors to refuse their child a place in the school may apply in writing by using the school appeals form available from the school office on request. It should be and returned to school for the attention of the Clerk of Governors.

Appeals will be heard by an independent panel. All appeals on pupil admissions to maintained schools must be carried out in accordance with current government legislation. In Wales, it is the Welsh Government's 2013 School Admissions Appeals Code.

Once the parent's appeal form has been received, an acknowledgement letter will be sent from the school. The governors must make arrangements for the appeal to be heard within 30 school days of the closing date for receipt of appeals. Parents will be given 14 days (10 working days') notice of the date and place of the appeal hearing.

This letter will also include:

- Guidance on the appeals process;
- The parent's right to attend the hearing and be accompanied if they wish;
- At least three days before the hearing, the names of the panel members and the clerk will be sent to the parents along with a written statement from the governors detailing the reasons the application for a place was refused.

There are usually three people on the Appeal Panel as well as the Clerk to the Panel.

Order of the hearing:

1. Introductions.
2. The governors' representative will explain why the place has been refused.
3. The parent may ask questions of the governor.
4. The Appeal Panel may also ask governors' representative questions.
5. The parent will be asked to explain the reasons for wanting a place.
6. The governors' representative will be able to ask questions of the parent.
7. The Appeal Panel may also ask the parent questions.
8. The governors' representative will sum up their case.
9. Parents will have the opportunity to make any final points and sum up the case.
10. The parents and governor leave the hearing allowing the panel to reach a decision in private.

When there are a number of appeals, the Appeals Panel may hear the case in one of two ways:

- **Grouped appeals:** the school's case is heard once for the first stage of the appeal. In this scenario the presenting officer presents a general case (the factual stage) in the presence of all appellants (and any representatives) who may question the case. If the panel concludes that 'prejudice' exists, it will be necessary to move to the second stage. At this stage the appeals of the individual appellants must be heard individually without the presence of the others and decisions must not be taken until all the appeals have been heard.
- **Individual appeals:** the school presents the case, followed by the individual appellants' case. In these circumstances, it will be necessary for the panel to hear the school's case repeatedly.

As with other appeals, multiple appeals are heard in two stages:

First: the panel must assess:

- whether admitting all the appellants would cause prejudice to efficient education or the efficient use of resources, and
- whether each child or young person would have been offered a place if the admission arrangements had been properly implemented.

If the panel finds that admission of the children would not cause prejudice or that they would have been offered a place if admission arrangements had been properly applied, their appeals must be upheld. Further information and guidance on this stage can be found in the School Admission Appeals Code (2013).

Following the hearing, the Clerk to the Appeal Panel must write to parents as soon as possible (usually within 7 days) to inform them of the result of the appeal. Schools will also be notified of the result.

Repeat Applications

Unless there are significant and material changes in the circumstances of a parent's application for their child or the school, the governors will not consider a repeat application in the same academic year.

Change of Preference

Once parent/carer have submitted their preferences they will not be allowed to change them without an exceptional change in circumstances, for example, if the family has recently moved address or an older sibling has changed schools.

All requests to change preferences should be made in writing to the Local Authority and school. Any parent/carer who submits an application for a change of preference for an oversubscribed school, without an exceptional change in their circumstances, will have that application refused.

School's website: <http://www.archbishopmg.co.uk>

Local Authority website: <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/residents/schools-and-education/school-admissions/apply-for-admission-to-school/>