



# **Admissions Policy 2020/2021**

**Dorset Schools**

**Last Update: November 2018 (version 2.0)**

## Document Control

### Changes History

Version	Date	Amended by	Recipients	Purpose
1.0	Sep 2018	Louise Adams Director of Education and Standards	All Plymouth CAST Headteachers and LGBs	To provide a CAST- wide approach to admissions

### Approvals

This policy requires the following approvals:

Board	Chair	CEO	Date Approved	Version	Date for Review
			September 2018	1.0	September 2019

### National/Local Policy

- This policy must be localised by Academies
- This policy must not be changed, it is a National Policy (only change logo, contact details and yellow highlighted sections)

### Position with the Unions

Does the policy require consultation with the National Unions under our recognition agreement?  Yes  No If yes, the policy status is:  Consulted and Approved  Consulted and Not Approved  Awaiting Consultation

## Distribution

This document has been distributed to:

<b>Position</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>
Plymouth CAST Directors and SEL	September 2018	1,0
All Plymouth CAST HTs	October 2018	1.0
All Plymouth CAST LGBs	October 2018	1.0

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### Key information – for definitions and notes see Appendix A

Department for Education school number	8353404
What <a href="#">kind of school</a> is this?	Academy
Does this school have a <a href="#">religious character</a> ?	Catholic Diocese of Plymouth
Who is the <a href="#">Admissions authority</a> ?	Plymouth CAST Multi-Academy Trust
Age range of children in this school:	4 to 9 years
Published Admission Number ( <a href="#">PAN</a> ):	158
Catchment area?	No
School Supplementary Information Form ( <a href="#">SIF</a> )?	<a href="#">Yes</a> – on faith grounds – appendix 1 <a href="#">Yes</a> – if seeking priority for exceptional need
Usual birthdate range for Reception children:	1 September 2015 to 31 August 2016
Our children have <a href="#">priority for admission</a> for:	St Osmunds Middle School Dorchester Middle School St Mary’s CE Middle School Thomas Hardye School
Do we ask children to wear a uniform?	Yes
<b>Applications</b>	
When can parents apply for admission to Reception?	15 November 2019 to 15 January 2020 <sup>1</sup>
How can parents apply for admission to	<a href="https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/education-and-training/schools-and-learning/apply-for-a-school-">https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/education-and-training/schools-and-learning/apply-for-a-school-</a>

Reception?	<a href="place/starting-school-for-the-first-time.aspx">place/starting-school-for-the-first-time.aspx</a>
When will places be offered for Reception?	16 April 2020
When should <a href="#">appeals</a> for admissions to Reception be submitted?	15 May 2020
When can applications for <a href="#">In-year</a> admission be made?	from 1 September 2020 for Reception; from 1 June 2020 for Years 1 to Year 6.

## **Information about this policy**

### **Vision and values:**

This policy supports the vision and values of Plymouth CAST. (To be added to upon completion of vision and values consultation.)

### **Policy Principles:**

This policy:

- Ensures Plymouth CAST schools comply with the requirements of the School Admissions Code
- Provides a CAST-wide approach to admissions
- Ensure all schools apply the same over-subscription criteria across the trust
- Provide a central point for consultation with local authorities
- Be reviewed each year by the trust leadership team and directors

### **Policy Aims:**

- To enable parents to know when and how to apply for places at CAST schools
- To assist school leaders and Local Governing Boards in meeting statutory requirements
- To identify a best practice approach to waiting lists
- To explain what supplementary documentation is required, when and to who
- To provide a transparent approach to allocation of places at CAST schools

### **Relevant legislation and linked policies**

School Admissions Code 2014: DfE

Fair Access Protocols: DfE

School Admissions Appeal Code: DfE

Local authority admission arrangements

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

Headteachers are responsible for:

- Providing advice and guidance to the LGB and the directors as to requirements under the School Admissions and Appeals Codes
- Making arrangements for determining admissions and hearing admissions appeals
- Ensuring local authority deadlines are met

Local Governing Boards are responsible for:

- Supporting the Headteacher to determine arrangements
- Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for pupil recruitment

The trust senior executive leadership team are responsible for:

- Preparing a CAST wide admissions policy, which takes account of Diocesan guidance and the School Admissions and Appeals Code
- Providing oversight, and support, of the implementation of admissions arrangements across the company
- Ensuring that the impact of any proposed changes to an academy's admission arrangements are considered in light of the other academies in the company and other catholic schools generally in the diocese Report to the directors regarding admissions arrangements across the academies in the company
- Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for pupil recruitment to the academies in the company
- Providing advice and guidance to directors regarding the requirements of the Schools Admissions and Appeals Codes

Directors are responsible for:

- Approving a CAST wide admissions policy, which takes account of Diocesan guidance and the School Admissions and Appeals Code
- Adopting the CAST-wide admissions policy prepared by the senior executive leadership and ensure that it complies with all diocesan requirements

Local authorities are responsible for:

- Providing information to parents about the school
- Providing applications and other available documentation to the school to be able to order parents who have applied for a place at the school
- Managing in-year admissions

This policy applies to all admissions for the school year 2020-21.

Religious education and worship are in accordance with the teachings and doctrines of the Catholic Church. **This does not affect the right of parents or carers who are not of the faith of these schools to apply for and to be considered for places.** We ask all parents or carers applying for a place to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community.

Our schools serve the Catholic communities of Dorset. **We also welcome applications from all parents and carers, regardless of faith or background, who would like their children to be educated in a Christian environment.**

Plymouth CAST is the admission authority for the academies listed above and is responsible for determining the admissions policies for these schools. On behalf of the Trust, the admissions process for our schools is coordinated by the local authority of each school.

The directors of the academy trust are responsible for the admissions policy and for ensuring the policy is implemented in CAST schools. School leaders (supported by Local Governing Boards) are responsible for following the admissions policy and providing information to directors to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities.

### **Contacts for Further Information**

#### **Plymouth CAST Multi-Academy Trust**

St Boniface House, Ashburton TQ13 7JL

01364 645450

[admin@plymouthcast.org.uk](mailto:admin@plymouthcast.org.uk)

#### **Churches Together in England**

020 7529 8131 [www.cte.org.uk/](http://www.cte.org.uk/)

#### **Diocese of Plymouth**

01364 645390 [www.plymouth-diocese.org.uk/](http://www.plymouth-diocese.org.uk/)

#### **Dorset for You policies, information and admissions application forms**

<http://www.dorsetnexus.org.uk/Services/788>

<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/education-and-training/schools-and-learning/policies/school-admissions-policies/2018-to-2019-school-admissions-policies.aspx>

#### **Clerk to the Independent School Admissions Appeals**

Caseworker East – 01305 221343

Caseworker Chesil and Purbeck 01305 221342

Caseworker North and West 01305 221934

#### **Dorset Transport Team**

<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/education-and-training/school-transport/apply-renew-or-appeal-school-transport/free-school-transport-entitlement.aspx>

#### **Children's Education Advisory Service – advice for service families**

01980 618244 [enquiries@ceas.detsa.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@ceas.detsa.co.uk)

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#### **The Department for Education (DfE)**

0870 000 2288 [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)



**The Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)**

0370 000 2288 [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency)

**Office of the Schools Adjudicator**

01325 735303 [www.education.gov.uk/schoolsadjudicator](http://www.education.gov.uk/schoolsadjudicator)

## The Application Process

### Application Form

Applications must be made on the Dorset local authority application form. Applications must be made to your local authority by the closing date set by your local authority

Local Authority	Deadline for applications	Website link
Dorset	15 January 2020	<a href="https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/education-and-training/schools-and-learning/apply-for-a-school-place/starting-school-for-the-first-time.aspx#/">https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/education-and-training/schools-and-learning/apply-for-a-school-place/starting-school-for-the-first-time.aspx#/</a>

### Applications deadlines:

Any applications received later than the deadline will be dealt with as late applications.

**Please ensure applications and supplementary evidence is submitted by the deadline for the relevant authority.**

### Applications under faith criteria

Applicants wishing to apply for a place under faith criteria should complete the Supplementary Form (appendix 1).

The completed form, together with any required evidence, (see below), should be returned to the relevant local authority for which a preference has been made by the closing date.

Parents and carers applying under the faith criteria should also supply one of the following documents:

- A copy of the child's baptism certificate with the parish stamp and priest's signature
- Parents/carers whose children are members of other Christian denominations should supply a SIF, signed by the relevant faith leader.

### Exceptional need for admission to our school

We give higher priority for children where there is an exceptional need to attend this school and not another school. The need must be specific to this school: a child may have very challenging circumstances that require additional support but if that support could also be provided at another school, there would be no exceptional need to attend **this** school.

In order to seek priority on this basis, parents **must** complete the application online. This is available from the LA's website at [www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/school-admissions](http://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/school-admissions) All applicants must use a common application form from their home LA.

The exceptional need could be due to the parent's circumstances. Exceptional need could include:

- A serious medical condition, which can be supported by medical evidence;
- Significant caring responsibilities, which can be supported by a social worker;
- Where one or both parents or the child has a disability that may make travel to another school more difficult, which can be supported by medical evidence.

These examples aren't meant to be exhaustive or exclusive. Neither should it be assumed that similar circumstances would impact on different children and families in the same way.

- if there are medical reasons that make it essential for a child to attend this school, the parent must provide supporting information from a doctor, together with any other relevant information. This must make a compelling case as to why the child's needs or the parent's can only be met here; a medical condition in itself will not automatically result in a place here. It isn't essential for the doctor to name this school and we wouldn't expect a doctor to have sufficient, specific knowledge of the school but the evidence should explain exactly what the child's needs are and what specialist support and facilities are required.
- for social reasons, parents must provide independent evidence from a relevant professional supporting the family. The supporting evidence must set out the particular reasons why this school is the most suitable and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. It isn't essential for the professional supporting the family to have in-depth knowledge of this school but the evidence must explain exactly what the needs are and what specialist support and facilities are required.

Exceptional need for admission here will **not** be accepted on the grounds that:

- a child may be separated from a friendship group;
- parents wish to avoid a child from the current or previous setting;
- child-care arrangements before or after school would have to be changed;
- transport arrangements would have to be changed;
- there is a medical condition such as asthma that doesn't require specialised treatment;
- the child has a particular interest or ability in a subject or activity.

Evidence from a relevant professional, independent of the family will be required in every case and should be made available in time for the LA will not prioritise an application as demonstrating exceptional need. The LA may seek its own advice to establish whether this school is the only school that could meet a child's needs.

Parents can indicate on a common application form that they believe there is an exceptional need for admission here. It isn't expected that a parent will seek this priority at a school that was not named as the first preference. The onus is on parents to submit their supporting evidence and to provide further evidence if requested to do so. Parents who apply using a common application form from another LA without a tick box for exceptional need should put a note in the reasons for their preference that they are requesting exceptional need priority and provide the required supporting evidence.

If the LA accepts that exceptional need has been demonstrated, the application will be prioritised under oversubscription criterion 2. This does not guarantee that a place will be available. Where the LA doesn't agree that the need is exceptional, the application will be prioritised according to other oversubscription criteria.

### **Catchment Area:**

We do not operate a catchment area which gives priority for school admissions purposes.

### **How the Admissions Process works**

Without exception, all parents have to make a formal application for admission to a state-funded school. Places aren't allocated automatically and no child has a guarantee of admission. This includes children with siblings at a school or those at a particular school or nursery. We welcome visits from parents - and their children - who are considering applying

for a place here. This is an opportunity to see what we have to offer. Visits aren't a compulsory part of the admissions process and won't affect decisions on whether a place can be offered here. Parents can arrange visits by contacting the school office.

Schools can't hold places in reserve in case a local parent forgets to apply or in case a family moves to the area later – there are very limited circumstances when an application can be refused. The responsibility for making applications and for providing information or evidence in support of an application lies with parents.

**Policy Changes:**

Once our policy is determined, it can't be changed unless an amendment is required to correct a typographical error, to ensure that the policy complies with the Codes, in response to a determination of the [Office of the School's Adjudicator](#) or where approval has been received to a request for an In-Year Variation. Any amendments that are made will be detailed in the [Policy Version](#) section above.

## Statutory Information

### Deferred Admission:

By law, children must attend school full time once they reach compulsory school age. A child reaches compulsory school age on the **prescribed day** following his/her fifth birthday or on his/her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day. The **prescribed days are 31st December, 31st March and 31st August**.

If your child is offered a full time place before s/he reaches compulsory school age, you have the option of deferring the child's entry up until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age. A place will be held and will not be offered to another child provided the place is taken up within the same academic year.

Parents can request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

<b>Child's fifth birthday</b>	<b>Parent can defer admission or child can attend part-time until the start of term in</b>
1 September – 31 December 2020	January 2021
1 January – 31 March 2021	January 2021 OR April 2021
1 April – 31 August 2021	January 2021 OR April 2021 OR September 2021 by making a fresh application for a Year 1 place (June 2021) or making a fresh normal round application for Reception in 2021-22

### Options for admission into Reception

When a place is offered in the normal round of admission, it is for full-time attendance at the beginning of the September term after the fourth birthday. Parents can then choose to:

- take up that full-time offer;
- take up the place part-time until the child is of compulsory school age;
- defer admission until the child is of compulsory school age within the same academic year; or
- decline the offer and make other arrangements.

A parent of a summer-born child can request agreement to delay admission to Reception in the next normal round of admission and then make a fresh application for admission. Alternatively, where summer-born children defer admission until they are of compulsory school age, deferral to the following September requires a fresh in-year application for a Year 1 place.

## **Admission of children outside the normal age group**

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of the normal age group for example if the child is exceptionally gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. However, this is a Trust decision and strict criteria apply. The Trust has the right to refuse if it believes it could compromise the child or school.

Parents of summer born children may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted outside of their normal age group to Reception rather than Year 1. This is an unusual request and should not be taken lightly. Parents who wish to seek a place for their child outside the normal age group should make an application for a school place for the child's normal age group and should also submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time, following the procedure set out by the relevant local authority.

Although the process is co-ordinated by the local authority, the decision is made by the Trust. The decision will be made based upon which age group the child should be admitted into, taking account of the circumstances of each case and the best interests of the child. Once that decision has been made the oversubscription criteria will be applied to determine if a place can be offered at the school.

The school is not required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Your statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which you have applied is unaffected. However the right to appeal does not apply if you are offered a place at the school but it is not in your preferred age group.

## **Late Applications**

Late applications will be administered in accordance with the local authority admissions policy.

## **In-year applications:**

In-Year applications will not be considered further in advance than 8 school weeks (40 school days) of the place being required with the exception of children from UK service personnel families posted to a new area whose applications will be considered up to 16 school weeks in advance. Applications received outside this timescale will be returned to the applicant or put aside until 8/16 school weeks before admission is required.

To make an in-year application, parents should apply to the local authority and the school, ideally after visiting the school. Once an in-year application has been made, it will be considered by the Local Governing Board Admissions Committee.

The decision will be issued by email (or letter if no email available). Offers of places may be withdrawn if they are offered in error or it is established that an offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

In cases involving school transfers that do not require a house move or where there is no need for an immediate move, arrangements may be made for the child to start school at the beginning of term to minimise disruption to their own and other children's education.

## **Fair Access Protocols:**

Local Authorities are required to have Fair Access Protocols in order to make sure that unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as

quickly as possible. This includes admitting children above the admissions number to schools that are already full.

**Infant Class Size Regulations:**

There is a statutory requirement for infant classes of 30 pupils. Parents/carers should be aware that when applications for places are being considered by the school, there is a requirement to keep to the 30 limit. Parents/carers do have a right of appeal in accordance with the Infant Class Size Regulations if the school is oversubscribed and their child is refused a place.

**Statutory right of appeal:**

Information on how to appeal can be found on the local authority website. Your appeal should be lodged within twenty school days after the date of the decision letter.

If a child is not offered a place, parents/carers have a statutory right to appeal. An appeal should be made in writing to the local authority.

**Fraudulent Information:**

If the allocation of a place has been made on the basis of fraudulent or intentionally misleading information, the governors reserve the right to withdraw the place.

## **Additional Information**

### **Waiting Lists:**

Parents whose children have not been offered their preferred school in the normal admissions round will be added to their preferred school's waiting list. Waiting lists for admission will remain open until the end of the Autumn Term in the admission year. A waiting list is maintained for year groups other than the intake year.

Waiting lists are ranked in the same order as the oversubscription criteria listed below. Your child's position on the waiting list may change. This means that a child's waiting list position during the year could go up or down.

Any late applications will be added to the list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Inclusion on a school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

### **Applications for twins/multiple birth children:**

If there are insufficient places to accommodate all the children of a multiple birth (i.e. twins, triplets, etc), in any one year group and one child can be admitted, the other siblings of the multiple birth will be admitted over the school's Published Admission Number. If it is in an infant class (Years R, 1 and 2) the additional children over the PAN will be considered as excepted pupils for the entire time they are in an infant class at the school or until the class numbers fall back to the infant class size limit in accordance with the School Admissions Code.

### **Attendance at Nursery:**

**Attending a nursery, or a pre-school setting on the site of the academy, does not give any priority within the oversubscription criteria for a place in the academy.**

### **Pupils who have EHCPs**

All children who have an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which names the school will be admitted regardless of the faith of the child.



### **Oversubscription criteria**

Any child whose Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) names this school will be admitted.

Oversubscription criteria (to be used only if we need to prioritise applications - see [notes](#) below):

- 1. Looked after children and children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order.**
- 2. Priority will next be given to children based on their exceptional medical or social needs or those of their parents.<sup>2</sup>**
- 3. Priority will next be given to children who are Baptised Catholic.**
- 4. Priority will next be given to children who are siblings of pupils on roll at this school.**
- 5. Priority will next be given to children who regularly attend (or whose parents regularly attend) a Christian church.**
- 6. Priority will next be given to children of members of staff who have been employed at this school for more than two years or recruited within the past two years to fill a vacancy.**
- 7. Other children.**

[Tie breaker](#) –to prioritise applications in the same oversubscription criterion, we will use:

- a) straight-line distance from home to school and,
- b) where distances are equal (within a metre) we will use an electronic list randomiser.

## Notes and Definitions

**Note 1** - Definition of looked after children or previously looked after children:

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 the definition in s.22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

A "previously looked after child" is a child who: (a) ceased to be looked after because they were adopted (this includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 [see s.12 adoption orders] and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 [see s.46 adoption orders] , or (b) became subject to a child arrangements order (under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.8, as amended by s.12 of the Children and Families Act 2014 - an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live), or (c) became subject to a special guardianship order (see S.14A of the Children Act 1989 - an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian [or special guardians]).

**Note 2** - Definition of Catholic:

A child baptised in the Catholic Church (evidenced by a baptismal certificate, signed by the parish priest).

**Note 3** – Evidence of being a member of another faith is provided through the SIF, signed by the relevant designated faith leader.

**Note 4** - The term 'sibling' means full brother or sister, half or step brother or sister, adoptive brother or sister and other non-blood related children who live with married or cohabiting parents in the same household and relates to all year groups provided by the school. In the case of an infant school the sibling link will apply to the related junior school and vice versa. Sibling link will only be considered if it is clearly stated on the application form.

**Place of Residence:** in order to qualify for consideration under this category, parents/guardians will need to show that at least one adult family member and the child to whom the application relates to have been attending their local church at least once a month for a minimum of a year prior to the closing date for applications. The application must also be supported by a written statement from the vicar/priest/minister or leader of the church confirming this

Appendix 1 - Supplementary Information Form

St Mary's Catholic First School		
<p><b>To be completed only where a parent is seeking admissions priority on faith criteria.</b> Where there are more applications than there are places, we will prioritise applications where a faith criterion has been met. Please complete and return this form to the school by 15 January 2020.</p>		
<p><b>You must also complete a Local Authority Common Application Form.</b></p>		
<b>PART A</b>	<b>To be completed by parent</b>	
Full name of child		
Date of birth		
Please tick the appropriate description		
Catholic	Child is baptised Catholic – part B signed by Parish Priest or baptismal certificate provided	
Other faith	Child is a member of a faith other than Catholic – part B signed by faith leader	

Once you have completed Part A, please EITHER attach a copy of the Baptism Certificate OR pass the form to your priest, minister, faith leader or church official who should complete Part B and return it to the school. If you don't return this form, your application will be considered under the "non-faith" criteria.

<b>PART B</b>	<b>To be completed by Priest or faith leader</b>	
Full name of child		
Church		
Name of Priest or faith leader		
Address		
Telephone		
Please tick the appropriate description		
Catholic	Child is baptised Catholic	
Other faith	Child is a member of a faith other than Catholic	
I confirm that the information provided is accurate:	Signed by: Signature:	
<p>Please return this form to: Sadie Wilson School name and address: St Mary's Catholic First School Lucetta Lane, Dorchester, Dorset DT12DD</p>		

