



St Alban's
Catholic High School



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Admissions Policy 2026-2027

Approved by Pupil Committee on:

ST ALBAN'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL



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ADMISSION POLICY 2026-2027

St Alban's Catholic High School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. 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 academy company 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 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. 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 academy company is the admissions authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority (LA) undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round¹ (except for admission to year 12). The admission authority has set its published admission number (PAN) at 174 pupils to year 7 and a minimum of 5 for external applicants to year 12 in the school year which begins in September 2026.

Where logistically possible, the admission authority will admit twins and all siblings from multiple births in admissions to year 7, where one of the children is the last child ranked within the school's PAN.

Admission to the Sixth-Form

Applications to the sixth-form should be made via the school web site [<http://www.st-albans.suffolk.sch.uk/6th-Form-Application-Form/>]. These applications must be made by 31 January 2026. The school operates a sixth form for a total of 220 pupils. 120 places overall will be available in year 12, if fewer than 115 of the school's existing pupils transfer into year 12, additional external pupils will be admitted until year 12 meets its capacity of 120. The school will not normally admit pupils after the first half-term of year 12.

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 as stated in our prospectus.

If 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 sixth form 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. Students already studying at St Alban's will be given priority over external applicants, even if external applicants are in a higher category in our oversubscription criteria.

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



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Where there is a space in year 13 i.e. where there are fewer than 100 pupils in the year group, the school will admit additional pupils up to this number using the oversubscription criteria set out below, provided they have covered the necessary curriculum in a previous setting to a satisfactory standard.

Where the school deems student's entry into the sixth-form poses a risk to other students, the school reserves the right to reject an application for enrolment

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 completely 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

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. Baptised Catholic looked after and previously looked after children. (see notes 2&3)
2. Baptised Catholic children in named schools. (see notes 3&10)
3. Other Baptised Catholic children. (see note 3)
4. Other looked after and previously looked after children. (see note 2)
5. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 4&5)
6. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion. (see note 6)
7. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader. (see note 7)
8. Children who have a parent or guardian employed at St Alban's and the member of staff has either been employed for two years or was recruited to fill a vacant post for which there was a demonstrable skill shortage.
9. Non-Catholic children who are in named schools (see note 10)
10. Any other children.

Within each of the categories listed above, the following principles will be applied.

- (i) The attendance of a brother or sister at the school at the time of enrolment (*excluding the sixth-form*) 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 (see note 8).
- (ii) After children in (i) above, priority will be given (and tie-breaks settled within each category) to children living closest to the school. Distances are measured on a straight line "as the crow flies" basis, All straight line distances are calculated electronically by Suffolk County Council using data



provided jointly by the Post Office and Ordnance Survey. The data plots the co-ordinates of each property and provides the address-point between which the straight-line distance is measured and reported to three decimal places. Where there is more than one home within a single building (for example apartments) we will measure to a single point within that building irrespective of where those homes are located.

- (iii) In the event of two or more applicants living the same distance from the school and competing for a single place, lots will be drawn by someone independent of the school to determine the successful applicant.

Application Procedures and Timetable

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round for Year 7², you **must** complete a Common Application Form (CAF1) (excluding admission to year 12) available from the local authority in which you live. Applications can also be submitted online at www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions. You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form attached to this policy or available from the school website <https://www.st-albans.suffolk.sch.uk>. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to **The Admissions Officer by 31 October 2025**.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application for a place in year 7 on 1 March 2026 or the next working day by the local authority on our behalf. 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.

If you do not provide the information required in the SIF together with all supporting documentation and return it by the closing date, your child will not have oversubscription criteria applied except for "Other looked after and previously looked children" if appropriate and this is likely to affect your child's chance of being offered a place.

To apply for a place in Year 12 you must submit a Sixth Form application form by 31 January 2026. You will be advised of the outcome of your application for a place in the Sixth Form in March. If you submit an application for sixth form after the closing date, responses will typically be sent to you within 10 school days of receipt.

Late Applications

Late applications, except those deemed by the Local Authority as exceptional and to be processed as 'on time', will be considered after the first round of offers issued on 1 March. This is because all applications received by the closing date must be considered before any late applications. If there are exceptional circumstances why your application is late, please include them when you send in your application to your Local Authority.

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.

² This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.



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Where a child has been admitted to a year group at primary school below normal age group, in line with DfE guidance, prior to transfer from primary to secondary school parents/carers should secure agreement for their child to continue to be educated out of their normal age group when their child begins year 5 (before the normal admissions round closes on 31 October).

Any such request should be made in writing to the Admissions Officer at the same time as the admission application is made. The admission authority team 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 account the views of the headteacher, (including the headteacher's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school), the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals as appropriate will be carefully considered.

If the application is for the normal admission round the request and supporting evidence should be sent to the Admissions Officer leaving sufficient time for the admission authority to consider the request before the closing date for applications.

Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful children will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. Waiting lists 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. The waiting list will be held open until the last day of the summer term.

Inclusion on 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 normal admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. Application should be made to the school through <https://www.st-albans.suffolk.sch.uk/admissions> or by contacting The Admissions Officer.

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, and you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel (see below).

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 the locally agreed protocol. Accordingly, outside the normal admission round the admission authority is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any locally agreed protocol. The admission authority has this power even where admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

The admissions authority reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place or, where a child is already attending the school, the place itself, where it is satisfied that the offer or place was obtained by deception.



Appeals

Should a parent / carer wish to appeal against a refusal to offer a place The Education Appeals Office will make the necessary arrangements for an Appeal Hearing. Appeals are independently administered by the Education Appeals Office, PO Box 579, Ipswich, IP1 2BX.

Once an applicant's case has been heard at an Appeal Hearing, further appeals in the same school year cannot be accepted unless circumstances have changed.

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.

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. Previously looked after children also includes those children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted'.

3. '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.
4. '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.
5. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.
6. "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.



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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.

7. "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 6 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.

8. Brother or sister includes:

- a. 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
- b. the child of a parent's partner where that child lives for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same address as the applicant.

9. 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.

10. For the purposes of this policy, named schools are:-

St Pancras Catholic Primary School, Ipswich

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Ipswich

St Mark's Catholic Primary School, Ipswich

11. 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, please refer please refer to the ordinarily resident definition. For more details, please visit www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions.